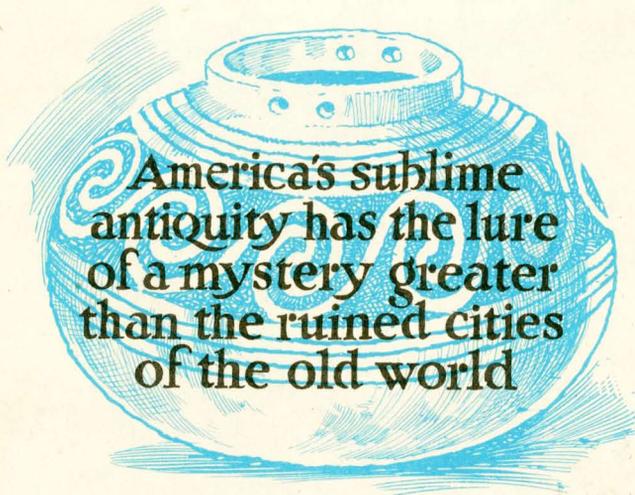


MESA VERDE NATIONAL P A R K COLORADO

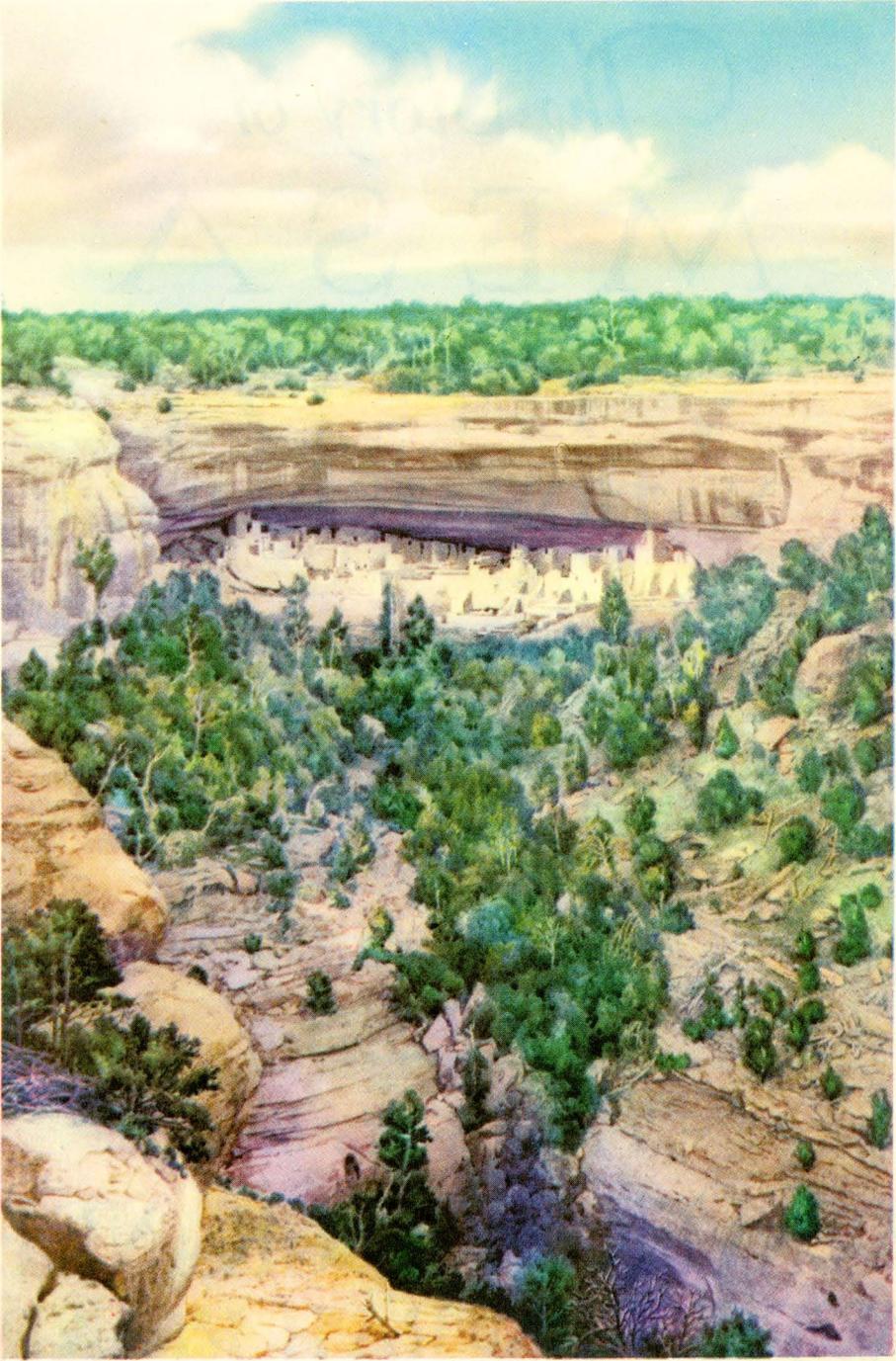


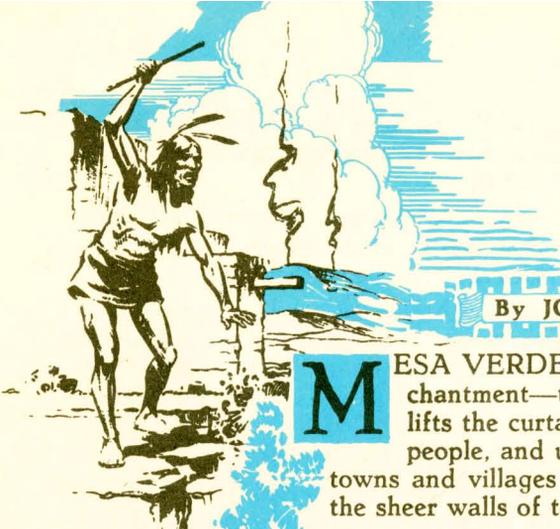
The Story of
MESA
VERDE
NATIONAL PARK



America's sublime
antiquity has the lure
of a mystery greater
than the ruined cities
of the old world

Presented by the
DENVER & RIO GRANDE
WESTERN RAILROAD





By JOSEPH EMERSON SMITH

MESA VERDE¹—an island of mystery and enchantment—takes you back a thousand years, lifts the curtain of the centuries on a vanished people, and unfolds to fascinated wonderment towns and villages that Stone Age man builded on the sheer walls of towering cliffs!

This Emerald Table stands 2,000 feet above the floor of a far sweeping valley that, in its ever changing colors, resembles a vast, silent sea. The Montezuma Valley, as it falls away, becomes a field of tumbled aqua marines in shaded squares and rainbow patches.

America's most alluring mystery, Mesa Verde, is a panorama in stone of the daily life—the playtimes, the worktimes, the feartimes—of gone human multitudes who fought for and enjoyed existence in pueblos fortified and hidden in cavernous pockets of stone walls.

We walk through cliff villages reared between heaven and earth. We enter the temples of the secret orders; see the early attempts to express thoughts by painting and pictography. We pause in the dusky mill where cliff maidens sang as they ground the corn into meal.

Everywhere mystery calls! Whence came this people? What happened to them?

Why do the Southwest Indians shrink from these ruins, saying they are haunted by the "Little People,"² who must not be disturbed?

Mystery—all is mystery!

Above the Emerald Table circling eagles soar, watching us as the sacred eagle watched the Cliff People centuries ago. Then man climbed by hand-holes and toe-holes, laboriously pecked out of the stone cliffs. We ride in a motor car over boulevard-like roads.

The contrast between stone age man and machine age man is nowhere in America quite so thrilling—nowhere is such striking significance of man's advancement, as here.

The world drops away beneath us. The Mancos river is a twisted thread of silver.

Far below is a canon where the intrepid friars in the little company led

¹Me sa (May'-sah) Verd'e. Spanish for "Green Table."

²"Little People" is a term applied by the Pueblo and Navajo Indians to the Cliff Dwellers. It refers to their helplessness against fierce foes and disastrous natural conditions, to which they probably succumbed. The Cliff Dwellers were not small in stature; on the contrary, they were about the normal height of the Indian of today.

by Fray Escalante,¹ a century and a half ago, were the first white men to see the Pueblos of the Perished, even then in ruins, and marveled, as do we, what manner of men had occupied them.

We speed on, ever upward. Navajos,² bronze figures, black hair bound by gay beadwork filets, stand impassive at the roadside. The fragrance of cedar and pinon forests rides the cool, sunbathed air.

Every turn discloses a new wonder. Above us, on the north rim, a tremendous ledge of sandstone rises sheer, straight in the air. This is "The Knife Edge." Eagles are sweeping, like flying sentinels, over the round and square watch towers of stone the Cliff Dwellers build on high points on the Mesa rim, and where fires were kindled for smoke signaling when enemies were descried in the valley, 2,000 feet below.

One hundred and thirty-five miles of mountains stretch before us. Mystical, hazy, silver and purple. To the south are the Lukachukai (Beautiful Mountains) where the mirages make magic, sending them into the sky in the form of giant mushrooms. To the west is the "Sleeping Ute," the mountain remarkably resembling a human figure, prone upon its back, with folded arms—flowing hair to the north and toes to the south.

Pale blue tents in a bluer sky are the Carizo mountains in Arizona. Deep blue are the Blue mountains of Utah, once the stronghold of fugitives from the law. Far away are the La Sal mountains. To the north is Lone Cone Peak in Colorado, and to the right of it the spire-like Needle mountains. And, as silvery as their name, to the east are the La Plata mountains.

A turn to the south brings an unobstructed view of the great dry sea, and on it a phantom ship floats—a jeweled ship with ever changing sails—at sunrise, ruby red, then coral, rose crystal, pure gold, heliotrope—a color chronometer. This is Shiprock.

Forty miles away it stands, a stone cliff, towering in isolated grandeur 1,860 feet above the land—above "the mystic sea."

Under the blue of the Colorado sky we ride to the Mesa's top, past pueblo ruins and ancient farms. With startling abruptness, the car reaches the headquarters buildings of Mesa Verde National Park.

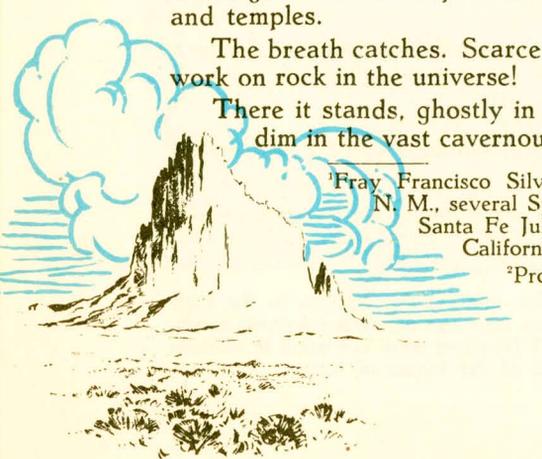
This is but the prelude to the drama. We stand on the brink of a chasm. Across the cleft in the riven earth, as though carved out of time-mellowed ivory, in the very face of a massive cliff is a cameo pueblo—a village in its entirety, with streets, towers, terraced houses, granaries and temples.

The breath catches. Scarce believing eyes take in the most stupendous work on rock in the universe!

There it stands, ghostly in a smiling world of sunshine, a silent town dim in the vast cavernous pocket of a mammoth wall of sand stone.

¹Fray Francisco Silvestre Velez de Escalante, a missionary at Zuni, N. M., several Spanish citizens and Fray Francisco Dominguez, left Santa Fe July 29, 1776, to discover a route to the missions in California.

²Pronounced "Nav'-a-ho." Having none of the Pueblo Indians' reverential fear of the "haunted cliffs," they are employed as workmen in the Park.



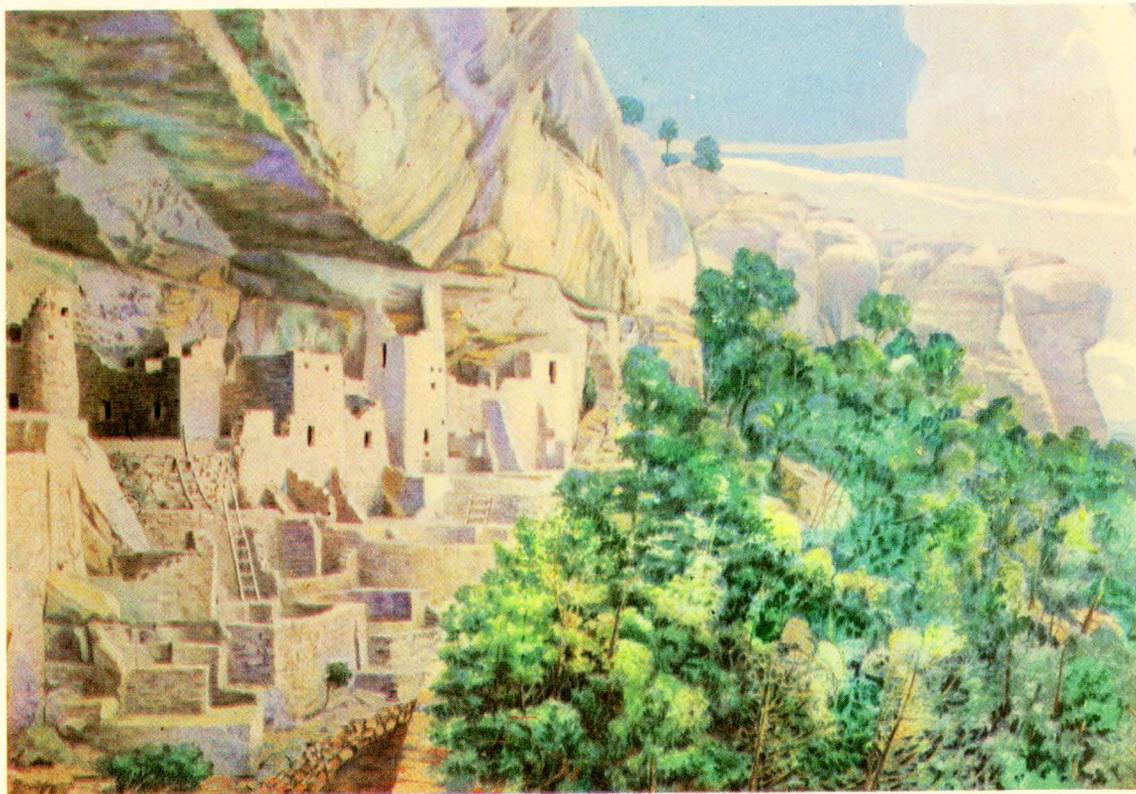


We see the first apartment houses in America. We look upon streets that echoed to thousands of feet when the wandering Aztecs were seeking the sign from their fearsome gods to found their capital of Tenochtitlan;¹ when Richard Coeur de Leon was leading his mailed Crusaders into the Holy Land to recapture Jerusalem!

The explanation of the magnificent distances and the dramatic beauty of the vast island of stone in a rainbow-colored bowl rimmed by far-away mountains, lies in the story of how Mesa Verde came into existence.

Twenty to thirty million years ago all this was actually a sea. The waters evaporated, leaving in layers of salt and gypsum mixed with shale the earliest fossils. Again the waters came, this time from the Gulf of Mexico. Under the deepest part of the ocean a cataclysmic disturbance caused the bottom to sink. The waters, retiring, left exposed a vast plain extending from the San Juan range to the Colorado river. In this age—the Cretaceous—dinosaurs, with other weird, forgotten creatures lived in and around the deep swamp covering the sandy bottom. The ooze, drying through the centuries, formed shale which covers the Dakota Sandstone, full of fossils of shellfish.

¹Tenochtitlan, now Mexico City, was the name the Aztecs gave the city they builded in the lake when they finished their long migration eastward from the Gulf of California.



The earth was frequently in convulsions, pushing up tremendous mountains while the valleys sank. The Mesa Verde emerged, coming to rest when 2,000 feet above the plains. It is capped with sandstone, 200 to 400 feet thick, in which is chronicled the drama of the earth's making.

To the south, volcanic blowouts are discernible in the desert, and on the southern part of the Mesa, a record of the mighty upheaval from the exploding furnace, the sandstone for hundreds of feet in depth is burnt a dark red.

Wind and water eroded the caves in the sheer cliffs. These caves were the shelters of the first men to wander into this part of the continent.

When Columbus landed on the shores of the "New World," Mesa Verde had long been deserted. The Ute Indians shunned it. Their traditions enumerated fierce sieges against the Cliff people, flashing arrows, whirling stone balls and hurtling boulders, in a stone rain of death. To the Pueblos, it was accursed.

The first published account of the "cities that died," appeared in 1874. Fourteen years later, on an afternoon in December, 1888, Richard and

Alfred Wetherill, of Mancos, while hunting strayed cattle on the top of the Mesa, urged their horses up the vantage point offered by a large mound crowning a great promontory. They were unaware they were passing over the mystery-filled Sun Temple. Turning to the east, to search the canon beneath, they froze to their saddles. Incredulous, bereft of speech, they stared at what they took to be an apparition of an immense ruined castle. The westering sun painted in gold, against a deep gray background, square and round towers and high walls, standing out from the massive cliff, high above the forest at its foot.

The Wetherills named it Cliff Palace and told the world. Baron Gustav Nordenskiöld, famous Swedish explorer, visited the ruin and published an elaborately illustrated work. In 1909, the government commissioned Dr. Jesse W. Fewkes to excavate and repair.

Amazing Cliff Palace, representing the highest point in Cliff Dweller architecture, has seven floor levels, or terraces, the lower terrace being occupied by twenty-three kivas.¹ Their roofs formed the floor of a plaza where the town gathered, held the sacred dances, and the women cooked in the many open fireplaces. Above this large square are lofty buildings, arranged in tiers, several being four stories high.

Stone steps and ladders—notched logs—and balconies, gave access to the upper story rooms. Long poles, laid on projecting ends of rafters, held a flooring of wattlings and cedar bark covered with adobe. Along this, dwellers passed from doorway to doorway.

The walls are of better masonry than other cliff dwellings. The rooms are plastered with a mixture of sand and clay, and the impressions of fingers show it was laid on by women's hands.

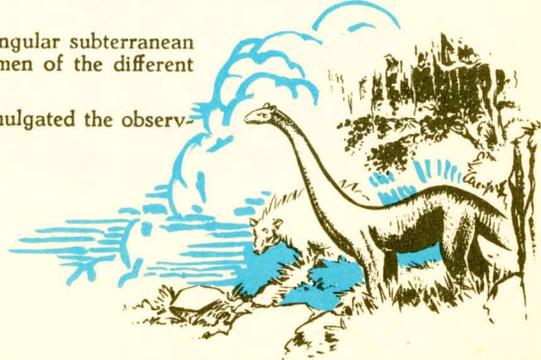
Distinct and independent clans comprised the population. Each had its milling room. Slabs of stone set on edge formed a box, where three women knelt; the first crushing, the second grinding, and the third rolling the corn into fine meal. Granaries, tightly sealed against rodents, held food sufficient for two or more years.

The impressive Square Tower contains mural paintings of the highest Cliff Dweller art, raincloud figures, the butterfly, triangles, parallel red lines with dots, and a square figure in red, crossed by zigzags. The Speaker Chief's² house stands on a huge boulder. This castellated three-story building, constructed of the finest masonry, reaches the roof of the cave. The Round Tower, its many peepholes commanding views far down the canon, is almost perfectly symmetrical.

There are hundreds of cliff dwellings in the Mesa Verde. Cliff Palace, 300 feet long, and containing 200 rooms, is in an enormous cave, arching 50 to 100 feet above it. Spruce Tree House, 216 feet long and 89 feet wide, has 114 rooms and 8 kivas. In places it is three stories high. Bal-

¹Kiva, the Hopi name for the circular or rectangular subterranean room symbolic of the underworld, and in which men of the different clans held religious exercises.

²The Speaker Chief announced the news, promulgated the observations and sounded the warnings.





cony House is named for its prominent balcony. High above the entrance is a porthole, and the sentinel's platform. Fire Temple, consecrated to the fire cult, has wall paintings, symbols of fire, and fire pits. New Fire House, Sunset House, Oak Tree House, Cedar Tree Tower, Square Tower, Long House—next in size to Cliff Palace—and Sun Temple,¹ are among the many ruins each differing architecturally and of distinct individual interest.

Far View House, on top of the Mesa, gives an excellent illustration of the prehistoric farming community: secular, ceremonial and storage rooms, an open court in front, the fields around and the cemetery nearby.

Around the open campfire in the star-blazing evenings, archeologists and ethnologists chat to us of the days when these

¹Sun Temple, a prehistoric "community church," has the oldest shrine in America. This is the "sun symbol" stone, made by a spring in the Cretaceous period, as determined by the late Dr. Willis T. Lee, U. S. Geological Survey. The water, bubbling up, formed the ridges radiating from the bowl. The temple, with its 1,000 feet of walls, averaging 4 feet in thickness, its decorated stones in fine masonry and its peculiar D-shape, was built and used by all the clans for the worship of the sun, the greatest of the Cliff Dwellers' gods.



ghost pueblos housed the Cliff Dwellers. The Navajo Indians in the Park, to the throbbing beat of the drums, do their ceremonial dances. And the imagination peoples with life, once again, the terraced streets, the houses and the kivas.

It is awesome, this journey through the centuries. We see the coming from Asia of the savage hunters, the gradual evolution from caves and pit houses to the stone structures. In a great stretch around us, we are told, there are tens of hundreds of time-buried settlements on the mesa tops, and that man has left ample evidence of his habitation here 3,000 years ago. The "Basket Makers,"¹ excellent weavers and potters, gave way to the builders of masonry and the architects who wrought so mightily in the Mesa Verde.

By comparison of tree rings the chronology of the Southwest has been carried back to 700 A. D.

¹The "Late Basket Maker" culture is the earliest discovered on the Mesa Verde. Evidences found in Step House Cave show the Basket Makers lived here 2,000 years before the Cliff Dwellers.



PAUL BRUGLE

The rings show that beams were placed in Cliff Palace in 1073 A. D.; in Oak Tree House, 1112; Spring House, 1115; Balcony House, 1190-1206; Square Tower House, 1204; Spruce Tree House, 1216 and 1262.

Superposition of walls, well constructed, on primitive walls shows that the cliff dwellings were inhabited at two different periods. Abandoned, they had partially fallen into ruin. Reoccupied, new buildings were erected on the old. Scientists believe that the Pueblo people first lived in the valleys but hostile tribes forced them to the cliffs. Again they essayed forth where running streams and fertile ground offered pleasanter existence. Forced to return to the cliffs, they builded permanently and here they lived for hundreds of years.

The Utes have a tradition that a terrible twelve-year drouth drove out the Cliff People, when pueblo fought pueblo for possession of the scanty remaining stores of grain and the dwindling springs. Then began the hegira to the open country, to mesas far away. It is accepted as truth that the Pueblo Indians are the descendants of the Cliff Dwellers.¹

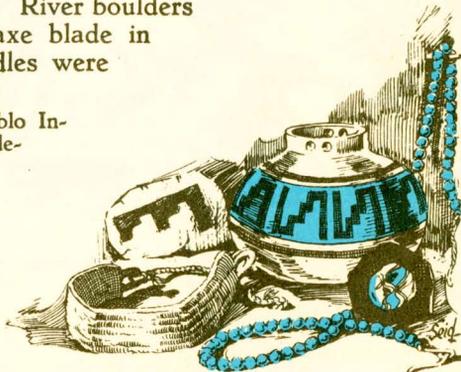
As the story is told at the campfire, we vision the brown faces, the gleaming bodies, the brilliance of the feather robes as these people assemble before the speaker chief's platform. We hear the startled cry of an infant, in the hush preceding the telling of the warning that the wild foes of this gentle people have been seen by the watchers in the stone towers on the Mesa's rim. As the speaker chief explains the meaning of the signal smoke, the billowing clouds and the thin columns, each carrying a message, the excitement grows. But it is the daily life, the intimate things in the making and keeping of these fortified homes, that hold for us the greatest interest.

The men were the warriors, weavers, hunters and farmers. The women were the millers, bakers and pottery makers. The men worked at looms in the kivas. From cotton and the yucca plant, fine and durable cloth was manufactured. Cotton cloth with colored patterns was found, also netting, woven belts and head bands with loops at the ends. Yucca strings, tied in six loops, each holding an ear of corn, indicate that the Cliff Dwellers, like the present Hopi Indians, recognized six cardinal points—north, west, south, east, above and below—and worshiped gods of these directions.

The weavers manufactured the beautiful feather cloth from the feathers of captured turkeys. The pulp was beaten out of yucca leaves and the fibre, when dry, was twisted into long cords on which the small turkey feathers were closely wrapped. These were then made into soft, warm blankets, worn as robes.

Bows and arrows and spears, as well as stone balls, were the weapons in warfare and for hunting. River boulders were smoothed and fashioned to an axe blade in wide grooves in sandstone. Axe handles were

¹On this authorities are now agreed. Pueblo Indians who have never seen the Cliff Dwellings describe accurately where buried jars are to be found. These have been found, just as described, under the undisturbed dust of the centuries.





made from two pieces of the tough squaw bush twisted twice around the groove in the axe and wrapped tightly with yucca cord. A stone wedge was used to split logs. Bone awls and arrow shafts were sharpened in narrow grooves in the sandstone, still visible.

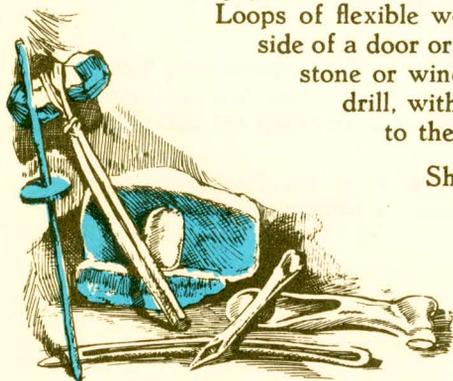
The women made food bowls, jars, canteens, vases, dippers, ladles and mortuary vessels, and painted them in artistic designs with a sliver of yucca leaf. None of it is glazed. The swastika in varying forms, also a St. Andrew's Cross, were often used as decoration, and also the stepped or terraced figures known as rain clouds.

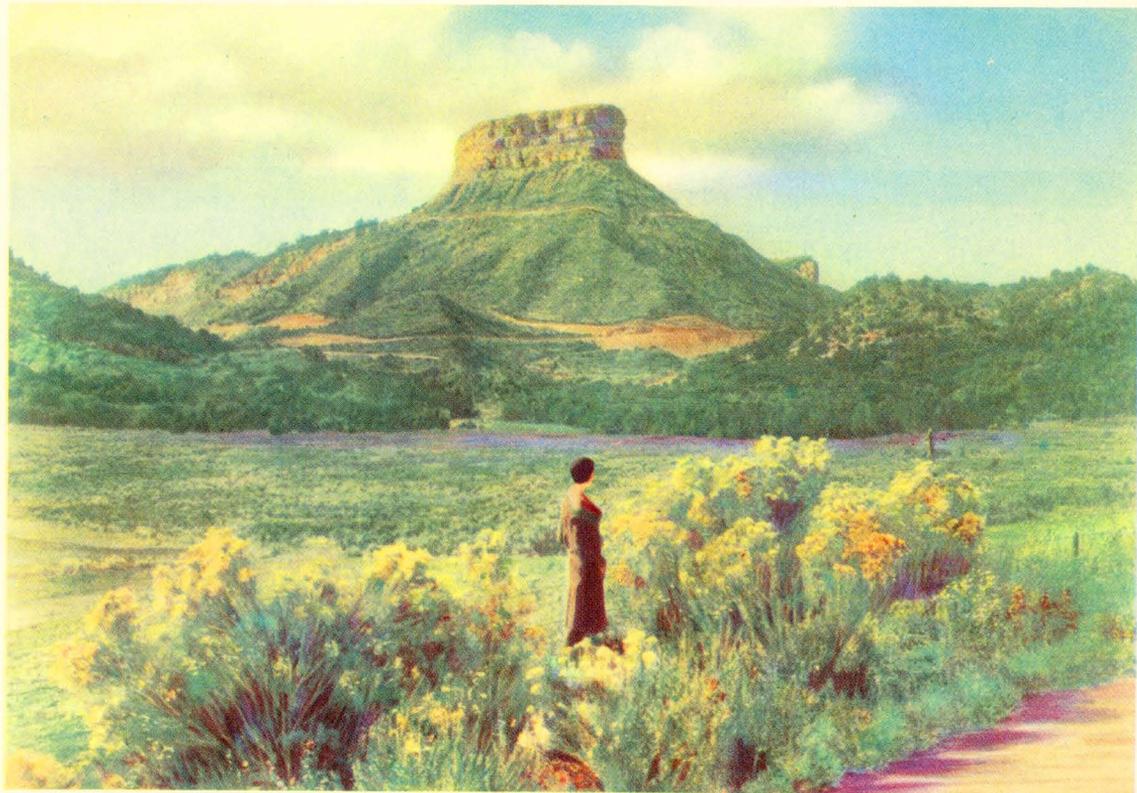
Basketry or wicker ware was common. Wood served many purposes.

Long pointed rods made the holes in which corn was planted.

Loops of flexible wood, inserted in the masonry, one on each side of a door or window, held a stout bar to fasten the door stone or window stone. Fires were kindled by the fire drill, with its small pointed stone attached with fibre to the end of a stick, and by the fire stick.

Sharpened bones of birds and small mammals were awls, bodkins, borers and pins.





Narrow yucca leaves made sandals. Yucca cords, attached to heel and toe of the sandal, secured it to the foot. Flat stones were the lasts.

Long clay pipes tell us the men smoked.¹ In Pipe Shrine House, eleven pipes, with small clay bowls and jars, were found on the altar in the kiva.

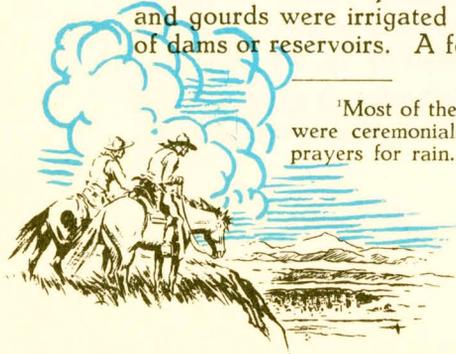
They "played marbles" by flipping pebbles into small holes pecked on flat surfaced sandstone. In the kivas, stone balls were rolled or dropped into deep pits and grooves in what might be called America's first golf.

Many toy dishes of baked clay tell us that the little ones played, like the children of today, at housekeeping.

Turquoise ear pendants, jet beads, polished discs of jet skilfully inlaid with turquoise, and other ornaments show fondness for jewelry.

On the Mesa top little farms growing corn, squash, pumpkins, beans and gourds were irrigated by rain and snow water stored in a succession of dams or reservoirs. A few miles from Spruce Tree camp are 200 dams.

¹Most of the clay and stone pipes found are "cloud-blowers," as they were ceremonially used to blow smoke in imitation of rain clouds, in prayers for rain.



The women baked the he'we or "paper bread." A large flat stone was heated over the fire. When this was hot, it was greased with animal skin. The hand was dipped into a bowl containing a thin batter of corn meal and the palm quickly passed over the stone. Almost simultaneously, the other hand lifted off the paper-thin cake.

The Cliff Dweller had advanced to a symbol or sign writing, painting in the kivas and on walls, and with hard, sharpened rocks pecking on the cliffs animal, bird and human figures. The first American-made map is on a flat sandstone slab, near Spring House. In pictographs, trails, landmarks and distances are indicated.

That caste or social distinction, was observed is evidenced by the disposal of the dead. The chiefs, or priests, were buried under the floors of dwelling rooms, and the floors sealed. There is abundant evidence of cremation in the caves at the rear of the houses and at the farms. The bodies were first dried. Handsome mortuary jars are found with the ashes in deep stone enclosures, at the farms. These jars contained food offerings, evidence of belief in a future life.

No one can visit the Mesa Verde and fail to be charged with the immensity of the drama spread before him. Every broken bit of pottery, every wide and gorgeously colored vista, every dark corner of a Cliff Dwelling, every word uttered by the guides, all the strange exotic antiquities, the every day tools and dishes and toys left by the Vanished, the imprints of fingers in the plaster of the walls, seem to bring us closer to the "Little People." Out of the mist of the past they seem to be just around the corner, coming back.

The mystery and sublimity enthrall, and we are reluctant to leave.

Come to this enchanted land and see it—feel it!

Twenty-six great canons, wild and gloomy gorges, claw open the Mesa Verde, and in many of these, high in the sheer cliffs, are pocketed pueblos, settlements of the vanished people. Here awaits you an unforgettable adventure that only the Mesa Verde offers—a romance of travel, with all the thrill of discovery.



ACCOMMODATIONS

Mesa Verde Motor Tour

In 1906, Congress set aside 48,966 acres in the extreme southwestern corner of Colorado¹ and created the only National Park for the preservation of antiquities. Mesa Verde National Park holds the most beautiful, impressive and best preserved of all American prehistoric ruins.

It is reached directly by one of the scenic motor tours of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad. Your railroad tickets permit a stopover at Grand Junction, on the main line, to make this memorable trip. The Park may be reached also by branch lines to Montrose, Ouray and Durango, and a shorter motor trip from any of these points.

The lines of the Denver & Rio Grande Western cover some of the most magnificent scenery in the Rocky Mountains, including the Royal Gorge, with its new highway suspension bridge—spanning the tracks of the railroad more than a thousand feet above the turbulent Arkansas River—Pikes Peak, Manitou and the Garden of the Gods, reached from Colorado Springs.

The motor trip to the Mesa Verde National Park is along the Chief Ouray highway, through the Uncompahgre Valley, noted for irrigated farms and picturesque mountains, and the famous mining communities of Ouray and Silverton, thence by way of Durango to Mancos, the nearest town to the Park.

Government headquarters, with its nearby hotel and camping grounds for motorists, in an air line would be but ten miles from Mancos. By the excellent government roads, the distance is necessarily thirty miles, as the contour of the Mesa must be followed to take advantage of easy grades.

At Spruce Tree Camp, Park headquarters, the museum and buildings follow the ancient Pueblo architecture. These stone structures enshrine a new charm springing from an old art. Each piece of furniture was fashioned by hand, wooden pegs being used instead of nails.

Chairs, tables, cabinets, speak of the Spanish period, of brown casked, sandalled missionaries, of steel-clad Conquistadores and of the seven legendary cities of Cebolla, in search of which the Spanish entered the Southwest in 1540.

The Park superintendent and his large and well informed corps of guides will help you to see and know the beauties and the stories of America's greatest mystery.

Since the wild game is protected, the fauna is practically the same as when hunted by the Cliff Dwellers. Rabbits, chipmunks, squirrels, weasels, bobcats, porcupine, deer, coyotes, bear, and mountain lions add to the wildness of the Mesa and its atmosphere of unspoiled wilderness. Three bands of wild horses roam the forested gorges. There are many birds, from the spinning circle of gold that is the humming bird, to the eagles.

Mesa Verde, 15 miles long, 8 miles wide, at its highest point is 8,575 feet above sea level.

¹This is the only "four corners" in the United States. The four states of Colorado, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico converge there, as will be seen from the map on a following page.





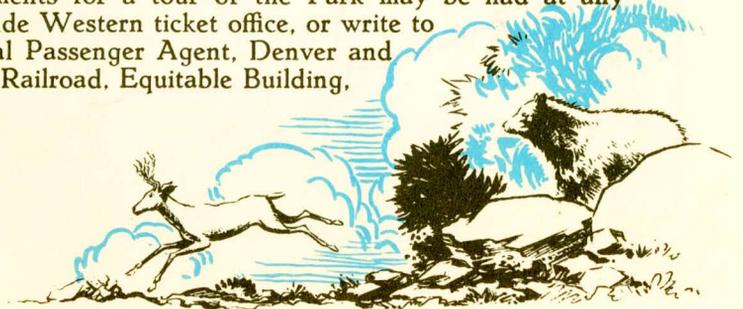
Clothing should be brought which will permit "roughing it" in and around the ruins and the rocks and cliffs of the Mesa Verde. Sports wear for the women, knickers for the men and coveralls for the children are suited for comfort and the necessary freedom for climbing and enjoyment of the outing.

Saddle horses and pack animals are available at the Park for riding or more extended expeditions into the wild country surrounding the Mesa Verde. Camp equipment may be rented and a registered guide employed for such a variation of the trip.

The camp accommodations include tents or cottages at Spruce Tree. The American Plan is followed and meals are served in a central dining room. Lunches for parties making all-day excursions may be obtained. Special fares and rates are provided for children.

Mesa Verde National Park opens May 15 and closes October 15.

Detailed arrangements for a tour of the Park may be had at any Denver and Rio Grande Western ticket office, or write to H. I. Scofield, General Passenger Agent, Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad, Equitable Building, Denver, Colorado.



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