

show her sinister side, yet we must agree that civilization does sometimes go forward by riding on a powder-cart.

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#### WOMAN ARCHAEOLOGIST DOES OWN DIGGING

There are few real pick-axe archaeologists among women, but Mrs. Earl Morris has dug for prehistoric remains with her own small hands and has ridden alone into dark, unexplored canons, seeking signs of remote occupation. With her husband, who is an archaeological explorer for the American Museum of Natural History, she recently returned from New Mexico to New York, bringing trophies which students of America's ancient history will admire when they are placed upon exhibition.

"They were really my find, weren't they, Earl," Mrs. Morris demands, pointing to two fine turquoise pendants which are one of the expedition's proudest and most significant discoveries. Mrs. Morris's specialty, however, are Basket Maker sandals, and to the study of these she is now giving most of her time.

The Museum's excavations at the Aztec Ruin, New Mexico, are being conducted chiefly with a view to obtaining light upon the three periods called, respectively, the Basket Makers, the Post Basket Makers's, and the Pre-Pueblo. Although the Basket Makers, who flourished 4000 or more years ago and antedated the Cliff Dwellers by several thousand years, had not learned to fashion pottery, yet they displayed fine craftsmanship in the manufacture of baskets and sandals woven of yucca fibre and ornamented with intricate and beautiful designs whose colors have survived the centuries. All of the specimens in Mrs. Morris's collection are obviously intended to adorn small feet.

It was one hot day last November, when all were digging in dust-masks, that her spade opened the site which was to yield those turquoise pendants. The expedition was feeling rather discouraged. They had found no valuable skulls. And archaeologists are not happy unless they find skulls. Finger-bones don't "get them much forrarder".

"I'm going to try once more," declared Mrs. Morris, and taking her shovel she went down the slope to a spot which the other scientific diggers had abandoned. Soon the earth crumbled. Thrusting in her hand she touched bones. "And you cannot imagine the thrill of discovering that there were not one but three skulls!" She had come upon a prehistoric cemetery, but a great fire at some period had destroyed baskets and textiles, leaving only bones. The Canon del Muerto, where this exciting event took place, is a hundred miles from a railroad, in the north-eastern corner of New Mexico.

Under the devastated cemetery lay two skeletons, upon their breasts the turquoise ornaments. These are the earliest examples of turquoise mosaic that have been found in our Southwest, and are easily 3,000 years old. They were the burial adornments of an old woman and a young man of the Basket Maker people, and are made of bits of turquoise and abalone set in wood.

"You can see from remains which that dry climate has almost mummified that the Basket Maker ladies wore bobbed hair," Mrs. Morris points out.

Between her archaeological excavations she explored many dark side canons leading off from the main canon, and in some of these, ancient paintings were still quite fresh upon the walls. Less appealing were the fresh bear-tracks.

Mrs. Morris was instructed at the American School for Prehistoric Study in Paris. The students every summer continue investigations at the La Quina station in southern France, where fossils from 50,000 to 100,000 years old are frequently unearthed.

"Some of those caves in the Pyrenees are two miles long. They open into the hillside and slope down into darkness. The walls are covered with beautiful paintings and carvings. You have to wriggle for long distances on your stomach to explore those caverns, but we thought nothing of that," said Mrs. Morris, who was therefore not dismayed by the caves of Dead Man's Canon.

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#### CORN GROWN IN 70 DAYS; EARS BURIED IN GROUND

Corn with stalks so short that the ears appear to grow directly out of the ground and maturing in 70 days is now being grown at experiment stations under the direction of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. In an effort to produce corn of short growing season and high resistance to cold, this corn will be bred with new varieties discovered in the Andean highlands of South America by Fred D. Ritchey of the Bureau of Cereal Investigations and who has just returned to Washington. This South American corn matures in a climate 20 degrees colder than that of the "corn belt".

"Corn with such short stalks is now being grown that the northern farmer may before long be harvesting his corn crop with a potato digger," said Dr. E. D. Ball, director of scientific work of the Department of Agriculture to a Science Service reporter. "Last summer I saw at the experiment station at Akron, Colorado, corn with stalks less than two feet tall when mature. The ears were so close to the ground that after hilling up they were nearly completely buried and appeared as if they were sprouting up through the ground directly from the roots. This corn matured in about 70 days."

These short season corns are not the result of cross-breeding by Department experts but are discoveries of varieties which have been grown in isolated sections in the northern parts of the continent. One of them has a rather eventful history. It was brought to Manitoba by Ruthenian immigrants a number of years ago from their native country on the slopes of the Carpathian mountains where the season is short. They have cultivated it in their colony 250 miles northwest of Winnipeg for years and have evolved a distinct variety. Others of even shorter season have been found in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and other northern sections.

In Bolivia and Peru, Mr. Ritchey found corn maturing in spite of the fact that the average temperature for the year was 50 degrees Fahrenheit, while the average minimum temperature during the growing season was as low as 39 degrees. In our corn belt, an average night minimum of 55 degrees is considered the limit for commercial production and the average temperature during the growing season is about 72 degrees.