

History Detectives

Uncovering Preservation

At Aztec Ruins

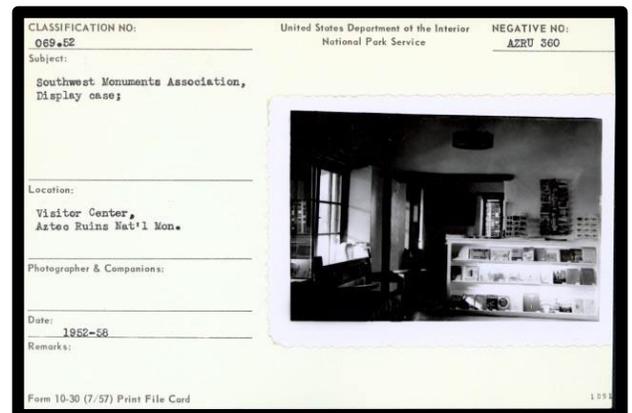
Primary Source Activity



Directions: Use this booklet along with your printed trail guide. Original photographs and discussion questions will be used to evaluate primary source elements at Aztec Ruins National Monument. Photo closeups follow the discussion questions, so that the teacher can read the questions and the students can see the photos simultaneously.

Start in the Visitor Center Bookstore:

- Fact: This part of the building was constructed in 1919-1920, although this image was taken in 1952.
- Locate this view and find at least one original element still present in this building.
- Find at least one component that has changed.



- The doorway that was pictured here didn't used to be in the original building.
 - It was built to be a home that would transition into a museum when Earl left.
 - What was its primary purpose in 1952?
 - What is this building's primary purpose now? (Feel free to ask a ranger.)
- Do you think you'll see any evidence of spaces being adapted for different purposes in Aztec West?

CLASSIFICATION NO:

069.52

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NEGATIVE NO:

AZRU 360

Subject:

Southwest Monuments Association,
Display case;

Location:

Visitor Center,
Aztec Ruins Nat'l Mon.

Photographer & Companions:

Date:

1952-58

Remarks:



Form 10-30 (7/57) Print File Card

1051



Stop 4: in the Great Kiva upper antechamber

Use this photo to identify which areas of the Great Kiva were known and which were hypothesized.

- Entrance staircase
- Floor diameter and bench width
- Floor Vault locations and size
- Fire-pit
- Great Kiva height



Answers:

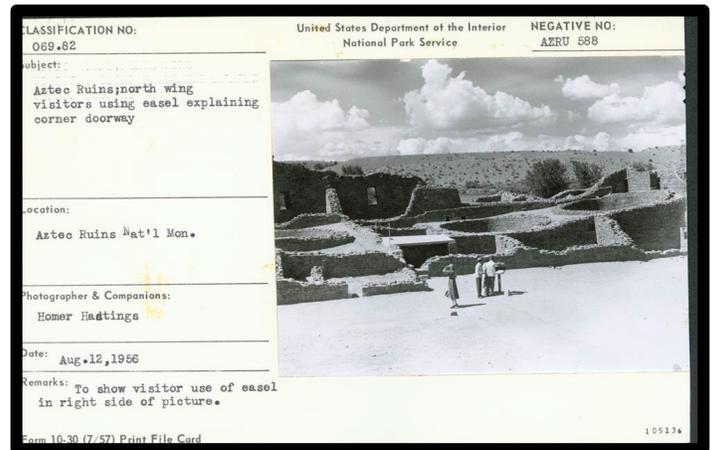
- *Entrance staircase: original location, widened now.*
- *Floor diameter and bench width: original is known!*
- *Floor Vault locations and size: original is known!*
- *Fire-pit: definitely known and prominent*
- *Great Kiva height: unknown – hypothesized height due to structural stability. The original notes of Earl Morris indicated that there was enough rubble for 10 additional feet of building height.*



Near Stop 8:

Find this view and discuss:

- Can you see a major difference in preservation methods in this photo?
 - Why would a roof be used?
 - Why would a roof be disused later on?
- Look at the photo on the next page for a view of an original plaster panel here at Aztec Ruins! You can barely see the doorway at the top!
 - Does this change your perspective on why a roof was originally used?
 - Do you think that the current preservation method is the best way to preserve this panel?
 - Notice the label on this postcard – is it more descriptive or more confusing today?



Answers:

Original plaster panels are very vulnerable to the weather. Simply shielding it from rain is not enough to preserve them – reburial of that room or rebuilding the rest of the room is a better method of preservation.

CLASSIFICATION NO:
069.82

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NEGATIVE NO:
AZRU 588

Subject: Aztec Ruins; north wing
visitors using easel explaining
corner doorway

Location:
Aztec Ruins Nat'l Mon.

Photographer & Companions:
Homer Hastings

Date: Aug. 12, 1956

Remarks: To show visitor use of easel
in right side of picture.



Form 10-30 (7/57) Print File Card

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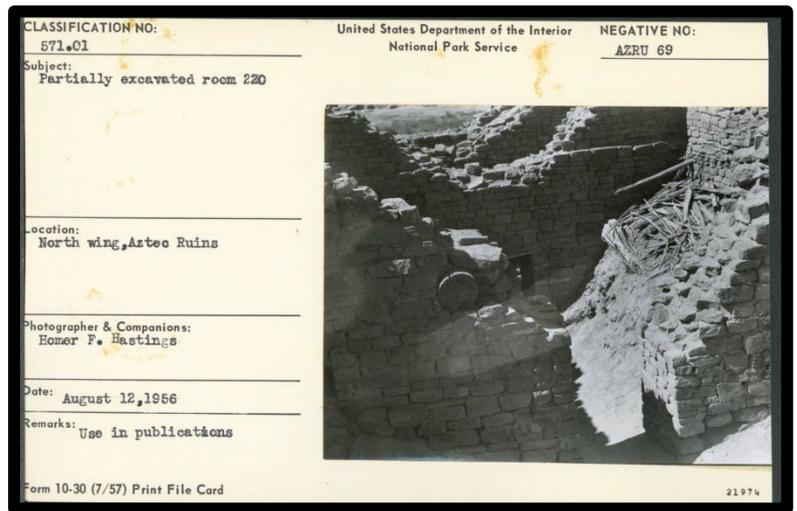
Hieroglyphic Drawings
Aztec Ruins Nat'l Mon. N.M.

©
Trio-Art
Farmington, N.M.

Stop 11:

Find this view and discuss:

- How much sediment and rubble was in these rooms?
- What original structure in this photo can no longer be seen?
- Why was this structure not preserved?
- If you were Earl Morris, would you choose the same preservation priorities?



CLASSIFICATION NO:
571.01

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NEGATIVE NO:
AZRU 69

Subject:
Partially excavated room 220

Location:
North wing, Aztec Ruins

Photographer & Companions:
Homer F. Hastings

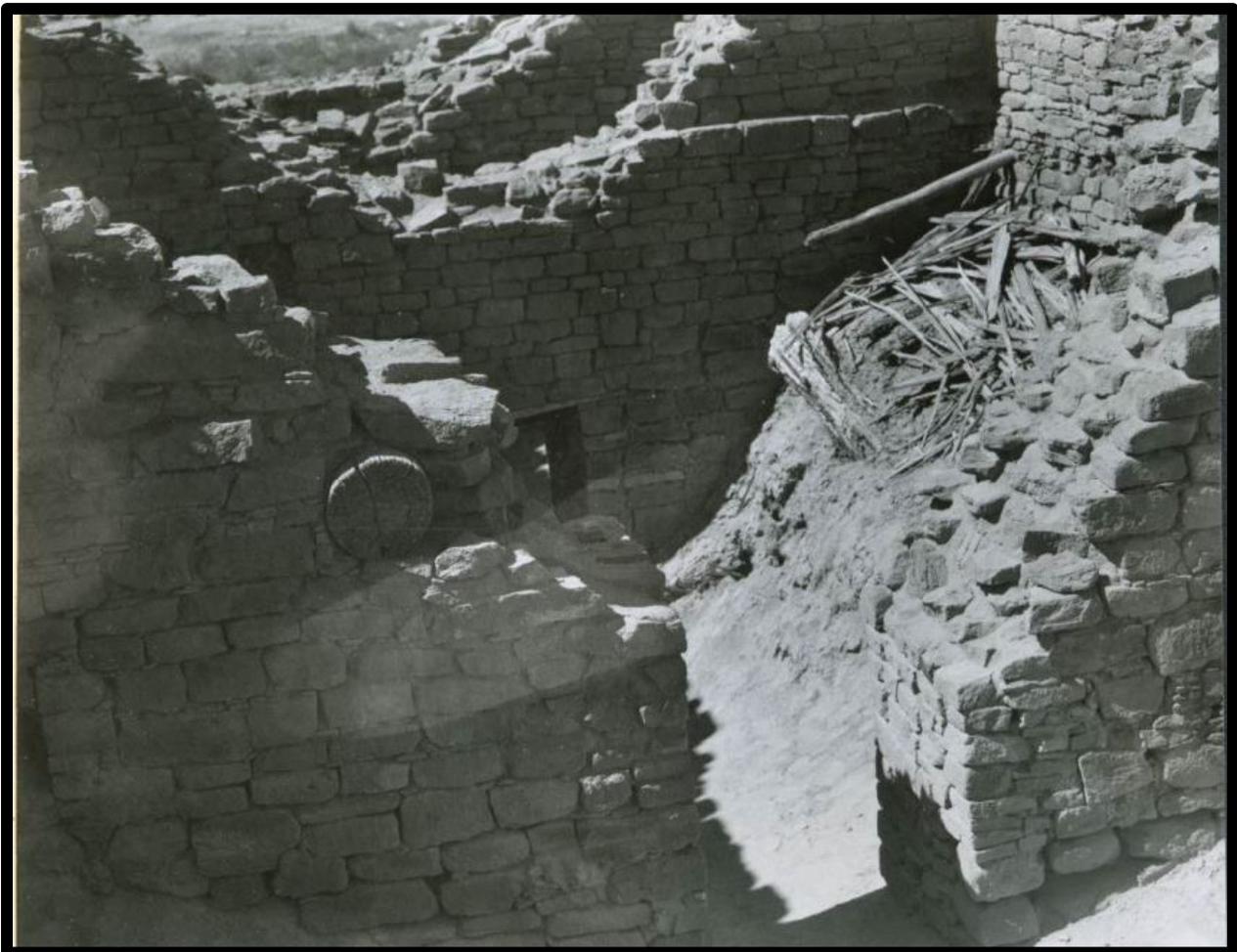
Date: August 12, 1956

Remarks: Use in publications



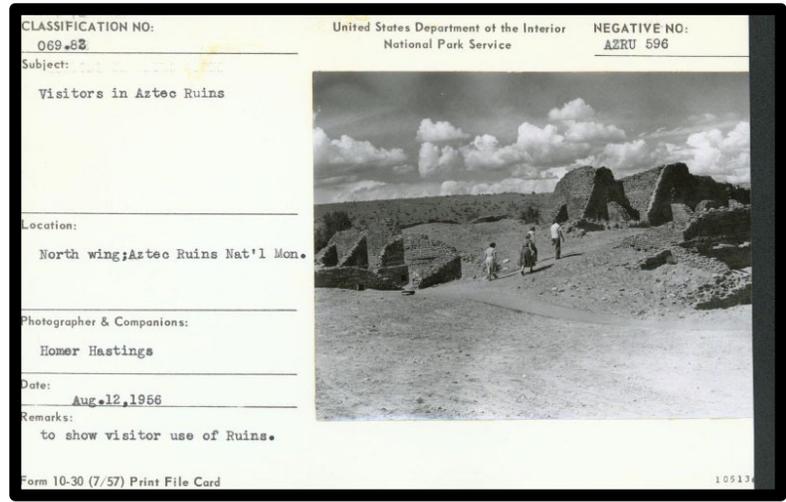
Form 10-30 (7/57) Print File Card

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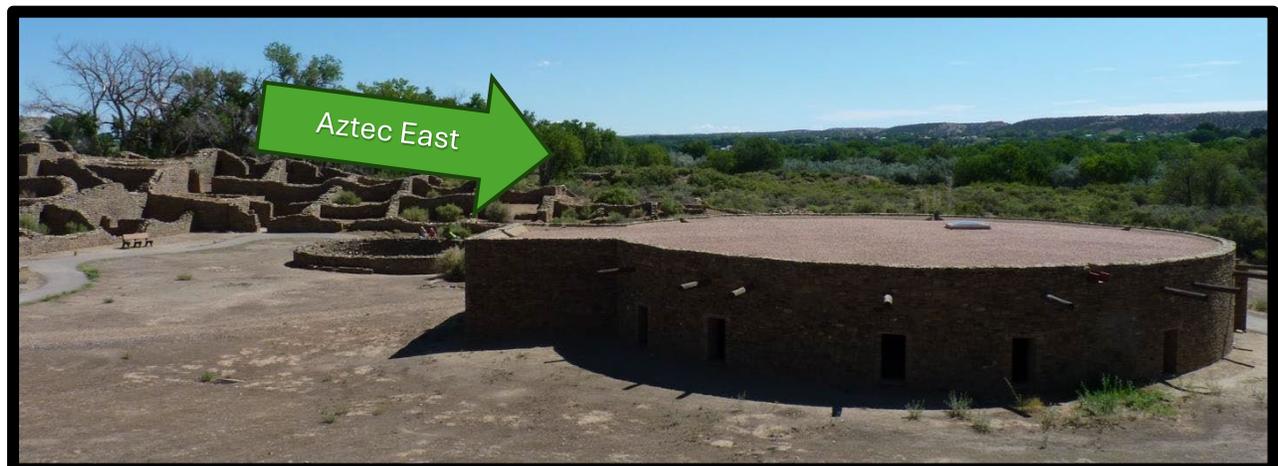


Stop 18:

Find this view and identify an area that was not originally excavated by Earl Morris. People used to walk through this area, since it was buried, but now the original structures are exposed, and this area is now off the trail.



- Which is more valuable to you today – seeing more of the original great house or having more side-trails to explore?
- Which do you think will be more valuable for future generations?
- Now consider Aztec East, the great house barely visible east to you (beyond the Great Kiva). Archeologists chose to leave this area unexcavated to protect what is there, since so much information can be gained from Aztec West. Would you make the same choice?



CLASSIFICATION NO:

069.82

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NEGATIVE NO:

AZRU 596

Subject: Visitors in Aztec Ruins

Visitors in Aztec Ruins

Location:

North wing; Aztec Ruins Nat'l Mon.

Photographer & Companions:

Homer Hastings

Date:

Aug. 12, 1956

Remarks:

to show visitor use of Ruins.



Form 10-30 (7/57) Print File Card

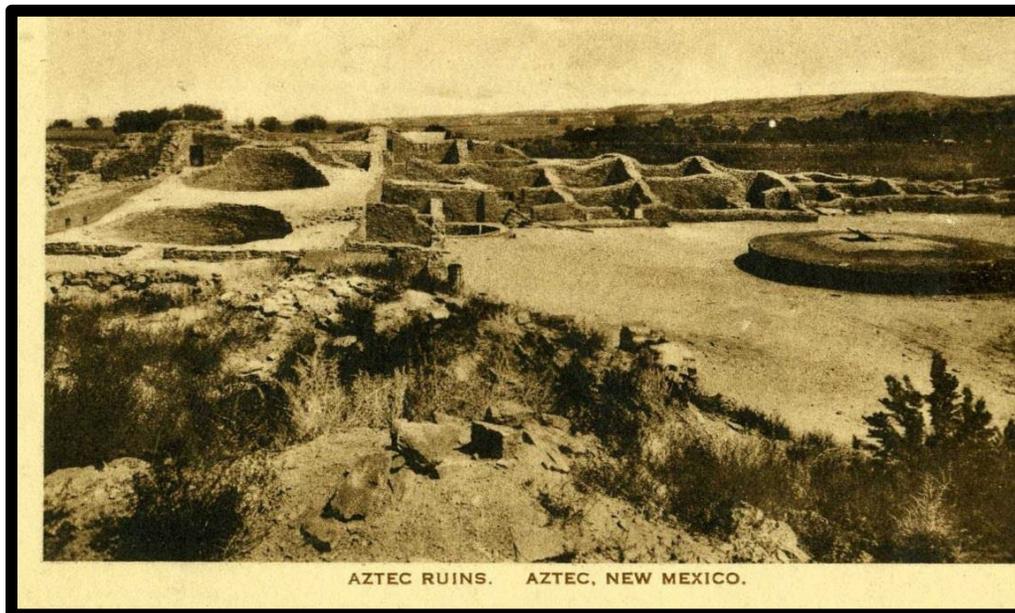
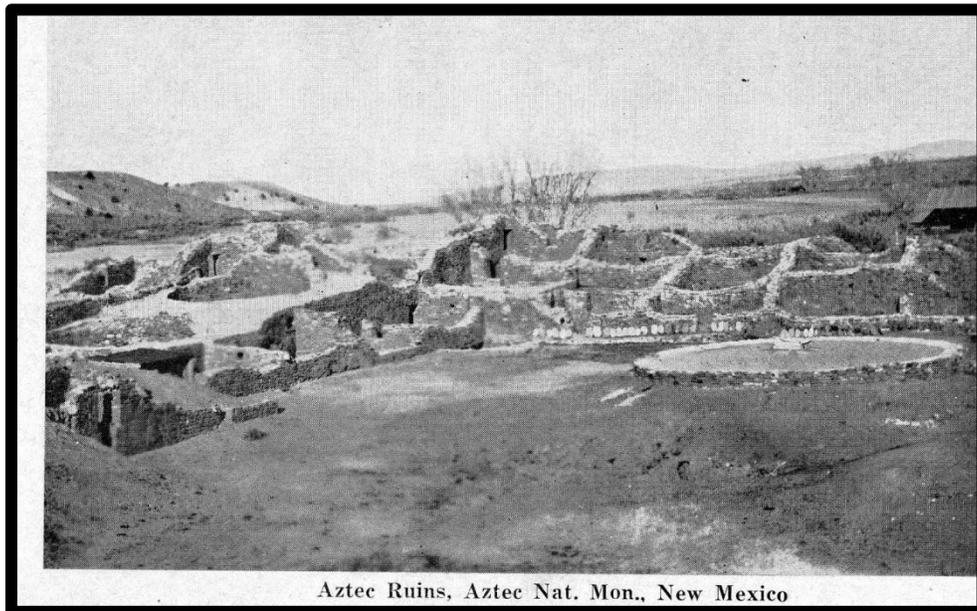
105134

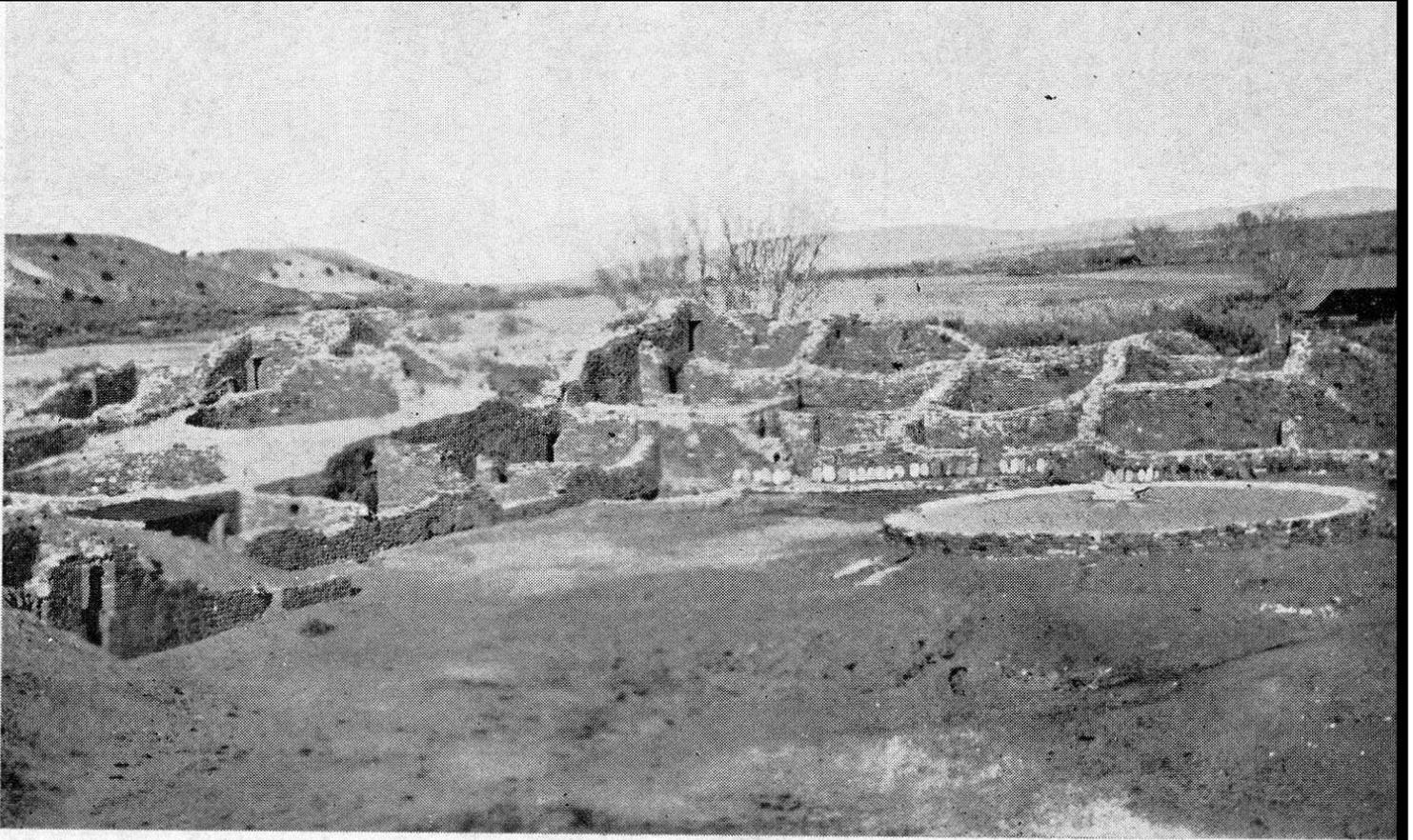


Stop 18:

Use the view of these postcards to see one area that used to be reconstructed but is no longer visible now. In addition to the Great Kiva, one other kiva roof was reconstructed.

This second roof (the kiva at stop 5) had to be removed because it caused water to shed into the kiva and erode the walls. Sometimes replacing a roof can protect a structure, but sometimes it can cause an additional threat.





Aztec Ruins, Aztec Nat. Mon., New Mexico



AZTEC RUINS. AZTEC, NEW MEXICO.

Animas River:

If you have time, walk the ¼ mile trail from the picnic area to the Animas River. Your view will be from a bridge, but the photo is a historic aerial view.

- What changes can you see in the river channel area?
- What season do you think this photo was taken?
- Can you infer any micro-changes in climate based on:
 - Vegetation type?
 - River level?
 - Would you need a greater time range than the current settlement period to infer climate change?
- Based on small changes you've observed, what would you expect to see from this vantage point 100 years from now?





*Thanks for using our “History Detectives” activity!
Please return it to the Visitor Center and let us know
what you think!*