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ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EXCAVATIONS IN THE NORTHERN
SIERRA MADRE OCCIDENTAL,
CHIHUAHUA AND SONORA, MEXICO**

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ROBERT H. LISTER & PAUL C. MANGELSDORF & KATE PECK KENT

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BY
ROBERT H. LISTER
WITH REPORTS BY
PAUL C. MANGELSDORF
AND
KATE PECK KENT

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BY

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WITH REPORTS BY

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PREFACE

The attention of the author was first drawn to the archaeology of northwestern Mexico in 1936, when he was a member of a field party which conducted archaeological reconnaissance and limited excavations in that area. The group, led by Donald D. Brand, then of the University of New Mexico, visited a number of the cave sites in the Sierra Madres and made stratigraphic excavations in several sites of Casas Grandes culture located in the basins and river valleys just east of the mountains. Most of the results of that field work have been published (Lister, 1939, 1946).

Although interest in the area continued, it was not until 1951 that actual field investigations were resumed. In that summer, a grant from the Council on Research and Creative Work of the University of Colorado made possible a trip to Chihuahua to formulate plans for future field work. In 1952 a grant was obtained from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research which allowed us to put our plan for archaeological research into operation. A renewal of the Wenner-Gren grant was received in 1955. Another grant from the Council on Research and Creative Work of the University of Colorado allowed for laboratory and stenographic assistance during the preparation of this manuscript.

During the summer of 1952 a field party made up of six anthropology students from the University of Colorado, James Cowie, Robert Komerska, Walter Rymill, Raymond Veseth, Sally Veseth, and Paula Lundell, and the author and his wife, conducted archaeological research in Cave Valley, Chihuahua. In 1953, the author, accompanied by Hugo G. Rodeck, of the University of Colorado Museum, and Paul Cline revisited several sites in Cave Valley, Chihuahua, and tested a number of caves in Arroyo el Concho, Sonora. The most recent field work was accomplished in December, 1955, when Paul Cline accompanied the author to the Río Garabato drainage, Chihuahua, to investigate cave sites in that locality.

Without financial assistance from the University of Colorado and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research the project could never have been initiated and developed to the point where we are now able to report upon certain results of our research. Sincere thanks are extended to both institutions for their generous assistance.

All of our field work in Mexico was made possible by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia from whom permits were obtained for each season's work. I wish to thank Dr. Eduardo Noguera, Director of the Division of Monumentos Prehispánicos of the Instituto, and Ing. Ignacio Marquina, Director of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, for their splendid cooperation. Not only did they furnish us with the necessary permits but they also allowed us

to bring most of the archaeological specimens recovered to the University of Colorado for study.

In the field we were greatly aided by several residents of Colonia Juarez, Chihuahua. Bishop Brown, David Spilsbury, Irving Romney, Herman Hatch, and others gave us valuable assistance in many ways — furnishing us camping places; providing automobile, horse, and mule transportation; acting as guides; and serving as friendly consultants. Without their help, our work would have been much more difficult.

Aid in the analysis of our materials was gratefully obtained from several specialists in other fields and numerous colleagues in anthropology. Paul C. Mangelsdorf, of the Harvard Botanical Museum, studied and prepared a report upon the maize. Hugh C. Cutler, of the Missouri Botanical Garden, identified many of the other vegetal remains. Kate P. Kent analysed several textile fragments. William Weber and Sam Shushan, of the University of Colorado, aided in the analysis of textile fibers. Emil W. Haury and E. B. Sayles, of the Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona, assisted in pottery identifications, as did Paul S. Martin and John Rinaldo, of the Chicago Museum of Natural History, and Joe Ben Wheat, of the University of Colorado Museum.

Hugo G. Rodeck was responsible for the photographic record during the 1953 season. Many of his photographs are included in the report. Daniel Houtz assisted in the preparation of photographs for illustrations. The author prepared all of the maps and line drawings, with the exception of the textile drawings, which were made by Mrs. Kent.

To all of those individuals mentioned above who have assisted in the field work and in the analysis of the specimens my thanks are extended.

Finally, I would like to emphasize the assistance rendered by my wife, Florence Cline Lister, in all aspects of the project. Her aid in the field and during the preparation of the manuscript has to a large degree made this report possible.

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