

## New Mexico and Arizona - 1931

Sun drenched and quiet stand the Pueblos of New Mexico and Arizona – queerly withdrawn from the modern life about them. Usually built of the soil on which they stand, they appear to have grown out of it their color is the same. There are few trees in the villages but they are surrounded by cultivated fields and cottonwood and willows grow along the water courses. The houses huddle in solid blocks of adobe like slightly battered apartment houses. Irregular ladder poles rise sharply here and there and protruding beams drop deep black shadows across the walls. Drifting in and out are the people – brown skinned and silent with black eyes, sliding walk and flashes of vivid color in blankets, neck or head bands. Who are they - where do they come from?

All the Indians who now live in villages in New Mexico and Arizona are pueblo people which simply means town people. They were so called by the Spanish explorers who found them in the middle of the 16th century and were naturally struck by their towns and town organizations. There are now about 9000 Indians living in pueblos in New Mexico and Arizona. They form self governing communities who support themselves by farming the land they own and live a life of astonishing independence of thought, organization and belief in the center of a modern American state. Today they speak five Indian languages in New Mexico and another in Arizona where the Hopis cling to their Rocky Heights. They also speak Spanish which is preached to them in their Catholic churches and the young ones all speak English.

Behind the Pueblo life as it exists today was the life of the cliff dwellings and of the great communal villages. Archaeologists learn of prehistoric life from the



Kiva Exterior

Pueblos all of whom have traditions connecting them with the inhabitants of the ruins found all over the south west. Hopi, Mesa Verde, Santa Clara, Piyu, Keres, Frijoles.

Fascination of modern Indian ceremonial is due to the antiquity of its site and forms. In the altars sacred symbols and customs of the

modern Indian we can trace the history of his ancestors. The most ancient of whom we have any record were wandering tribes who made no permanent homes, with slight brush shelters.. The prototype of the kiva in which the modern Hopis keep the snakes during the annual snake dance.



Kiva interior

Later as agriculture developed and the people needed more stable homes they dug into the ground and made a circular room, roofed with mud daubed logs and entered from above by means of a ladder. These people are called the small house or pre-pueblo people and their house is still a prominent feature of every Pueblo for it is the Kiva, the ceremonial lodge. The modern kiva is still the center of clan and religious life. The modern Kiva has retained many features of the original home. The ladder entrance from above through a hole which is also the smoke vent, the ventilation and smokescreen. The fire in the center, the absence of windows and the hole in the floor which typifies the entrance to the underworld. Today the preliminary services for every dance are performed in this Kiva and men meet there for clan and Pueblo business.

Between this time and the Spanish conquest the Indians had developed his religion, his government, his art and architecture to eight Heights. If you take away from the modern pueblo what the white man has brought you will see what he used and how he lived before the white man came.

- Rooms - stone or adobe roofed with piñon or cedar beams over which are laid saplings or brush and earth.
- Floors – hard earth finished with adobe.
- Fireplace in corner gave light, heat and smoke. Alternate layers of smoke and fresh plaster.
- Niche in wall held sacred meal
- Polls on things held drying meet.
- Grinding stones set in floor
- Pottery – reached its height in the great age 1000 to 1540.

What the white man did was to check the growth of a truly democratic state. The Indians were completely democratic and indeed he is today in so far as the white man allows him to be. Everybody lived in the same sort of houses on the same sort

of food, everybody worked and the only honors and distinctions were won by personal merit. No personal accumulation of wealth, no inheritance of dignity or position. When the Spaniards came they found the Indians governed by their old men in council with the ? as final arbiter. The? Was the only man exempted from labor and that was because his time was given to prayers and meditation for the benefit of all. That is still true today. A race of men to whom personal glory had no meaning. No record kept of the achievements of warriors, priests, architects. Or artists save in the evidence of a splendid culture. All were artists though no master ever signed a piece of pottery. It is to the glory of the race that it developed a type of government entirely different from that of the Europeans and more effective. The welfare of the people was the supreme end of the government. The idea of a monarchy had no place. The European and the American of today relinquishes his preconceived ideas painfully. "Empires of the Montezuma" roles splendidly off the tongue. There was no kinship not even among the advanced civilizations of Mexico and Central America but Europeans could see in a powerful chief only as a king. If he happened to be the chief over a number of chiefs of towns or tribes temporarily united for defense as Montezuma in Mexico he must be "an emperor". These Indian emperors, principles and what not are the creation of Spanish chroniclers and romantic historians and archaeologists based upon traditional European patterns of government. To people educated under our traditions it is almost impossible to conceive of civilization without nationality. National aspirations – national honor – or ideas that go with a white skin. Our passion for organization – for offensive and defensive alliances grows out of our liking to meddle in one another's affairs. Alliances and leagues, treaties and laws innumerable testify to the inability to get on without interference with one another.

Pueblo – town dwelling Indians. In 1540 when first described by Castaneda of Coronado expedition there were 80 inhabited towns. 66 in Rio Grande basin. Seven at Zuni and seven at Hopi. Now reduced to 17 in RG, Zuni and eight I'll be in Arizona. Great shrinkage came before 1540. To account for it makes good guessing for the archaeologists. Chaco Juan river valley, Gila river valley – vast areas inhabited by cliff and communal dwellers who never lived to see a white man. Describe Chaco. A small waterway just west of Continental divide. 50 miles of desert on all sides. No word of history – no convincing traditions being found.

Name by which they called themselves is lost. No people whose achievements have survived have more completely attained oblivion. Treeless except for stunted Cedar and pinon and a few gnarled pines that show long struggle for existence – average elevation is 6500 feet. Marked by sand drifts, broad dry washes, plains sparsely covered with grass and sage brush. Some rattlers, others, and gopher snakes. Small flocks of sheep and goats graze in and about the canyon. Little to attract the permanent settler. Traders come and gone. Two or three Navajo families live in the 10 miles of Canyon near the trickle of water. Extent of population today. Here are the ruined houses – enormous community structures of stone, which sheltered thousands of people in times past. Here are the abandoned fields, irrigation ditches, sanctuary – picture writings, relics of life achievements wrapped in silence of ages.

Today as then - town or village life. The community - the unit in the political structure. A closely knit, highly organized body made up of clans, fraternities, priesthoods with civil and religious authority sharply defined and provided for by election never by inheritance. Village never formed a state. No tradition of rulers of any kind. Myths of Montezuma etc. The people rule. No individual glorified. No individual ownership of land.

Religious life of Pueblo a key to their existence. Their arts, industries, social structure, and government all enjoying in daily life. This fundamental belief is in an all pervading power. This finds expression in dramatic ceremonial events, musical accompaniment, in the symbolism which dominates the performance of drama dances, in color and design, in decorative arts, its construction and use of sanctuary and most common place daily tasks. Planting is a ritualistic performance – hunting is ceremonially ordered. In pottery making it is not possible to say whether the utilitarianism, aesthetics or religious motives predominates.

Dance the highest expression – prayers – for rain, fertility, strength, and endurance. Good hunting – thanksgivings all perfectly ordered and perfectly executed. When you have seen one, you haven't seen them all as many tourists fondly suppose. Similarity and ends with certain points of costume and form that are fairly common to all. These are a white handwoven skirt embroidered in red, green and black, a sash of the same material either embroidered or finished with heavy fringe. A fox

skin dangles from the waist line in back. A turtle shell is tied under the left knee. A string of shells hangs over one shoulder, the moccasins are edged with skunk fur for a protection from the evil spirits. Woman's hair hangs loose. All family silver, turquoise. In different dances variety is introduced in head dresses, feathers, and the paint on upper part of body. Music for dance by chorus. Effect vigorous, unmelodious but marvelously rhythmic. Subtle rhythm.

Snake dance given by Hopi people in Arizona. Describe Hopi country – mesas – fields of dwarf corn, squashes. Difficulty of making anything grow - what they need most is rain. The rain God is the great serpent. Snake clan descendants ceremony of nine days, first seven in Kivas. Then antelope and snake dances. Camp at Mishnonovi – describe – race is early morning. Gathering in plaza – kiva center. A little before sunset the chief antelope priest comes from Kiva – speaks down hatchway of snake Kiva asking if all is ready. Then goes back to own Kiva. Comes out again in full regalia. Chin blackened and outlined by a sharp white line from ear to ear - body painted with zigzag lines of lightning and the legs whitened to the knees. Feathers in his hair, white skirt – fox skin, beaded arm bands holding feathers and beaded anklets. Other priests the same except one who wears wreath of Cottonwood leaves on head, carries bowl of water resting on another wreath. Men carry two rattles. Stand near Cuba until all are out then rattle vigorously, March around plaza four times stamping upon sipapy and sprinkling meal. Stand in front of Cuba perfectly relaxed but perfectly still. Then come the snake priests from their Kiva. General effect of their costume is dark brown and black. They're dark brown bodies are spotted with dirty white. They are dark brown skirts are painted with the snake symbol and white and black, The hair is smeared white and feathered with red stain feathers. Each man wears a turtle shell rattle below the right knee but otherwise jewelry is worn without uniformity. Each man carries his snake whip and carries bag of sacred meal. Entrance more thrilling than that of antelope priests – dark and foreboding. Most of them old men. Shake their rattles and the snake man there whips. Repeated eight times. Dances with the snakes. Circle of meal. Snakes put in it – then carried off Mesa.. Dead silence – solemnity. Four circuits of plaza. Line up facing the antelope priests. No chorus or drums. The two lines sway from side to side making only enough motion to cause the rattles to sound and chanting a terribly low thunderous murmur which seems to come from the earth itself. Louder and louder it grows as the bodies rock. Then suddenly it

stops and the antelope men Shake their rentals and the snake man their website. Repeated eight times. Dance with the snake. Circle the meal. Snake put in it and then carried off Mesa.



Acoma

Acoma - Camp by enchanted Mesa - describe it at night. Early morning climb up the Mesa. Describe country around Acoma. Famous rock of Acoma a sandstone Mesa 357 feet high. For situation Acoma. One of most remarkable town. No other Pueblo gives one such a clear sense of living in ancestral times. Rock trails. Girls carrying water jars on their heads. The church –

all materials brought up from the valley below. Timbers from San Mateo Mtn.

#### Navajo Reservation Dinne the People

More than 42,000 on the reservation supporting themselves by marketing there blankets and silverware. Came to trading Post and then disappear into the mysterious desert. Dignified to point of superciliously. Looks on white man with contempt. Only time you see them in numbers is at one of their sings where they may be several thousand.

Chaco - scenic point of view, not impressive only when looked at with imagination that it grips you with tremendous force. For centuries there was silence there broken only by the sound of the trickles of water coming off the western slope by the continental divide – eroding the sand stone Down to a depth of 200 feet. Then for a few hundred years the canyon was the scene of great human labors and achievements until one day the people vanished leaving behind them the evidence of what they wrought. But of written history they left nothing. No name. No language. The plateau treeless except for Piñon etc. Shifting sanddrifts, broad dry washes, plants, rattlers, batteries, gophers. Little to attract permanent settlers – two or three Navajo families keep goats. Here are the remaining houses – enormous community structures of stone that shelter thousands of people. Here are their abandoned fields, irrigation ditches, sanctuaries, picture writings, all the relics of their activities wrapped in silence. From the ruins of the canyon looking down into a panoramas of ruins that is awe inspiring. Pueblo Bonito with its beautiful curving walls is in the foreground. Feverish building activity. In Chaco Canyon the range

of activity was necessarily small as that energy not employed in food production went into building and religious ceremonies. Presence of kivas – denotes high organization. 50 kivas alone in Chetro Ketl. Estimated that in the building of Chevron Ketl alone 15 million pieces of stone had to be quarried, transported, shaped and fitted into the walls. In addition to the thousands of logs and poles had to be cut in distant forests, transported by man power, prepared with stone tools and built into the structure. Tons and tons of mortar had to be prepared. A prodigious task and this is only one out of eighteen. Represents the spontaneous impulse of an extraordinarily vital people. Unlike old world peoples ruled by employers and kings. Built for their own use. A people who availed themselves with exceptional intelligence of the resources around them. Held their own against invaders, developed through stages of community life, with agriculture and hunting as chief forms of subsistence, grew physically and intellectually vigorous, manifested in unusual social aesthetics and religious activities, conspicuously in the buildings of great community structures and religious sanctuaries which challenge the admiration and constructive ability of modern times. Ran courses to summit of civilization without interruption and then went into oblivion. No signs of sudden destruction, but abandonment came at full tide of life. Tell of night spent there. Ghostly light. This is only one – thousands unexcavated. Tell of turquoise bead at Tranhaivi, Canoves in Janiez, painted caves in Janiez.

### **Pack trip in the Janiez**

**August 27, 1931**

We have just come into the camp after riding all day at the Rio Oso and whoever it was who wrote of a dry and thirsty land must have been over the same route. The creek was bone dry and no feed for the animals. We are camped now by a little strange and I have thrown all caution to the wind and drunk deeply taking some of my dysentery medicine on top just for good luck. So far we have had no wild adventures. The two mules Kid and Maggie have trotted after like two dogs so there has been nothing to divert the attention from the fields of contemplation. Marriage has not changed Pete to the extent of making him more talkative. I wonder what on earth Nancy and he will talk about for the rest of their lives. He did say that while he thinks anyone can get along and have a good time if he's not married, he wouldn't go back. We have been climbing up and up and for the last

few hours have been among big timber – yellow Pine, oh, screws, Cedars and aspens. This is a heavenly spot in the midst of mountains. There is a little Mexican village talked away below and there are the usual sounds of barking dogs and the cries of children.

### **August 28. By Povedere Creek**

We got here at 1:30 after a lovely ride through a valley covered with yellow flowers and then down a steep canyon. Last night after I finish writing we were visited by two batches of Mexicans. First two boys about 17 years old and then by three little boys. One of them came up and put out his hand saying “How do you do”. He had brought three dahlias Dash two pink and one red which you left with me. Pete remarked apropos of I don’t remember what “just a freak of nature“. He is an extraordinarily peaceful person to be with. His silence has something of the quality of a mountain. He remarked “if I ever had a thought it would strike me dead”. As for dreaming, “that’s something I never do“. He just is – that’s all. The moon was so bright last night you couldn’t see the stars. In my dreams I heard the cowbell that is tied around Maggie’s neck and this morning the first thing I saw was Pete going after the horses. I ate an enormous breakfast and again we had Mexican visitors. This time a man with a gun going after a bear in the mountains behind us and several small voice. As we left the camping spot we looked up and saw that in one place the aspens on the mountain have started to turn yellow. In a few weeks now the mountain rides will be golden. This spot is hard to describe. It’s down in the canyon with the stream of water and mountains rising on all sides. As you look along the canyon there is a sandstone Cliff with Cliff dwellings which have never been excavated. We are going up them tomorrow with a spade. To the left of that is a Mesa and over the top of it you can see the old Pedrenal. It is impossible to put down on paper the feeling of peace that a trip like this gives you. I don’t know of anything else like it. After lunch I stretched out and slept for two hours. Now Pete is making the fire to cook supper. It must be about 4:30.

**August 30. Still by the Povedere Creek** although about to move. Yesterday I was thwarted in my writing. After breakfast we mounted the horses and with the mules following lest they should rip up the camp, started for the ruins. The only name that Pete knows for them is Canones but in the future I should call them mine. We had to lead the horses part of the way up because it was sheer rock and slippery.

As far as location goes these ruins have it all over Frijoles and Pepe. When you are on top of the Mesa you can look up this valley on one side, up Canones creek on another and then right beside you on another are the colored cliffs leading up to the Pederal which looks two grand for anything. In another direction you look across a broad valley to the entrances of Navajo and Chaunea canyons. What I suppose was the communal house on top of the Mesa was made of sandstone blocks and is pretty well fallen down although there are about six rooms standing. There are five kivas visible and the outline of the whole outer wall it's as plain as can be. You could carry away lots of pottery by the bushel but as I already have so much I concentrated my energies to looking for arrowheads which are rarer. I found one that is almost perfect and to obsidian points that have been broken off. We rambled around for a good while and Pete spent a great deal of time digging for a skeleton and what he was sure was a grave. Nothing more exciting came to light then a huge boulder which couldn't be bunched with the tools at hand. Soon the Thunderbirds began calling and we started down or rather we thought we did when we came to a wall of rock. We thrashed about in there for about 10 minutes before we found the trail and by that time it was raining hard. We stopped on the way down to look in some caves cut in the cliff. They are perfectly huge and one still has a pinkish plaster on it. By this time it was hailing and I couldn't give my undivided attention to the caves for thinking of my bed and duffel bag below which were not covered. On the way down we passed a little Mexican goat herder huddled under a tree. He looked for all the world like a little gnome. When we got down the rain had stopped but more was coming so Pete stretch the fly and put up my tent. I went to sleep. By supertime it was pouring but Pete managed to get a fire going and we had soup and coffee. I went to my tent to get my hat and bumped against the front stake which collapse the whole business and Pete had to go to work to put it up again.

**August 30 at night.** We are camping somewhere near a huge cow camp and the herd, bulls and all, is now making straight for us as we are by the only water for miles. I can't say that I like it. This morning we left here at 9:30 and rode around the foot of the Mesa with the ruins and up Canones Creek. It was a gorgeous ride, climbing all the time. By noon we came into the most magnificent timber. Thousands of Douglas fir, silver spruces and blue spruces with aspen everywhere. We had no view for sometime but road among these tall trees by the creek. Just

after lunch it began to pour but cleared as we came over the ridge of the mountain and we could look back at the highest peaks in the Janiez. It was simply magnificent. Now it is very damp although the clouds have all swept over and it looks as though it will be fair tomorrow.

### **August 31. By San Antonio Hot Springs.**

It is the most gorgeous afternoon and camp is all set up for the night. Last night had to be fair but there was a drizzle of rain all night and I turned and twisted because my bed wasn't level. This morning I had on a heavy undershirt and two flannel shirts and was cold until washing the dishes warmed me up. It was the bleakest kind of a morning. I ate a big



[San Antonio Hot Springs](#)

dish of cream of wheat, one fried egg, two pieces of bacon and six hot cakes And coffee so that I might be well nourished through what did fair to be a nasty day. However, when we started the sun came out great and so it has stayed with the exception of a few sprinkles all day. We came down off the mountain which we were on into the San Antonio valley and a lovely site it was. The valley is rolling with the mountains on all sides. I simply can't get over the quantities of blue Spruce, Silver Spruce and Douglas furs growing like common pine at home. This is a perfect spot with a creek below us and the lovely trees all around. Up the cliff is the San Antonio Hot Springs with water just the right temperature for a bath. It is such a gorgeous feeling to plunge into the steaming hot water right out in the sun. I wanted to stay up there all afternoon. However I had a grand bath, washed all my clothes and now I'm laying in the sun. Pete has gone up there. You never really appreciate a bath until you have been without one for a while. You could almost write a poem on it. And this hot water out in the sun. I never dreamed anything could be so comfortable.

### **September 1 Canon Media**

This has been a day. We left San Antone early and road down the San Antone valley and had lunch just before dropping into the Valle Grande. Orville told me of a huge valley in the Janiez that was once the great crater from which all the lava which makes the Mesa round about came. It has filled in so that it has no look of a crater now excepting that it is a round of depression with mountains all around.

Pete seems never to have heard of the crater business but I am sure the Valle Grande is it. It is a lovely spot with cattle and sheep grazing in the mountains very blue in the afternoon light. We cross the Valle and all of a sudden dropped off in the Canon del Norte. There was no sun in there and all of a sudden it began to pour. The trees are enormous and drops of water began shaking off them. The ground was soaking and everything's teeming with dampness including the packs on the mules. We went down and down for what seemed hours and no sign of water in the creek and a meadow for the animals. When it seemed as though it must be 7 o'clock we slipped down the side of the Canon and started up another – a very dark, wet one. Pete was on ahead, then came the mules and then I to prod them on. After a half an hour riding we passed an old prospectors hole and then came in right of a fine meadow and the old prospector's tumble down log cabin. The cabin was on a slope – in fact everything sloped until you got down to the meadow which was a bog. There seems no place to put a Bed outside and though the rain had stopped for the moment, clouds were sweeping across the mountains. We investigated the cabin which had been inhabited in turn by the old prospector, sheep and chipmunks. We had a hurry up supper and then put the boxes and all our stuff inside. He says "Many's the time this would look better than a million dollars to me". My bed is by one window and he is by the other in order to get all the air possible. The sky is clear by now but that doesn't mean anything.

### **September 2 Cappuline Canon**

Up this morning with no sound of the horses. Pete built a fire and then started off and I got the coffee on and the bacon cooked. While I was down at the creek getting water I heard a great crashing in the trees on the mountain behind me. When Pete came back he said it must have been a bear. These mountains are full of them. There are also mountain lions and deer. The old shack looked very funny with towels, slickers, chaps etc. hung by the nails in the windows and the pack boxes in the two doors. We had to use part of the building for wood to burn. We made an early start and climbed over several ridges and then dropped down into the canyon, a most immense hole in the ground as Pete called it. We stopped at a dude ranch in the canyon, a horribly messy place, and then climbed out of the canyon on the other side and went up what is known as St. Peter's Dome. From the top you can see almost the whole state of New Mexico. Santa Fe was due east about 40 miles. South of us I could see the huge mesa that we dropped off in the

car going from Santa Fe to Albuquerque. Sandia Mountain by Albuquerque looked near enough to touch. Looking north east we could see the Black Mesa behind the ranch and tell just about where Alcalde is. The Sandre de Christopher mountains were a heavenly blue and the desert below them a kind of peach color. To the north and north west were the Janiez mountain peaks and we could see just about where we had come from. We are averaging about 20 miles a day.

**September 3 by the Valle Grande** facing a mountain called Redondo as nearly as I can make out from Pete's pronunciation. This has been quite a day. This morning we rode up Capulin Canyon for about 3 miles to see the painted cave. It is an



Capulin Canyon

extraordinary thing there in the heart of the mountains miles away from everything. It is a cave about 20 feet up the cliff hollowed out like the ceremonial cave at Frijoles. The whole cave is painted with all kinds of symbolic figures. There is the sun symbol, the jagged lightning symbol, the rain serpent, evil spirits draw on something like this, wolves and all kinds of other animals. They are all painted in the usual brick red except one or two animals in black. The canyon itself is very much like Frijoles in looks. Sandstone cliffs and western yellow Pine – not much Spruce or fir and no aspen. One of the fascinating things about these mountains is that they change so almost from hour to hour. We rode back again to camp and packed the mules and started up the steep trail out of the canyon. At the rim of the canyon we stopped to look at what are known as the stone lions of the Cochiti. They are two mountain lions carved out of sandstone lying side-by-side. People have chipped away the heads but the outlines of the bodies are still very clear. We rode along the ridge where we could look off for miles in every direction and then dropped down into Alamo Canyon which is by far the most impressive we have been in. It is very deep and the trail is narrow and steep. When we got to the bottom we had to climb out the other side. We were heading back for the Valle Grande and came to a thickly wooded place and somehow Pete missed the trail. He knew he had but kept going in the general direction and presently we found ourselves climbing a mountain. We pressed on and came to the top and there was the valley grande spread out at our feet and all the other mountains around. It was one of the most

gorgeous views we have had. Then came the question of getting down and hitting the trail in the canyon below. The timber was very thick and the mountain side was very steep so we got off the horses and led them crashing down the mountain side. Half the time we were sliding with mules and all on top of us. Maggie fell down but managed to get up. After a half hour or so of this we got on and road and came out at the entrance of Canyon del Norte which we had gone down when we cross the valley grande before. We have camped at the mouth of that canyon where we can look out on a bit of the valley. The sun set is lovely and the shadows on Redondo are fascinating. It is one of the loveliest camping places we have had.

#### **September 4 - Santa Clara canyon**

This morning we cross the Valle Grande and instead of going to San Antonio again we came north east to Indian Creek where we had lunch. We could see where the los Alamos school boys have been camping By the creek. From lunch time on the ride has been lovely through this canyon which is wide enough so you can see the mountains on each side. Chacoma, the highest peak in the Jamez was on our left and other beautifully wooded ones on our right. My only regret is that we didn't have time to climb Chacoma and go along on the ridge trail.