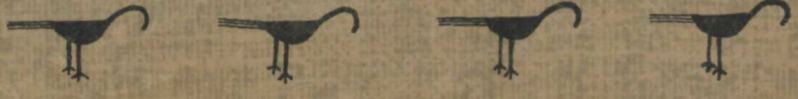
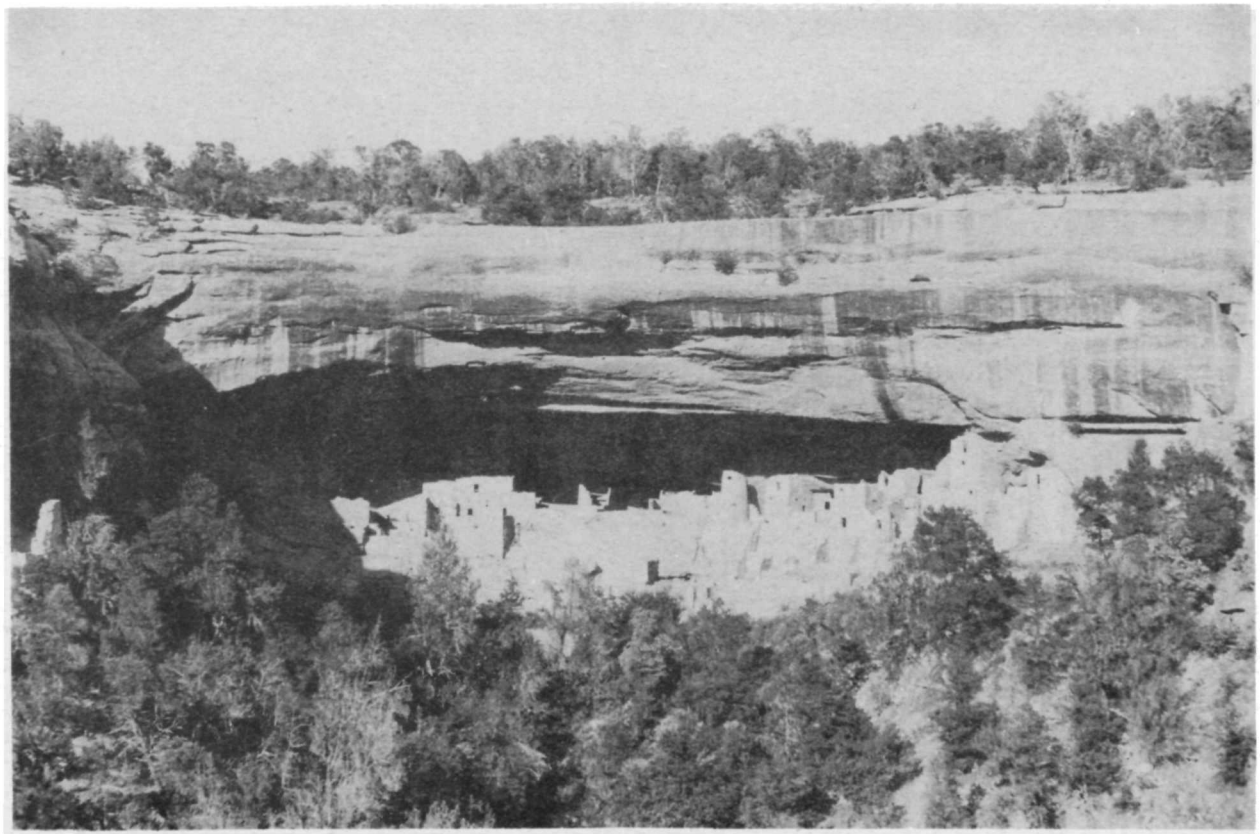
CLIFF PALACE

The Story of an Ancient City

Don Watson





Cliff Palace, the greatest known cliff dwelling

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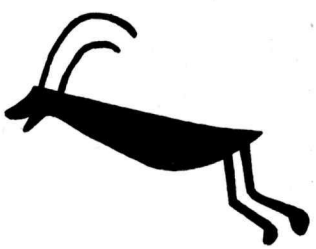

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Cliff Palace

Under the arching roof of a tremendous cave stands a silent, empty city.

For almost seven centuries it has stood there looking out across the canyon toward the setting sun. Proudly, almost haughtily, it has resisted the heavy tread of those slow centuries. Like a giant with a shawl of everlasting stone pulled closely about its shoulders it has stood with unbowed head, an eternal monument to the intelligence and industry of its builders.

Almost seven centuries ago they turned their backs on their proud city and walked away. All of the forces of nature seemed to be against them. The rains failed to fall, the springs ceased to flow. No corn grew in the fields. At last, weak from lack of food and water, and bewildered by the failure of the gods to answer their hysterical prayers, they surrendered to the inevitable. Sadly they turned their backs on the once happy city and walked down the canyon, never to return.

Cliff Palace, the crowning glory of the Cliff Dwellers, was a silent, deserted city.

In spite of the protection offered by the cave roof that shelters the entire city Cliff Palace has suffered somewhat from the leveling forces of time. The owls and the pack rats have been careless tenants and the lack of repair is evident. Some of the walls have cracked; a few have fallen. Foundations have slipped; roofs have disappeared. The once-bright plaster is peeling from the walls.

These minor changes have failed to dim the glory of the largest of all cliff dwellings. From one end of the cave to the other stand unbroken lines of

houses. Story upon story they rise to the very roof of the cave itself. On a still higher ledge, far up under the cave roof, stands a long row of storage bins where the Cliff Dwellers once stored their abundant supplies of grain. In some of the houses paintings are still bright on the walls; in others the footprints of the Cliff Dwellers are still clearly evident in the hard-packed clay floors. At each end of the cave is the trail that once led to the corn fields on the mesa top; below the cave is the trail that led to the bottom of the canyon.

In reality Cliff Palace has not changed a great deal since that day when its inhabitants disappeared. They walked away, it is true, but they are still there. You can see them if you close your eyes.

Unfortunate indeed, is he who views this ancient city and sees only the towering walls. Unfortunate because the stones are the least important part. Cliff Palace is really built of the hopes and desires, the loves and hates, the joys and sorrows of an industrious people. It is not a cold empty city for it is still warm with the emotions of its builders. In each finger print and tool mark lie the prayers of a young couple for a stable home filled with children and happiness. Each storage bin is chinked with a farmer's prayers for a bountiful harvest. In each plastered kiva wall is the reverence of an ancient priest for his gods. A pot is not just a piece of baked clay; it is an ancient potter's moulded prayer for beauty and strength. Each solid wall is a testimony of success; each broken jar, each shattered human bone is an admission of defeat.

Cliff Palace is a human document. The story of the Cliff Dwellers is written there just as accurately as it could be written with a pen. We will approach it now by a long and devious route in order to see all of the steps that caused it to be built. And when we finally enter the great cliff dwelling, remember--don't look at the walls! Notice the people--they are Cliff Palace!

II

Discovery

After Cliff Palace was deserted by the Cliff Dwellers late in the thirteenth century it stood, unmolested by man, for many hundreds of years. The owls and pack rats took it over and enjoyed its security, but from all evidences it was many centuries before men again entered the cave.

The Cliff Dwellers themselves may have intended to return when conditions became normal again but they never came back. There is no evidence that farming Indians ever lived in the Mesa Verde after its desertion by the ancient people. Other Indians came but they were hunters and they seem to have shunned the silent cave cities.

A couple of centuries after Cliff Palace was deserted an important event took place, an event that was to have a strange effect on it at a later date.

America was rediscovered!

Fifteen thousand years after the Indians discovered the continent from the west, white men entered it from the east. A new people blundered into the western hemisphere that had so long belonged to the Indians.

The newcomers were a greedy lot and they began to stretch acquisitive fingers in all directions. Mexico was colonized and tales of wealth among the Indians to the north led the Spaniards into the Southwest. In 1540 Coronado was only one hundred twenty miles from Cliff Palace but he turned away. Other Spaniards came nearer and nearer until at last, in the year 1776, the first white man saw the Mesa Verde.

On August 10, 1776, only thirty-seven days after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Escalante, a Spanish priest, camped in the very shadow

of the Mesa Verde. While the American colonists were fighting for their freedom Escalante was braving the wilderness of the Southwest to gain lands for Spain and converts for the church. It seems almost incredible that at a time when the colonists along the Atlantic seaboard knew nothing of the vast wilderness beyond the first range of mountains, Escalante and his men were here in the land of the Cliff Dwellers. From their native Spain they had sailed to Mexico. From Mexico City they had trudged through the burning deserts, ever northward. At last, on August 10, 1776, they camped by a little stream in the Mancos Valley, only twenty miles from Cliff Palace.

In his diary Escalante wrote:

"10th day of August. Father Fray Francisco Atanasio awoke with a severe attack of rheumatism, which he had begun to feel the day before in his face and head, and it was necessary to remain here until he was relieved. The continued rain and dampness of the place, however, obliged us to leave. Going north a little more than half a league we turned northeast. A league farther on we turned to the west, through beautiful mountain glens, full of verdure, roses and other flowers. Two leagues farther on it began to rain copiously, which caused Father Atanasio to become much worse, and also made the road impassable. We passed on two leagues farther west, but were obliged to stop by the first of two small streams which make up the San Lazaro, otherwise called Las Mancos. The pasturage continues to be abundant.

Today, four and a half leagues."

The small stream beside which Escalante camped that night is still called the Mancos. Only a few miles below his camping place it cuts directly into the Mesa Verde. The Cliff Dwellers had known it well. It had failed them during the great drouth. And now, on August 10, 1776, exactly 500 years after the beginning of that drouth which had caused the Cliff Dwellers to leave the Mesa Verde; Escalante, a man of a new race, camped beside the Mancos, only twenty miles from Cliff Palace.

He saw the great mesa, the Mesa Verde, without a doubt, for it looms high above the Mancos Valley. But he turned away; he was seeking the sea to the west.

During the following century many other Spaniards must have seen the Mesa Verde for there was much exploration in the region. Sometime during this period the mesa was given a Spanish name--Mesa Verde--the "green table." The Spaniard who named it is unknown. Possibly he named it after climbing to its summit for from the valley below it is not so evident that the top is flat and eternally green. Could it be that he even saw the cliff dwellings and we have failed to find the record in the musty archives of Mexico or Spain? No, probably not. We must consider that Cliff Palace and the other cliff dwellings were still unseen by modern man.

In 1848 Cliff Palace, although still unknown, passed from Spanish to American ownership. Slowly the new owners drew nearer. The date of discovery of the now aged cliff dwelling was close at hand.

The first known mention of the Mesa Verde was made in the year 1859. In that year an exploring expedition set out from Santa Fe, under the leadership of Captain J. N. Macomb, to explore certain territory in what is now the state of Utah. Serving as geologist for this expedition wás Professor J. S. Newberry and in his geological report he wrote:

"Between the Rio de la Plata and the Rio de las Mancos we skirted the base of the extreme southern point of the Sierra de la Plata. These mountains terminate southward in a long slope, which falls down to a level of about 7500 feet above the sea, forming a plateau which extends southward to the San Juan, the Mesa Verde, to which I shall soon have occasion again to refer."

Farther on in his report he adds:

"To obtain a just conception of the enormous denudation which the Colorado Plateau has suffered, no better point of view could possibly be selected than that of the summit of the Mesa Verde. The geologist

here has, it seems to me, satisfactory proof of the proposition I have before made..."

From the manner in which he spoke of the Mesa Verde it is very evident Professor Newberry voiced a name that was in common usage. This was true also of all the rivers and mountains mentioned in his report. Their names indicate the Spaniards had done a very thorough job of christening the landmarks of the region.

From Newberry's report it is also evident that he climbed to the summit of the Mesa Verde. His description indicates he must have scaled one of the high points along the northern rim, possibly Park Point, the highest of all. He merely climbed to the summit, feasted his geological eyes on the thrilling view over 16,000 square miles of wilderness, and descended. He was only a few miles from Cliff Palace and scores of other ruins but he failed to suspect their presence. He does deserve credit, however, for the first known mention of the Mesa Verde and for the earliest modern ascent to its summit.

The first American settlers entered the Mesa Verde region about 1870. Miners, farmers, trappers, cattlemen, even bandits, came pouring into the Mancos Valley and found it to their liking. None of them had ever heard of or would have been interested in the ruins. To them the past was dead and forgotten; they were looking ahead. They were interested only in taming the wilderness and in keeping their scalps firmly attached to their heads.

At that time the entire region was terrorized by the Ute Indians. Naturally a war-like group they were goaded into a frenzy by the loss of their hunting grounds. They made life miserable for the whites. Adventurous miners and trappers were slain; farming settlements lived in constant fear of the merciless warriors. The situation became acute and soldiers were finally sent in to hold the Utes in check.

To the settlers the Indians were simple hazards to be expected in the conquest of the wilderness. They were merely to be brushed aside. If they resented the

brushing process; if they showed a tendency to resist the loss of their ancient tribal homes it was very unfortunate--for the Indians. The persuasive little leaden pellets of the settlers convinced one Ute after another that it was wrong to resent the loss of homes and hunting grounds. The remnants of the tribe sought refuge in natural strongholds, especially in strongholds where there was nothing desired by the whites.

One of these natural strongholds was the Mesa Verde. Its warm lower canyons had long been the winter home of bands of Utes and they were familiar with every nook and cranny in it. The deep narrow canyons and high mesas offered sanctuary to the oppressed Indians. The settlers in the Mancos Valley respected this wilderness stronghold and it remained a place of mystery to them. From the time of Professor Newberry's climb to the summit in 1859, we have no definite record of white men entering the Mesa Verde until 1874.

In that year a small party of explorers ventured into the forbidding canyons of the great mesa. The young government far off to the east was endeavoring to learn the extent and nature of its newly acquired possessions in the far west. Small surveying parties were being sent into all parts of the vast unknown land. One of these parties drifted down from the north and entered the Mesa Verde region in the year 1874. In charge of the party was Mr. W. H. Jackson, photographer for the U. S. Geological Survey. Jackson and his men were not interested in the Mesa Verde, in fact they had no knowledge of its existence until men whom they encountered in some of the mining camps began to tell of a great tableland filled with mysterious ruins.

Jackson was intrigued and although he had little faith in the strange rumors he decided to explore the Mesa Verde. His guide on the expedition was a garrulous miner named John Moss, who claimed to have first-hand knowledge of the ruins. This chapter in the story of the Mesa Verde is extremely vague. There is no doubt that before the time of Jackson's expedition some of the settlers knew of the Mesa Verde ruins. How

much they knew is uncertain. Some of the early prospectors or hunters may actually have seen them. The Mancos Canyon afforded a natural avenue for travel through the Mesa Verde and in spite of the Ute danger the intrepid adventurers may have used it occasionally. If they did they could hardly have failed to see the cliff dwellings that clung to the faces of the cliffs a thousand feet above the river.

On the other hand, knowledge of the Mesa Verde ruins may have come from the Indians. In a little while we will see a friendly Ute Indian giving the white men their first knowledge of Cliff Palace. Perhaps John Moss and the other miners heard of the existence of the ruins from friendly Utes or Navahos.

At any rate, John Moss knew that there were ruins in the Mesa Verde and in September 1874, he led Jackson into the Mancos Canyon. One night they camped on the banks of the river in the heart of the Mesa Verde. A century earlier Escalante had camped a few miles farther up the same stream. Six centuries earlier Cliff Dweller maidens had filled their water jars from it.

No cliff dwellings had been seen and the men were beginning to lose faith in the stories of their guide. As dusk was settling over the canyon the men stood about their campfire.

"Moss," one of the men questioned, "where are those ruins that you have been telling us about?"

"Right up there," Moss replied, with a swing of his arm that took in the whole out-of-doors.

Unimpressed the men stepped away from the campfire and began to scan the cliffs above. In the bottom of the canyon they stood in the gathering shadows of twilight but far above the cliffs were lighted by the last dying embers of the setting sun. Suddenly the men saw what John Moss had not even suspected when he had said, "Right up there."

In the topmost cliff was a cave. In it, standing out in bold relief against the shadowy background, were small stone houses. There was a ruin "up there."

In spite of the growing darkness the men scrambled up the canyon walls. Just as total darkness fell two of them entered the little cliff dwelling. It was the earliest known discovery of a Mesa Verde cliff dwelling by white men.

The next morning Jackson and his men returned to the ruin and photographed it. Two-Story House, they named it because of a splendidly-built two-story structure it contained. Excitedly they climbed about the small village, poking into every dark corner. In the debris of the cluttered rooms they found things that aided them in their wild speculations about the vanished people; pottery, corn cobs, stone tools--the Mesa Verde was beginning to give up its secrets.

Today Two-Story House still clings to the face of its cliff. It has changed little since Jackson saw it three-score years ago. Not a dozen men have entered it since that fatal day when the Cliff Dwellers left it behind.

Long ago the people of Two-Story House were neighbors of the people of Cliff Palace, the great cliff dwelling toward which we are moving. To them it must have been a metropolis, a great city, the largest they ever knew. It took only an hour for them to trot up the canyon to the larger community. Often the men of the little village must have slung their prized possessions over their shoulders and set out for Cliff Palace on trading and gambling expeditions. It was "big town" to them.

When Jackson was at Two-Story House he was very near Cliff Palace but he did not see the larger ruin. If he had gone only four miles up the nearest side canyon he would have found the amazing structure. But he was satisfied with the discovery of Two-Story House and other small ruins and a narrowly-averted clash with a band of Utes sent him scuttling down the Mancos Canyon and out of the Mesa Verde to safety. Cliff Palace was still unknown but the threat of discovery was coming nearer.

One of the early settlers in the Mancos Valley

was Mr. Ben Wetherill, a rancher. In the eighties he and his five sons were living on a large ranch at the foot of the Mesa Verde. It was a typical pioneer family but in one respect the Wetherills were very different from their neighbors. Throughout all of their years of residence in the valley they had been friendly with the Utes. Instead of persecuting them as so many of the settlers did, they befriended the helpless Indians who were rapidly losing the lands they regarded as their own. Indians were welcome at the Wetherill ranch and the bonds of friendship grew strong.

As a result of this friendship the Wetherills began to run their cattle in the Mesa Verde! At last white men were welcome in the vast stronghold of the Utes. Deeper and deeper they penetrated into the network of canyons.

As they worked with their cattle the Wetherills began to notice tiny houses standing in caves on the faces of the cliffs. They even climbed to them and as they explored the little villages their interest and curiosity mounted. The houses were merely small stone rooms, evidently built in the caves for security. In the houses the boys found things the ancient inhabitants had left behind, even the remains of the people themselves. They speculated on the origin of their finds but there seemed to be no answers. The objects found had no actual value so they spent little time in the ancient buildings. Their cattle could not be neglected for the tiny, valueless houses in the cliffs.

An interesting tale came to the Wetherill brothers' ears when they became acquainted with a Ute Indian named Acowitz. In some of the canyons, he told them, were cliff dwellings that were very large. When he showed them how large they were the boys smiled for they knew he was lying. Acowitz talked on. There was one cliff dwelling that was the largest of all. When he showed them how large it was and how many rooms it contained they were quite sure he could not be believed. No cliff dwelling could be so large.

Acowitz persisted in his claims. Time after time he told the Wetherills of the ruin that was the

largest in the Mesa Verde. Dubious but interested the boys began to watch the cliffs whenever their search for cattle took them into new canyons.

At last Al Wetherill thought he saw it.

He was following the bottom of a canyon in which none of the boys had ever been. Far above, in the highest cliff, he saw the arched roof of an enormous cave. Through the tops of the trees Al thought he saw houses; he could not be sure. Anxious to reach camp before darkness came he did not climb up to investigate. The boys began to consider the claims of Acowitz with less doubt. The cave seemed to exist; perhaps it did contain the largest cliff dwelling of all.

The following winter two of the Wetherill brothers, Richard and Alfred, and their brother-in-law, Charlie Mason, were again in the Mesa Verde with their cattle. Day after day they watched them, often riding the high mesa trails in search of strays. As they rode they remembered the story of Acowitz and the cave Al had seen. Before the winter was over they intended to find it.

One snowy December day in 1888, Richard Wetherill and Charlie Mason pulled their horses up out of the Mancos Canyon and began to follow the trail of some stray cattle northward across the mesa top. Snow lay deep on the ground. Soft flakes filled the air. Silently the two forced their way through the heavy growth of pinon and juniper trees. Only the thud of the horses' feet and the creak of saddle leather broke the silence. Near the edge of a canyon the growth thinned out and they finally rode out into the open.

"My God, Charlie, look at that!" cried Richard, pointing across the canyon.

In the opposite wall was a tremendous cave. Filling it from one end to the other, and rising even to its vaulted roof, was a silent city of stone. No snow fell on the ancient city. No storm had touched it through all the centuries. It seemed as eternal as the ageless cliff that protected it.

Framed by the magnificant cave, a thin veil of snowflakes drawn across its face, the silent city cast a spell over the two cowboys. In all that vast wilderness there was no sound but the soft hiss of the snowflakes and the throbbing of the boys' hearts. Speechless they sat in their saddles.

At last one of the horses stirred and the spell was broken.

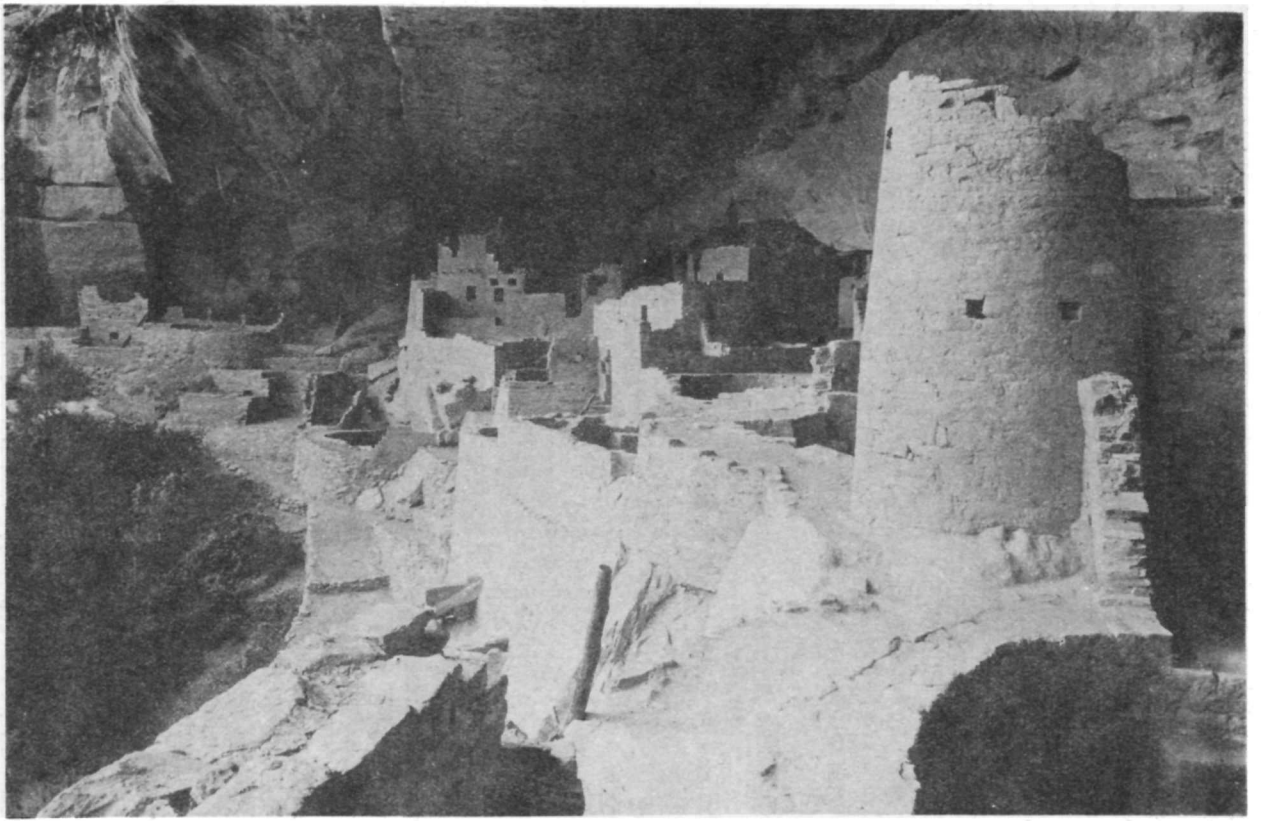
In later years Charlie Mason told of the discovery.

"We had heard of Cliff Palace before we saw it. A Ute Indian, named Acowitz, had told us about it and we had always hoped to find it. The Utes were afraid of the ruins and didn't go into them because of the spirits of the old people they believed were there. If we wanted to keep the Utes out of camp we just put a skull on a stick and they wouldn't come near."

As the first flush of discovery passed the two boys began to search for a way to enter the ruin. Riding around the heads of two small canyons they were soon above their goal. An ancient trail led down the cliffs. Breathless with excitement they walked into the cave.

Once again the great cliff dwelling knew the touch of man. Six centuries after the despairing Indians deserted their home, two flushed, happy men walked into it. A new era had dawned, one that would see strange happenings in the Mesa Verde.

Excitedly the two cowboys began to scramble about the ruin, prying into every corner, appraising the many strange things they found. Acowitz had been right; it was tremendous. They could never hope to find another ruin as large. Throughout its entire length the cave was full of houses, simple stone rooms with small, high doorways and few windows. Here and there among the houses were mysterious circular, subterranean rooms that the boys could not understand. At the south end of the cave was a four-story structure that touched the cave roof; in the third-story room was a beautiful painting in red and white. At the north



Cliff Palace, looking toward the north end of the city

end a terraced structure also rose to the cave roof; in it was some of the best masonry in the entire cave. On an upper ledge at the back of the cave was a long row of smaller rooms. In them the boys found corn cobs, tassels and shucks. Under flat rocks where rats had not found them were a few grains of corn and some brown beans. Instantly the boys knew the ancient people had been farmers.

In the center of the cave was a graceful round tower. Every stone in it was carefully rounded to fit the curve of the wall and the entire tower tapered uniformly toward the top. In the tower was the most perfect stone axe the boys ever found. But the use of the tower puzzled them.

The ruin was in a sad state of repair. Roofs had fallen; walls had partially crumbled. Courts and passageways were choked with fallen stones, adobe mortar and broken roof beams. Rat nests filled the darker corners and a mantle of dust and cobwebs lay over all. Out of this jumble the once-proud city raised an unbowed head. Only minor parts had fallen. The greater part of it remained as the Cliff Dwellers had left it. The crumbled parts spoke of age and the forces of decay; the unbroken walls gave mute evidence of the skill of a vanished people.

After several hours of exploring the ruin the two cowboys started back to their camp. On the way another amazing ruin was discovered, the ruin now known as Spruce Tree House. The next morning Square Tower House was found and the boys began to realize what an important discovery they had made. Unsuspectingly they had found the evidences of a vanished race of men. Surely the ruins and the ancient cultures they represented must form an important chapter in the story of mankind. Flushed with excitement they hurried back to Mancos to tell of their discovery.

Upon hearing of the amazing discoveries John Wetherill decided to investigate for himself. With three companions he made his way to Cliff Palace. Near the south end of the ruin, just back of the painted tower, one of the subterranean rooms was in perfect

condition except that the roof was missing. After cleaning it out carefully the boys stretched a canvas over it and the room served as their home for a month.

It was a strange use for the ancient room. Six hundred years earlier it had been a sacred ceremonial room, a kiva, where reverent priests had conducted their ceremonies. Now it was merely a living place for men of a different race. The cowboys built their fire in the same firepit where the priests had built theirs centuries earlier. They stored their food and possessions on the same ledges where the priests had kept their sacred, ceremonial things. They slept on the floor, exactly where the tired priests had slept during their long ceremonies. The boys had no knowledge that they were profaning a place of worship. It was not until many years later that they learned they had lived in a kiva, one of the ceremonial rooms of the Cliff Dwellers.

During the month they spent in the ruin John Wetherill and his three friends searched endlessly for the things they knew were buried under the debris. In the houses, under the dust and fallen roofs, they found the utensils and tools the women had once used. In the kivas they found the ceremonial paraphernalia and tools of the men. Everywhere were the objects that had been used in the daily life of the Cliff Dwellers. It became evident that the ancient people had deserted their homes, leaving in them the things they were unable to carry. Perhaps they had intended to return and had left most of their possessions behind.

Far back in the cave where there were no buildings the most exciting discovery was made. In this part of the cave the roof was too low for houses so the Cliff Dwellers had used it for a trash room and as a roost for their flocks of domesticated turkeys.

As the cowboys dug through the accumulated trash they suddenly found themselves face-to-face with the Cliff Dwellers. For some strange reason fourteen bodies had been buried there in the trash. Natural processes had mummified them so perfectly that in some the normal expression of the faces seemed to be

preserved. It was a thrilling discovery for there, except for two things, were the Cliff Dwellers. In only two ways did the mummies differ from the cowboys themselves. Only the moisture and the spark of life were missing. If they could have restored those two things the boys would have found themselves confronted with the actual builders of the ruin they were exploring. They speculated wildly on what the ancients would say if life were restored to them.

Centuries earlier sorrowing relatives had buried them there in the back of the cave. The dry earth and trash had drawn the moisture slowly from the flesh until only the bones and dried tissues remained. Nothing was missing except the spark of life and the moisture. Everything else was in place; the bones, the flesh, the skin, the eyes, the internal organs; all were there, only very, very dry. Long hair still hung about the shoulders of the mummies and in it were the mummies of ancient lice that had once formed a happy population.

John Wetherill found fourteen mummies in Cliff Palace. It was a fitting climax to his first venture in archeology. Of the five Wetherill brothers, John was the one who developed the greatest interest in the ancient cultures. For many years after his work in Cliff Palace he was actively engaged in exploring the Mesa Verde and making its features known to the world.

It was a strange month the cowboys spent in Cliff Palace in that winter of 1888-89. In the midst of a silent, snow-covered wilderness they lived in and explored an ancient city that was unknown to the civilized world. Centuries earlier it had sheltered the Indians. Now it sheltered the newcomers. Untouched by wind and snow they pried into the secrets of the ancient people.

The name John Wetherill and his three friends chose for the ruin indicates their feelings toward it. As they noted its high walls and towers and the security of its position they remembered the ancient castles and palaces of their childhood storybooks. With this inspiration it is easy to imagine how naturally they

made their choice.

Cliff Palace was the name they gave it, an inspiring name for the greatest structure the Cliff Dwellers ever built. It is not especially appropriate for the great ruin was never a palace. Instead it was a small city, the dwelling place of hundreds of people. But the name was the choice of the men who first explored it and it reflects their feelings toward the ancient structure.

During the years that followed the discovery of Cliff Palace the Wetherill brothers discovered hundreds of other cliff dwellings in the cliffs of the Mesa Verde. They found also that the mesa tops were dotted with additional hundreds of ancient ruins. Realizing the importance of their discoveries they began to make them known. The young pioneer nation showed little interest. It was thinking of the glory that lay ahead. It had scant time for the glories of the past. Years slipped by and the Mesa Verde was unprotected.

The Wetherills took four great collections from the ruins. Luckily these are preserved today in museums in various parts of the country. In 1891, Baron Gustav Nordenskiold, a young Swedish archeologist, excavated in a score of the larger cliff dwellings and took a splendid collection back to his homeland. Soon after his return home Nordenskiold died: is it possible that the curse of the Cliff Dweller medicine men was as potent as the curse of the Pharoahs of Egypt? After Nordenskiold's death the collection was sold to Finland where it rests uneasily today.

Even though it could only be reached by a thirty mile horseback ride the Mesa Verde was visited by a surprising number of people. Some came only to see the ruins but many came to dig and on the return trip the packs often bulged with the things taken from the ruins. Priceless artifacts that had been unmolested so long were thoughtlessly scattered to the four corners of the earth.

As a result of these visits, however, the fame of the Mesa Verde grew and public sentiment finally came to its aid. Because of continued pressure by

interested people the Congress passed the Antiquities Act in 1906, creating Mesa Verde National Park. At last, after six hundred empty years, Cliff Palace and the other ruins were again in the care of men who were interested in their well-being. These men were of a different race and their feelings toward the cliff dwellings were very different from those of the Cliff Dwellers. To the ancient people the cave structure had meant home and security. To the new caretakers the ancient ruins were a milestone in the story of mankind and as such they should be preserved for all time.

Cliff Palace soon felt the effects of the new order for in the spring of 1909 a long-deferred house cleaning began. Dr. Jesse Walter Fewkes, of the Smithsonian Institution, moved into the cave and began a systematic excavation of the ruin. The fallen stones and adobe, the rat nests and the litter of the centuries were carefully removed. Once again the houses, kivas, passageways and courtyards were clean and neat. A small amount of repair work was done to prevent further deterioration. Cracks were filled with adobe mud, weak walls were braced and foundations were strengthened. No effort was made to rebuild the fallen parts and to the casual eye Cliff Palace is as it was when the cowboys found it except that the litter has been cleared away.

As Cliff Palace emerged from its mantle of dust and debris the unusual size of the cave and its ruin became more evident. The cave was over three hundred feet in length and its greatest depth was one hundred feet. At the front the great stone arch was almost one hundred feet above the terraced houses that it sheltered.

Within the cave Dr. Fewkes found over two hundred houses and in the open courts about which they clustered were twenty-three of the subterranean, ceremonial rooms now known as kivas. When Cliff Palace was in its hey-day at least four hundred people must have enjoyed its security.

To modern man Cliff Palace seems only a village. To the Cliff Dwellers of the Mesa Verde it was

much more than that. Located almost in the center of the great mesa was this largest cave of all. In it was the largest structure they ever built. To them it was a metropolis; it was the big town, the hub of their world. In their eyes it was magnified by comparison with the smaller cliff dwellings just as our modern cities are magnified by comparison with smaller towns and villages. To them it was a city, the greatest they ever knew. As an ancient city, then, we shall consider it.

Today Cliff Palace stands as Dr. Fewkes left it thirty years ago. It is not a cold, hollow shell, as one might expect after the long centuries of silence. It is warm and alive, a glorious monument to its ancient builders.

In order to gain a complete understanding of Cliff Palace and its people we will follow a long and devious trail. We will watch the Indians for 15,000 years before we see them move into the great cave and lay the first stone. Then, after the background has been painted, we will move into Cliff Palace and live with the people for a year. Daily contact with the Cliff Dwellers will give us a true picture of the ancient culture.

III

The Background

The story of Cliff Palace really had its beginning many thousands of years ago in a distant land. It began when that first ancient Asiatic stepped across from Siberia and became the First American. Who he was we will never know; exactly when it happened we will never know, but it was the very important first step in a long chain of events that led to the building of our ancient city, Cliff Palace.

There seems to be little doubt that the early inhabitants of North and South America came from Asia by that northern route. It is the only route by which men, traveling without artificial means of transportation, could have reached these western continents. Not a single insurmountable barrier, not a single impossibility lay in the path of those ancient men as they drifted with the line of least resistance. From the northwest America was discovered and populated.

Men first came into being somewhere in the general region of southern Asia or the Near East. From this point of beginning they spread slowly over the face of the earth. In all directions those ancient men traveled, always on foot of course, always without a goal. After a time Europe, Africa and Asia were populated but the Americas remained without men. Surrounded by vast areas of water, except at one point, the Americas were the last great land bodies to be discovered.

Finally the day of discovery arrived. For countless centuries groups of men had been drifting over the great continent of Asia. Farther and farther they traveled until at last a group, perhaps forced on by stronger groups behind, stood on the utmost tip of northeastern Asia, the tip of Siberia now known as the East Cape.

Standing on the shore of the ocean those men

shaded their eyes and looked out across the water. There, only fifty miles away, lay another land. Curiosity, or perhaps the force of "enemy pressure," urged them on. A means of crossing those fifty tantalizing miles was found. At last the first human foot trod American soil.

The story of Cliff Palace began that day. That was the first important step.

At first glance it may seem that the crossing of those fifty miles of water would be impossible for men who were without boats. Such was not the case. In severe winters the Bering Sea freezes over completely. Present-day Eskimos make the crossing on the ice and only a few years ago a white man made the crossing with a dog team. Thus, primitive man needed only a severe winter in order to satisfy his curiosity about the land across the water. The journey was made even less hazardous by two islands, the Diomedes, that raised their heads in the center of the Bering Sea, cutting the crossing into two shorter jumps.

It is even possible that when those men reached that tip of Asia no water separated them from America. A strip of land may have connected the two continents. It is known very definitely that at some not far distant date the two continents were connected by land, for some of our well-known animals have crossed from one to the other. The horse and the camel developed in America and walked off to Asia. The mammoth and the bison reversed the direction and crossed from Asia to America. In order for those beasts to make the crossing a land bridge was necessary.

When the land bridge disappeared is not known. When the first men came is not known. Certain it is, however, that if the land bridge was in existence when the first men came to America it afforded them an easy approach. If, on the other hand, it had disappeared beneath the waves of the Bering Sea the men must have crossed on the ice. No one can as yet be positive as to the exact manner of the crossing. The important point is that the crossing was made. America was discovered and populated. Primitive man, after hundreds

of thousands of years of wandering over the Old World, had at last found the one point at which he could enter a new land.

That this new land was superior to the old soon became apparent to the newcomers. Summers were longer; winters were less severe. Hunting and fishing were excellent and in the summer edible plants were common. Truly, here was a better land.

The first crossing from Asia to America was made many thousands of years ago. From the evidence now at hand fifteen or twenty thousand years seems to be not too great an antiquity for those first Americans. Even at that early date, however, man was fully as well developed mentally and physically as is the modern man. The first American was no primitive brute. He was Homo sapiens, no different from the fifteenth century foreigners who rediscovered America thousands of years later and gradually edged it away from its first settlers.

Primitive human remains, such as those that have been found in the Old World, have never been found in America. Man went through his developmental stages in the Old World and came to America at a late date, a fully developed human being. Pithecanthropus erectus, Sinanthropus, Homo neanderthalensis--America has never known those tongue-twisting lowbrows!

After the first discovery of the new land there were innumerable rediscoveries. One group of men after another came to America and those migrations continued over a period of at least fifteen thousand years. The latest migrants came to America very recently. Thus, America was populated by many successive waves of migration over a long period of time.

It seems, almost, that after the first group came word may have spread from one small tribe to another that off to the east lay a better land. People were disappearing over the eastern horizon. What lay in that direction? Curiosity urged them on!

It is altogether possible that actual word of the new land in the east went back to the Asiatic

continent. Perhaps a small counter migration. Or perhaps some small traveling group, feeling a bond with some other group in the old country, sent emissaries back to beckon them on.

Certain it is that there was not just a single migration. Numerous groups of men filtered into America over a period of thousands of years. Slowly, aimlessly they wandered. One group pushed another and was in turn pushed by an oncoming tribe. After a time, thousands of years certainly, North and South America were covered with hundreds of small tribes of Indians.

The members of these various tribes were not all alike. They differed greatly in appearance, in language, in religion and in mode of living. The answer is apparent. The various groups had come from different parts of Asia. They had come at different times. They had settled in different parts of the New World. They had developed in different ways according to the natural resources in each region. As a result there were slight variations between groups. As a result there came into being the many tribes of American Indians that were in America when Columbus came on his journey of rediscovery from the east.

The early part of the story of the Americas is still hazy. In spite of many years of search by dozens of top-flight archeologists there are many unanswered questions. Each year expeditions sift through the dust of the ages on the trail of those early Americans. More often than not the trail leads to a blank wall. The ancient past of the Indian is still clouded with uncertainty. The lure of the unknown still beckons to those who are endeavoring to trail him back to his Asiatic birthplace.

The great trouble is that for thousands of years the Indians lived a hunting life. They wandered from day to day, living on the natural foods that they found in each day's journey. There was no permanent home, no settled life. The hunter was ever on the trail of his next meal.

Consider the life of the primitive hunter. Each morning he is awakened by the pangs of hunger in

his empty, flapping paunch and he views with dismay his breakfast that is disappearing over the horizon on four strong, swift legs. Rubbing the sleep from his eyes he starts out in pursuit of his breakfast. Failing to catch up with it he starts after his lunch. If it eludes him he begins to work on the next meal--and the next and the next. Always he is one jump behind his food supply. When he makes a kill he gorges and smoothes the wrinkles out of his belly. When he fails he goes hungry.

Being forced to follow the game he is ever on the move. He can have no permanent home, no pottery, nothing that cannot be easily transported on the trail. One night he sleeps under a tree and leaves behind a broken stone knife. The next night he sleeps in a cave ten miles away and discards a worn-out sandal. The third night he builds his campfire beside a lake across the mountain. On and on through the days he moves and finally when the end comes the animals of the wild clean and scatter his bones and they return to the dust from whence they came.

The archeologist may find the stone knife and the discarded sandal. He may even find the long-cold ashes of the campfire. But there is nothing to indicate that all three belonged to the same man. There is not a single bit of evidence that ties them together.

Thus it is with the hunter. His trail is cold; the clews are few. He is the will-o-the-wisp of the human race. He has put many gray hairs in the head of the archeologist.

All of the early inhabitants of North and South America lived a wandering, hunting life. For thousands of years they lived on the chance products, animal and plant, that nature offered. They seldom stayed long in one place; they never built a permanent thing. To date the story of the first ten or fifteen thousand years is far from complete. It can be summed up in a few words.

The men themselves have not been found. Not a single bone has been found that, beyond all doubt, can be said to have belonged to one of those earliest

Americans. The men themselves have eluded us. However, the tools made and used by those men have been found. Even better, they have been found under circumstances that show clearly the antiquity of man in America.

A few thousand years ago there were elephants in America. The mammoth was here as well as his terrifying near-relative, the mastodon. There were horses in various parts of the country and a strange, lumbering animal, the ground sloth, was common. Tremendous bison with long sweeping horns wallowed in the bogs and camels roamed the plains.

Modern man has never seen those animals in America. They were gone long before he came. They had been extinct thousands of years before the first Europeans poked their tardy noses into the New World.

In spite of this we know that the early Indians did see them. They hunted them. They lived on their flesh. They may have been a contributing factor in the extinction of some of those ancient species. Changing weather conditions thinned out the great herds and man, not yet conservation conscious, helped to wipe out the survivors.

How do we know!

In several dozen places the implements of those early men have been found in direct association with the bones of the extinct animals. The inference is unquestionable. Dart points, knives, scrapers and other implements have been found so definitely associated with the bones of the animals that there can be no doubt that man and the animals existed at the same time. If those animals have been extinct for thousand of years it dates the earliest men fairly definitely.

One of the most important finds was made in northeastern New Mexico, near the little town of Folsom. This find was important because it was here for the first time that modern scientists were forced to admit that man had been in America a long, long time. It is also important because it has given a name to the ancient men. Folsom Man, the most elusive American we

have yet been unable to find!

At the Folsom site, in the late nineteen twenties, were found the bones of thirty large bison. The bones were fourteen feet under surface of the earth. All evidence indicated that a few thousand years ago this had been a swampy, boggy place, a bison wallow. Primitive hunters crept up on the drowsing animals and sometimes made a kill. They skinned the bison, cut off what meat they wanted and left the carcasses to rot in the mud. Sometimes they failed to extract all of their dart points from the bodies of the bison. Those points were exactly what the excavators found. Nineteen of them were among the bones, telling a mute but convincing story of the struggle of those ancient men to gain the meat and skins they needed so badly.

The place became known as the Folsom Site. The dart points became the Folsom Points. The men became Folsom Men. Archeologists for the first time nodded their heads at the suggestion that man had been in America ten or fifteen thousand years for it was felt that this particular species of bison had been extinct at least that long.

The evidence was conclusive. The points were so closely associated with the bones that there seemed to be no doubt as to their antiquity. Man, Folsom Man, had actually killed those ancient bison.

With the announcement of this find the search was on. Who would have the honor of first finding the bones of Folsom Man? The question is still being asked. Who will have the honor of first finding the bones of Folsom Man? He still eludes his trackers. No bones have been found that can be considered, without a doubt, to have belonged to him. He is still the Mystery Man of American archeology.

Evidences of him are plentiful. In many parts of the United States the points have been found. But Folsom Man himself still eludes us. The name means little. It is a term that is rather loosely applied to the makers of the beautiful Folsom Points. They are entirely distinctive, perhaps the highest examples of

the flint workers art that have been found in America. Beautifully shaped, delicately chipped points with grooved faces, they can not be confused with any other dart or spear points. They have been found in many places, often associated with the bones of extinct animals. But the actual remains of the men who made them have not been found.

Up in northern Colorado, near the town of Fort Collins, is the Lindenmeier Site. In it were found the bones of the same bison as those of Folsom. With them were the same Folsom Points. With them, also, were stone knives, scrapers, chopping and rubbing stones, as well as the ashes and charcoal from ancient campfires. They were spread over a large area. It was a campsite where Folsom Man had actually lived. Was Folsom Man in camp? No, he had stepped out!

In Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and other states, similar finds have been made. Folsom Points, and other points equally ancient, have been found in association with the bones of many extinct animals, such as the bison, musk ox, mammoth and ground sloth. Everywhere are found the evidences: nowhere is found Folsom Man himself. Not the tiniest bone has been found that is thought to have belonged, definitely, to Folsom Man.

Bones of the extinct animals, being solid and massive, have lasted well. Tools made of stone last indefinitely. Human bones, being thin and delicate, disintegrate more rapidly. There were probably few burials in those days and the human bones were scattered to the four winds. Still the search goes on. Sooner or later the find will be made. In the back of a dry cave, somewhere in the Southwest, probably, will be found some human bones. With them will be some Folsom Points. Then we will know that the points and the bones belonged to the same man--Folsom Man.

Or perhaps, when the human bones are found, a Folsom Point will actually be sticking in one of them. Then we will be sure that we have Folsom Man--or at least, someone whom Folsom Man did not like.

Surprisingly enough, it begins to look as though Folsom Man was not the first settler of America. Evidences of earlier people are being turned up in a number of places. The story is being carried farther and farther into the past by stronger and stronger evidences. No one knows where it will end. Certain it is that America was discovered a great many thousands of years ago. Columbus was a late comer and he came the hard way. The real discoverers of America came the easy way; they just walked over.

All of the early inhabitants of America were hunters and gatherers. They lived on the chance products of nature; wild game, fish, nuts, fruits, roots, everything they encountered in their wanderings that could be utilized. The result is that we know little about them. North and South America were covered at an early date with countless, small, drifting tribes. For many milleniums there was little change.

A short time ago, three thousand years, perhaps, a very important thing happened. Somewhere in Mexico or Central America, or perhaps even in the highlands of South America, the first farmers appeared.

Some ancient Burbank produced corn. Here was the second important step in the story of Cliff Palace!

The origin of corn is still a mystery. Our story seems to be full of them! But botanists are not yet agreed as to how corn came about. Perhaps some tribe developed it directly from some tropical plant. Perhaps they crossed two or more plants and produced it. Or perhaps--

The exact story of the development of corn is not known. We can only say that it appeared and the lives of many Indians changed. Corn spread from one tribe to the next. One group after another found that farming was more dependable than hunting. Farther and farther it spread until large portions of North and South America were covered with farming Indians. More food plants were developed; beans, squash, potatoes, tomatoes, and countless others. Farming was in America

to stay.

The result was amazing. Indians who formerly followed the forest trails year after year now lived settled lives. Villages developed. The population increased. People began to concentrate in the best farming areas.

The Indians were at last on the road to a higher state. They had taken the greatest step on the long climb toward civilization.

IV

Early Inhabitants of the Mesa Verde

After all these devious wanderings we now approach the Mesa Verde. We are ready for the third step in the story of our ancient city.

About 2000 years ago farming Indians first climbed the rugged cliffs that surrounded the Mesa Verde and decided to plant their crops on the level mesa tops. That was the third important step in the story of Cliff Palace.

We have at last, after 15,000 years of wandering, arrived on the scene. Up to this point we have dealt with elusive hunters. We have not yet seen a single Indian; only dim, mysterious shapes sifting through a forest of question marks.

Now we are actually on the Mesa Verde. We are dealing with steady dependable farmers. Soon we shall see thousands of them; actual, living people.

This date is still a little uncertain as it is just beyond our definite dating system. All evidences indicate that agriculture was first practiced on the Mesa Verde just about the beginning of the Christian Era, possibly a little later. Indians had been here before that time but they had been hunters so we have no definite trace of them.

The trail of farmers is easier to follow. They have a dependable food supply. They live in one spot for generations. They build villages and cities and best of all, excellent garbage piles. Nothing delights the archeologist as much as a big pile of trash for every piece is a paragraph in the story of a people. If he can find the things people have used, worn out and discarded the archeologist can reconstruct their lives to an amazing degree. Hunters never pile up their trash but farmers are more obliging. Living for generations in a village they carry it outside and dump

it in one nice big pile. And in those piles of trash, built up layer by layer through successive generations, is the story of the people. The archeologist revels in it; he is probably the only person in the world who is thankful for trash.

Careful excavation of ruins and trash piles of the region has revealed that there were four archeological periods in the early occupation of the Mesa Verde. There were no abrupt breaks between these periods. The culture developed steadily and there was constant progress from a simple beginning until the climax was reached just before they disappeared from the region late in the thirteenth century.

The first two cultural stages are known as the Basket Maker and Modified Basket Maker periods: the last two as the Developmental Pueblo and the Great Pueblo periods. Until recently it was considered that the Basket Makers and the Pubelos were different people but late studies indicate there was little change in the physical type. The people as well as their culture seem to have progressed in an unbroken line.

THE BASKET MAKER PERIOD

The Basket Makers were the earliest farmers in the Mesa Verde region. Their culture was comparatively simple and was featured by excellent weaving, expecially of baskets and bags. Because of this trait they were called "Basket Makers" by the early explorers and the name has stuck.

At the beginning of this period the Basket Makers had an extremely simple culture for they had just turned from hunting to farming. At first they probably farmed only incidentally and regarded it as a sideline. Its possibilities became more and more apparent with each harvest and soon the conditions were reversed. Farming became the main stay and hunting the sideline.

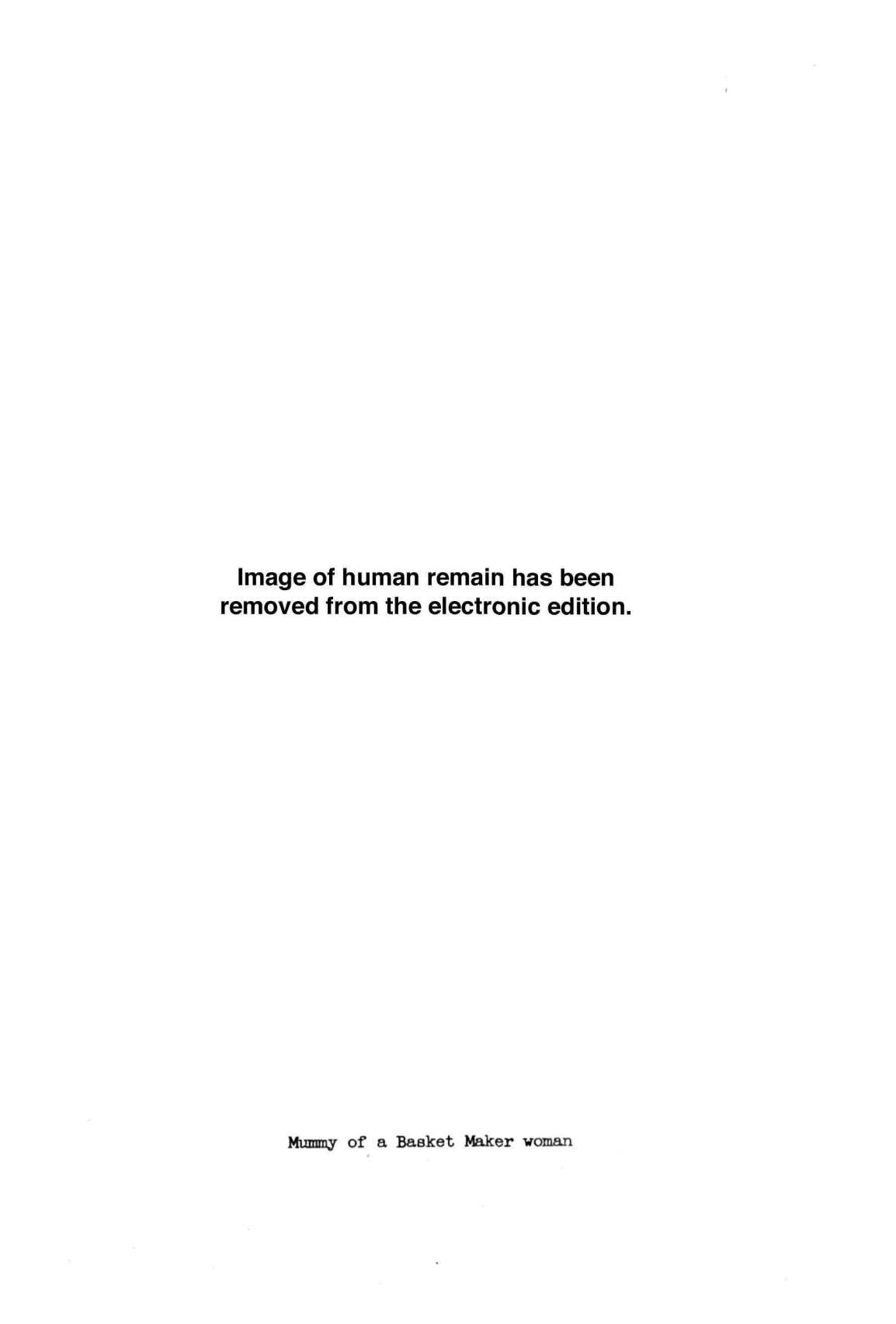
After full realization of the advantages of agriculture came to the people they never returned to a hunting life. Their main dependence was upon their harvests and hunting became secondary in importance.

Our first recognition of these people brings up an interesting problem, as yet unanswered. Were they living in the Mesa Verde as hunters when corn came to them from some other tribe or did they bring corn into the Mesa Verde themselves from some other region where they had already learned to farm? The answer is not known so it will suffice to say that the first evidences of them in the Mesa Verde indicate that they were farmers.

Physically the Basket Makers were an interesting group. A large number of their burials have been found so their physical appearance is not in doubt. They were rather short in stature, the men averaging a little more than five feet, the women a little less. As a general rule they were inclined to be somewhat slender in build. The shape of their heads is noteworthy because the skull is very important in the determination of race. Most of the Basket Makers had long heads. This simply means that the heads were long from front to back but narrow between the ears. There was no deformity such as we will see later in Cliff Palace, no flattening of the back of the skull. It was simply a long, narrow head, beautifully streamlined. The Basket Makers must have zipped across the mesa tops!

The color of the skin varied from light to dark brown and it is safe to say that their eyes were also brown. The hair was black, sometimes rusty black and occasionally was inclined toward a slight waviness. On the mummies that have been found the hair of the women is usually cropped short but on the male mummies very elaborate hair styles are sometimes found. A wide line was often shaved down the center of a man's head and remaining hair was braided into a number of small, neat braids.

If we could have walked through a Basket Maker village we would probably have considered the people rather attractive physically, even when viewed from our standards. They would have seemed short to us but well proportioned. Their features would have been pleasing for there would have been none of the amazing skull deformities that are going to seem unusual to us when we get to Cliff Palace. Occasionally we would have



Mummy of a Basket Maker woman

encountered an individual with a receding forehead and heavy brow and cheek bones but on the average we would have been pleased by the appearance of the Basket Makers. They would have been easy to like.

From a cultural viewpoint the Basket Makers are important because of their lack of certain very important traits. During their early farming stages they had no permanent houses, no pottery, and strangely, they did not use the bow and arrow.

The lack of houses and pottery was perfectly natural for they had only recently been a hunting people. While they lived as hunters they were forced to move about so much in search of game that a permanent dwelling was an impossibility. Pottery was also out of the question for it was too heavy for them to transport as they moved about from day to day. The abscence of the bow was simply due to the fact that it had not yet reached these people. The bow was invented only once. From its point of beginning somewhere in the Old World it spread slowly from tribe to tribe. We will see it reach the Basket Makers at a slightly later date.

All people need shelter, household utensils and weapons, so, lacking houses, pottery and the bow, our Basket Makers used substitutes. As is always the case they were inferior.

Part of the time, probably during the colder seasons, the Basket Makers lived in the caves. These offered shelter from the elements and provided safe dry places for the storage of food. Toward the front of the cave the women built their cooking fires and around them centered most of the activities. In the rear of the cave they constructed storage cists for their corn. Small pits, two or three feet deep and of slightly greater diameter, were dug in the floor of the cave. The pits were lined with thin slabs of sandstone and chinked with bark and mud. Over the pit was placed a roof of poles and packed earth, leaving only a small hatchway that was closed with a thin stone slab. Such cists were secure and dry and served as excellent storage bins for each year's harvest of corn. When the

occupants left the cave for any length of time they could conceal the cists by covering them over with earth and stones so they would not be detected by chance visitors.

Even though all of our evidences of the Basket Makers have come from the caves it is probable that they lived in the open near their fields for at least a part of the year. As farming became more important to them they were faced with the necessity of protecting their crops. Each farm needed to be watched carefully to prevent damage by birds and mammals or even by men of other tribes. Because of this necessity of living in the open near their fields it is probable that they erected temporary shelters as a protection from the sun and rain. A mere framework of poles covered with brush and grass would have sufficed. No trace of such structures has ever been found but there is a very strong feeling that they did exist.

During the colder seasons it is probable that the Basket Makers lived in the caves. When spring came they took their seed corn and moved to the open country, after first concealing their storage cists very carefully. They may have returned to the caves occasionally for corn but for several months they must have lived in the open. At harvest time the corn was carried down to the caves for storage and the people again sought the shelter of the overhanging roofs.

The absence of pottery during the Basket Maker period resulted in a widespread use of baskets for all household purposes. Water was carried and stored in tightly woven baskets and food was cooked in them. Into a basket of food hot stones were dropped. As they cooled they were replaced with more until the cook's fingers were thoroughly burned and her patience was exhausted. Half-cooked "stew-a-la-ashes" was the inevitable result. It was a crude inefficient method and greatly limited the cooking possibilities.

Many of the baskets and woven bags of this period were superb examples of workmanship and design. Skillfully woven, artistically decorated in colors and gracefully shaped they are outstanding among the

basketry of the American Indians.

The lack of the bow and arrow forced the Basket Makers to rely upon an odd weapon, the atlatl, that was as difficult to use as it is to pronounce. It was used in all parts of the world before the bow took its place.

The atlatl was a spear thrower that served as a mechanical lengthener for the arm. It was a slender flattened stick about two feet in length. At one end was the grip, equipped with two leather loops for the fingers. At the opposite end, on the upper face, was a short spur or hook, against which the dart or spear rested.

The dart, either a reed or a slender shaft of wood, was four or five feet long. One end was tipped with a stone point. The other end was feathered and this basal end was cup-shaped to fit against the spur on the atlatl. In reality the dart was merely a very long arrow.

When the hunter was ready to use the atlatl he held it lengthwise in the palm of his hand extending between the first two fingers. These fingers passed through the finger loops, with the other fingers and the thumb curled over the top of the atlatl to give a firm grip. The dart was hooked against the small spur at the rear end of the atlatl and was balanced by the first two fingers of the throwing hand. The arm was drawn back of the shoulder with the atlatl extending out behind horizontally. From this position the arm was thrown sharply forward in a long sweeping arc and the dart was projected from the end of the atlatl. In this way the length of the arm was doubled and great force was imparted to the missile.

Even though the atlatl was a powerful weapon it had certain bad points. The accuracy was very difficult to control and it was not well adapted for use in stalking game. The hunter was forced to stand erect and be free of bushes and trees in order to throw the dart. Later on we will see the Basket Makers discard the atlatl in favor of a superior weapon.

We have seen briefly the outstanding traits of the Basket Maker culture. Summing them up we see a tribe of Indians living in the Mesa Verde region shortly after the beginning of the Christian Era. Formerly hunters, they turned more and more to farming, raising squash and a single variety of red corn on the mesa tops or in open canyon bottoms. Having no permanent houses they sought the shelter of the caves for a considerable part of the year. Pottery was unknown: baskets served for all household purposes. The atlatl, or spear thrower, was used instead of the bow. Physically the people were short, long-headed and essentially non-Mongoloid.

The noteworthy point in the story of these ancient people is that there was constant progress. They were an industrious, intelligent lot, climbing the same trail that all advanced people have followed in their struggle toward civilization. In the early stages the progress was slow but with the acquisition of every new idea the pace quickened.

The great step forward was the abandonment of the chase, the acceptance of a settled farming life. Within a short time they became firmly established agriculturists. Their main dependence for food was soon on their farms and wild animals and plants became a secondary source. However, meat and such natural products as nuts, roots, greens and fruits were always necessary, in addition to the agricultural products, for a balanced diet. In years when the crops failed these natural foods were vitally important. Hunting and gathering, therefore, never ceased, they merely became secondary to farming.

The change to an agricultural life revolutionized the entire culture. As the food changed the religious, social and economic life also changed. The religion of hunters could never suffice for farmers so an entirely new one evolved. New social regulations grew out of the settled existence and the entire outlook on life was different. The men viewed rain and snow, the soil, the sun, frosts and the changing seasons through the eyes of farmers instead of through the eyes of hunters. All events of nature were interpreted according

to their effect upon agriculture. We are at last dealing with true farmers.

Even though progress was slow at first, some startling changes came. About 400 A. D., or possibly as late as 500 A. D., some of the changes were so important that the culture was radically modified. A new descriptive term must now be used in order to indicate these new developments.

THE MODIFIED BASKET MAKER PERIOD

Even though the culture changed the people themselves did not. It is extremely important to keep in mind the fact that the Modified Basket Makers were merely the descendents of the true Basket Makers. The culture was modified but not the people. They added new material things to their culture, thus modifying it, but they themselves changed not one particle.

To state it briefly it can be said that the change of name has been made because the people acquired the things they were mentioned as lacking during the Basket Maker Period. They learned to make pottery, they began to build houses and they adopted the bow and arrow. Thus the true basket making culture disappeared, or rather, we should say it was modified. The weaving of baskets continued but the addition of pottery modified it and this is indicated in the new cultural name.

Since it was the appearance of pottery that made the greatest change in the culture it is considered the most important of the new traits. The new term is applied as soon as pottery came in. Houses appeared at approximately the same time but the bow came a little later and was the least important of the three.

It is important to note that all three of these important developments did not appear at exactly the same time, nor did they reach all of the Basket Makers at the same time. They spread slowly from one group to the next. They were slow in getting to some regions or, since there are conservatives among all people, perhaps some of the Basket Makers were hesitant about

accepting the new-fangled contraptions.

It is extremely doubtful if the Basket Makers invented a single one of the new features. Such things were usually passed from one tribe to another: often an intricate contrivance such as the bow traveled all over the earth after a single invention. The Basket Makers did a certain amount of traveling and trading and they were not averse to borrowing new ideas from their neighbors.

It seems fairly certain that pottery came to them from the south where other tribes had been making it prior to its arrival in the Mesa Verde. Some of the Basket Maker men, while on a trading expedition, may have seen women making vessels out of clay. Realizing the superiority of these vessels that could be placed directly on the fire the men mentioned the matter to their wives upon their return home. Possessed of only the idea the women set about trying to make pottery.

They were practically forced to invent pottery all over again for they knew nothing about the actual process. They had merely heard that fine utensils could be made out of clay. Their first attempts were extremely clumsy and resulted in absolute failure. They made the first ones from pure clay and as fast as it dried the vessels cracked and fell into pieces. After a time the women realized they must add something to the clay, a tempering material. Straw and juniper bark were tried and with a certain amount of success. The vessels had less tendency to crack but when they were placed on the fire these materials burned out and the result was more in the nature of a sieve than a pot.

The patient women continued to experiment and at last they learned that some kind of sand or grit was necessary for temper. In several places in the Mesa Verde volcanic blowouts provided the potters with an abundance of volcanic grit. This was ground fine and mixed with the pottery clay. Vessels made of this material did not crack upon drying. Many of the first pieces of pottery were merely sun dried but soon the women learned that if they were subjected to intense

heat they were much stronger and were perfectly waterproof. Each vessel was carefully baked, or fired, and true pottery was the result.

The effect of pottery on the food habits of the people was profound. With vessels that could be placed directly on the fire whole new lines of food were available. Soups, stews, porridges and greens became commonplace. Many new plants were utilized and innumerable combinations of meats and plants were discovered.

Pottery was of inestimable value to the Indians for water storage. Baskets were not well adapted for this purpose because of their tendency to disintegrate within a comparatively short time because of the moisture. Pottery lasted indefinitely and each woman could make an unlimited number of large water jars. On rainy days every jar in the village was filled with water and the terrors of drouth were lessened. Many of the jars were slightly porous and enough evaporation took place through the walls to keep the water sweet and cool.

Thus it is easily seen that the perfection of pottery was one of the major steps in the progress of the Indians. The diet was improved, the drudgery of cooking was lessened, the range of foods was widened, storage facilities were increased and the entire domestic economy of the Basket Makers took a decided turn for the better.

At first the pottery was crude but each succeeding generation showed improvement in the new craft. The proper percentage of temper and clay was discovered, designs were introduced and improved upon, and vessel shapes became more graceful and efficient. As time passed the fingers of the potters became more and more deft.

The adoption of a permanent house was also of great importance. Life in the open caves was never too comfortable. Heavy rains, deep snows and the bitter temperatures of winter held certain terrors for the Basket Makers who were without actual dwellings. No great population could ever grow out of such

conditions. A permanent, secure house was necessary to stabilize the culture.

The first dwellings were in the nature of pit-houses, partially above and partially below ground. The underground portion consisted of a shallow pit, two or three feet deep and from ten to fifteen feet in diameter. Sometimes the dirt walls were plastered with mud, or if the walls had a tendency to cave, they were lined with stone slabs. In the floor, forming a large square, four holes were dug and a crotched post slightly higher than a man's head was set upright in each. A long slender log was stretched from the top of each post to the next, forming a square framework, the main support of the roof. Slender poles were slanted from the edge of the pit up to this framework at twelve or fifteen inch intervals, entirely around the room. Other poles were placed across the flat top portion and the skeleton of the roof was completed.

To this framework was lashed a solid covering of reeds, brush, bark or coarse grass and the entire roof was covered over with a layer of earth several inches thick. A small opening was left in the center of the flat portion of the roof. This served as a smoke hole and it was often equipped with a ladder and used as an entrance. Some of the pit houses may have had doors in the side walls but these side walls are so badly destroyed that above-ground side entrances have not been detected.

Many of the houses were equipped with odd crawl entrances. In a house of this type a low tunnel was dug under the south wall of the room and extended for a distance of several feet. At the end the tunnel was enlarged into a room, usually very small but sometimes almost as large as the main roof itself. It is believed that this small room was roofed over except for a hatchway in the center that served as a door. In reality a house of this type consisted of the large main room and a small antechamber, the two being connected by a tunnel. The person entering the house lowered himself into the antechamber, dropped to his hands and knees and crawled through the passageway to the main room. The tunnel entrance served an an

excellent ventilator. As smoke and warm air escaped through the hole in the roof fresh air was drawn in through the tunnel. When the antechamber was large it served for grain storage or even as a work room. Storage cists were often dug in the floor of the main room and bins, constructed of thin stone slabs, were sometimes placed around the walls. The firepit was in the center of the main room.

These houses were truly comfortable and secure. They offered excellent protection to the people, being fully as good as the ordinary Navaho hogan of today. Life was easier for the Indians and less time and energy were spent in the struggle against the elements. In the summer the pithouse was cool. In the winter it was warm. The Indians at last knew the meaning of comfort and leisure. Winter storms lost their terror and during the cold weather the people were able to spend their time with their various crafts, producing the countless articles they used in their everyday lives.

As generations passed the houses improved. In some villages, especially in the caves, the individual pithouses held on but in many places the practice of building adjoining rooms developed. In these latter villages the pits became shallower and the tunnel entrances disappeared. Instead of being round the houses were rectangular with vertical side walls and flat roofs. Dozens of these rooms were joined together in long curving rows. Adjoining the living rooms on the back side were smaller storage rooms. Sometimes a village consisted of several parallel, crescent-shaped rows of houses. In front of the houses in the open courts were always a few of the old-type pithouses. These grew deeper and larger and after a time they became club rooms and ceremonial rooms for the men. This was the beginning of the kivas, rooms that are still set aside for those purposes in the present-day Pueblo villages.

One of the far-reaching effects of the permanent house was its influence on true family life. Before this time the people had probably lived in a helter-skelter fashion; large groups clustered together

with little opportunity for the development of family ties. The house changed all this. Each one was surely the home of a man, his wife and children and the family became established as a unit. Family ties, relationships and inheritance took on new meanings.

It seems highly improbable that the Basket Makers of the Mesa Verde developed the pithouse by themselves. Similar pithouses were used by Indians all over America, in fact they can be traced up the northwest coast and on to Alaska and Siberia. Since this type of house was so widespread it is probable that the Basket Makers borrowed it from some neighboring tribe. It is sometimes suggested that the pithouse developed from the storage cists we saw them building in the caves a short time ago. Intermediate steps between the simple cists and the fully developed pithouses have not been found so once again we should consider the Basket Makers as borrowers.

The third cultural trait that set the Modified Basket Makers apart from their ancestors, the Basket Makers, was the bow and arrow. Again the Basket Makers borrowed. The bow and arrow was such a complicated combination that it is easier to believe it was invented once, then spread over the world, than that it was invented several different times by different people. The invention occurred in the Old World and it was brought to America by many bands of immigrants.

The Basket Makers received the bow and arrow at about the same time or shortly after they acquired pottery and the house. Some wandering band of Indians brought the new weapon into the region. Our Mesa Verde Basket Makers may have obtained it by peaceful borrowing. On the other hand they may have recognized the superiority of the bow over their atlatls through the sad experience of trying to defend their homes against men who were armed with the strange new weapon. The moment they recognized the superiority of the bow they took it over and the atlatl was discarded, never to be used again in the Mesa Verde.

The bow excelled the atlatl in every way. It was a weapon that could actually be aimed. It was

well-adapted for stalking game or defending the home for it could be shot from a kneeling, sitting or standing position. Brush and trees did not interfere with its efficiency as in the case of the atlatl that could be used only where there was room for the long overhead sweep of the arm. Arrows were shorter than atlatl darts and easier to carry: their range was greater. The bow was also much more efficient in the capture of small game.

As is always the case the old gave way to the new. The bow was accepted and soon mastered. The defense of the home became easier. Hunting was more efficient and many more game animals were killed than had been possible with the atlatl.

An extremely important point that must be remembered is that pottery, the house and the bow did not all arrive at the same time. It must not be considered that on a certain day in a certain year the Basket Makers voted to accept the new things and became Modified Basket Makers. These new cultural traits filtered in slowly, in no particular order, and the Basket Makers themselves little realized how their culture was changing. Within the span of a few generations the three features had been accepted by all of the Basket Makers of the Mesa Verde region.

During the period other cultural changes of a minor nature occured. Keen-edged stone axes appeared; they were vitally necessary for cutting poles for the houses. Previously only red corn had been grown but during this period other colors became common. Beans came up from the south and were eagerly accepted. Turkeys were domesticated and turkey feather blankets, first woven during the preceding period, became more common. Excellent baskets were still woven but pottery was slowly taking the place of the baskets that had meant so much to the earlier people. Pottery, once it was perfected, improved throughout the period.

There is much evidence that the Basket Maker culture became more and more stabalized with each succeeding generation. Farming methods improved; the harvests became more abundant. With the dependable

supplies of food, the added comfort and security of the dwellings and the improvement of living conditions the population increased. By the early part of the eighth century thousands of Modified Basket Makers were living in the Mesa Verde and surrounding regions. Some of the villages were in the caves but most of them were in the open. It must have been a peaceful time for the villages were widespread, evidently with little thought of concentration for safety.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL PUEBLO PERIOD

We have now reached the point where archeologists have long been confronted with some puzzling questions. When Southwestern Archeology was in its infancy the change of cultures seemed strange and unexplainable but in recent years the question marks have been weeded out fairly well.

The change came during the early part of the eighth century and the principal new development appears to have been in the physical makeup of the people. The culture changed little but there seems to have been a sudden and pronounced alteration in the physical characteristics of the Indians themselves.

When the Basket Makers were first recognized half a century ago it was noticed immediately that their skulls were strikingly different from those of the ancient Pueblo Indians. The latter people, who were very well known before the Basket Makers came to light, had broad skulls. This broadness was accentuated by a deformity on the back of the skull, a flattening caused by the hard cradle these people used. Sometimes this deformity was extreme, causing the head to be almost as wide as it was long.

When the first Basket Maker remains were found it was immediately obvious that their skulls were of a different shape for they were long and narrow and there was no deformity. When the skulls of the two people were compared side by side there was a striking difference and the natural assumption was that two different racial groups were represented.

The result was that a different name was given to the newly-discovered longheads by the men who discovered them. No pottery was found in the burials but there was an abundance of baskets so they began to refer to them as the Basket Makers. Credit for the first recognition of these people goes to men whom we have met before, the Wetherills. While digging in a cave in southwestern Utah they first encountered the longheaded people who had no pottery and to Richard Wetherill is generally given the credit for first use of the term "Basket Makers."

As Southwestern Archeology progressed through uncertain early years this assumption that the Pueblos and Basket Makers were two different peoples became an accepted fact. In those early days there was not enough skeletal material from the various periods and regions for an exhaustive comparative study and while many questions were unanswered and doubts were often expressed by archeologists, the separated identity of the Basket Maker and Pueblo Indians was generally accepted.

The weak point in the story was in the transition from one to the other. The change seemed to have taken place within a very short time and strangely enough, there was no evidence of upheaval or conflict when the new people supplanted the old. The only evidence of any change was the sudden appearance of the broad, deformed heads.

The natural result of this was that until very recently archeologists considered that the Pueblo Indians did not replace the Basket Makers. Instead, it was felt that there was a very peaceful, though swift, merging of the two with the result that the population became roundheaded in a very short period of time. It seems to be a human trait that roundheadedness is dominant over longheadedness, so if the roundheaded newcomers intermarried with the longheaded Basket Makers the head shape of the entire population would have changed. In addition it appeared that the new people brought a new type of cradle into the region. This was the rigid cradleboard, used without a pillow, and the resultant

flattening of the back of the head served to accentuate its width.

Thus the archeological story of the Mesa Verde region stood until recent years.

Now the whole thing is changed. Recent intensive studies of a large amount of skeletal material, ranging from the ancient Basket Makers down to recent Pueblo Indians, has thrown new light on the problem. The result is that after all these years it now becomes apparent that there was really no radical change of physical type at all. The Basket Maker racial type seems to have persisted, with little evidence of any addition of new blood.

Study of the skeletal material that is now available indicates that there were a number of errors in the earlier assumptions. Most important of all is that the Basket Makers were not all longheaded. Many of them were roundheaded and a large number were in the medium group, midway between long and round.

On the other hand it is equally apparent that the Pueblo people were not all roundheaded. A very large number were not roundheaded at all; in some groups of skulls the majority were in the medium class.

Added to these errors was the lack of evidence indicating that new people came into the region during the eighth century, the period during which the shift from long to roundheadedness occurred. There are few evidences of any cultural change: there are no indications of conflict with any incoming group. All evidence points to a quiet, easy, peaceful change with no disruption of the steady cultural progress that characterized the Basket Maker and Pueblo periods.

As a result of the recent studies it is now considered that there was no change of physical stock. Perhaps a few new people did drift into the region but there is little or no evidence of it and it is not necessary to introduce new blood in order to explain the change of head shape.

Since there was considerable roundheadedness among the Basket Makers the natural tendency for round-

headedness to be dominant over longheadedness would cause the people gradually to change. Intermarriage of longheads with roundheads would assure the ascendancy of the latter.

In addition to this, one new cultural trait had a profound effect on the shape of the heads. It was at this time that the rigid cradle was adopted. Where it came from is not known: surely it must have been borrowed from people with whom the Basket Makers came in contact.

How can this change of cradles be explained except by saying that it was a craze, a new beauty fad that caught the fancy of the people. The old flexible cradle with its soft head pad had allowed the head to develop normally. The new cradle was a rigid affair, often simply a thin, smooth piece of wood. On this the baby was carried, its pliable head resting on the hard surface. The result was inevitable: the back of the head flattened, the sides bulged and a broad, deformed head resulted.

Surely no one forced this new cradle upon the Basket Makers. Evidently the new head shape became fashionable for within a short time the new cradle was adopted throughout the area. Instead of changing the hat or the "hairdo" as is the custom among modern people, they went to the very root of the matter and changed the shape of the head.

From this time on we are going to know these people as the Pueblo Indians. The term "Pueblo" was applied by the early Spaniards to Indians whom they found living in large, compact, many-roomed villages. In Spanish the word means village. It applies well to our roundheaded Indians as from this time on the habit of building compact villages became firmly established.

The first few hundred years of the new culture are known as the Developmental Pueblo period. The term means exactly what it says. It was the period during which the Great Pueblo period that we shall see at Cliff Palace was going through its developmental stages.

Once again we must stress a very important

point. Even though we have changed names; even though we have stepped from the Modified Basket Maker to the Developmental Pueblo period, there was no abrupt cultural change. The principle change was in the physical makeup of the people. This change took place within the group itself with little evidence of outside influence. We are now dealing with roundheaded Indians but the new culture was merely a continuation of the old. There was no break between the two and it is impossible to select a place where a line could be drawn. There was less difference between these two periods than between any other two successive periods that we shall see.

During the Developmental Pueblo period there was the same gradual improvement in all lines that we have seen throughout the Basket Maker periods. The people were alert and curious; they were energetic and ambitious and the result was steady development. They made very definite progress up the road toward civilization.

It was a period of peace for the people lived without fear of an enemy. The caves were practically deserted and the villages were built on the open mesa tops or on the broad valley floors near the fields of corn, beans and squash that supplied them with food in abundance. The population grew rapidly and spread over a tremendous area in the Four Corners region, the place where the four states now meet. Villages sprang up all over what is now southwestern Colorado, northwestern New Mexico, northern Arizona, southern Utah and southeastern Nevada. It was a far-flung culture and there is every evidence that for a long time there was peace and prosperity among the people.

At the end of the Modified Basket Maker period some of the villages still consisted of individual pithouses. Other villages were made up of long curving rows of adjoining, flat-roofed houses built of mud and poles. In front of the living rooms were a few large pithouses that probably served as ceremonial rooms. These were the kivas that will become more important as time goes on.

At first the Developmental Pueblo villages were merely continuations of these earlier villages. As time passed, however, there were improvements. The people seem to have done much experimenting. Various types of walls were built and after a time it was realized that walls built of stone masonry were best. In most regions the mud-and-pole houses disappeared and toward the end of the period practically all of the villages were built of stone.

The discovery of the stone wall was a real triumph. It probably took time for the discoverers to convince the stubborn conservatives that this new type of construction was superior. A poorly-built stone wall collapses with a disastrous crash and there must have been many accidents. There are evidences that the builders had little faith in the stone walls at first but finally they were won over. Villages of horizontal masonry predominated at the end of the period.

Pottery also continued to improve. The women had become firmly convinced of its value and they experimented endlessly, probably in a spirit of friendly competition. New shapes appeared, designs became truer and more intricate, and during the period dozens of different types of pottery were produced. As pottery asserted itself basket making declined.

During this period cotton was introduced from the south and loom-woven cloth made its appearance. Domestication of the turkey became widespread and turkey feather blankets became very common.

In summing up the Developmental Pueblo period a few points seem obvious. It began early in the eighth century. At that time, partly from natural causes and partly from the artificial effect of the new cradle the people became predominately roundheaded. The culture was a continuation of the Modified Basket Maker culture and there was constant progress in all lines throughout the period. It was a time of peace; the people prospered and the population increased. Countless thousands of successful farmers lived in innumerable villages that dotted a large area surrounding the Four Corners. They were vigorous and ambitious and the

result was a period of progress.

Toward the close of the tenth century new influences seemed to affect the people. Once again we change cultures. Now we leave the Developmental Pueblo period and move into the golden age of the Pueblos.

THE GREAT PUEBLO PERIOD

The change is made when certain new trends become apparent. Indications are that enemy groups began to harass the peaceful farmers. Nomadic Indians entered the Pueblo region and the small scattered villages fell easy prey to their raids. The border regions suffered first and soon the inhabitants were forced to abandon them. In those border regions small villages have been found that give unmistakable evidence of having been destroyed by a ruthless enemy.

Life in small villages was no longer healthy and the population began to concentrate in regions that were especially favorable because of abundant supplies of water, good farming land or excellent natural defensive locations. Large villages developed as the people from the small villages gathered for mutual protection. Great communal buildings grew up; terraced villages rising as high as four stories. These compact structures with their thick stone walls served as forts and gave the Pueblos a chance to defend their homes and families.

Sometimes the villages were not large but usually in that case a number were built close together and the same protection was afforded. Natural defensive locations such as high points, mesa tops and caves became especially desirable. In some regions, such as the Mesa Verde, there was an abundance of caves and almost the entire population took advantage of the security they offered.

There may have been factors in this change that we do not understand; certainly some of the aspects are hard to explain. The change took place, however, and at present we can only suggest that enemy pressure caused the Pueblo people to leave their scattered small

villages and concentrate in the most favorable areas. If there was a psychological cause that developed because of their advancing culture we have so far missed it entirely.

The change occured at slightly different times in different regions. In the Mesa Verde it occured about 1000 A. D., but in some areas it was earlier. Because actual traits changed little it is again difficult to draw a definite line between the two cultures. In general it can be said that toward the close of the tenth century the concentration of population came and the classic period began.

This period marked the climax of the Pueblo culture. We saw the beginning of the Basket Maker-Pueblo growth a thousand years ago when the first grain of corn was planted in the region. We have seen the culture develop steadily without a backward step. Now we have reached the top. For almost three centuries the golden age of the Pueblos will last with the people enjoying the fruits of their long climb up the tree of progress. Then we shall see them falter.

The Great Pueblo period was a remarkable climax. The population became highly concentrated in certain definite areas and great villages, really cities considering the time and the culture, were often built. A great village like Cliff Palace must have seemed to those people as cities seem to us today. It was a metropolis to them.

This concentration of population caused competition among the artists and craftsmen and the result was an amazing excellence in every field of endeavor. The massive stone walls were the finest ever built by the Pueblo Indians. The pottery was superb with the women of each region specializing in certain shapes and designs. Each piece of pottery indicates the region where it was made just as definitely as if it had a label on the bottom.

Beautifully woven cotton cloth in several colors was common and exquisite jewelry of turquoise and shell was produced. Even the minor tools gave evidence of patient industry and nimble fingers.

The religion must have been amazingly complex and of a highly ritualistic nature. Ceremonial rooms, now called kivas, were numerous; sometimes dozens of them existed in a single village. They were built after a definite pattern in each region, giving evidence of rigid, ritualistic ceremonies. The social organization must also have been highly developed with strict codes that regulated the lives of the people.

One almost wonders if the people of the Great Pueblo period had as much fun as the people of the earlier periods. Before this time there had been much individual enterprise. There was constant experimentation and artisans often left the beaten path in their efforts to develop new things. Group consciousness was not strong.

During the classic period there was more regimentation. The people moved in certain grooves. Artists and craftsmen were highly skilled but they all followed the same patterns. There was little tendency on the part of the individual to strike out by himself. Individual initiative was less apparent and the religious and social life was rigidly regulated.

In order to fully understand this Great Pueblo period that marked the zenith of the Pueblo culture we are going to do a strange thing. We are going to spend a year in Cliff Palace at the time when it was alive. This is where we have been heading all the time. We have seen the background; we have watched the fifteen thousand year rise of culture that resulted in our ancient city. As soon as we have set the stage we will be ready to step into the play.

We will climb down the steep trail into Cliff Palace. For a year we will live with the people. By so doing we will gain an excellent picture of the life in any pueblo during the Great Pueblo period.

V

How Do We Know?

The fourth decisive step in the story of Cliff Palace took place in the early part of the eleventh century when groups of Pueblo Indians who were living on the mesa tops decided to move down into the great cave. It must always be remembered that the Cliff Dwellers were merely Pueblo Indians who built their pueblos in the caves. The exact year when this happened will never be known. Dendro-chronologists, the men who are able to determine the dates when ancient logs were cut, have dated a number of the old roof beams from the ruin. The earliest date is 1073 A. D.

This means that houses were being built in the cave at that time so the first construction probably took place a little earlier. It can be said, then, that construction of the cliff dwelling began in the early part of the eleventh century, possibly as late as 1050 A. D.

That was the fourth important step in the story of Cliff Palace; the actual beginning of its construction. We have at last, after a long and devious climb, reached the ancient city itself.

Fifteen thousand years ago we started up the trail. From a simple beginning in a far continent we have walked with the people as they progressed through higher and higher stages of culture. Along the trail there have been four crucial points, four decisive steps. Without any one of them there could have been no Cliff Palace.

These four important steps have been:

1. The first migration of men from Asia.
2. The development of corn.
3. The arrival of farming Indians in the Mesa Verde.
4. The decision of a group of Pueblo Indians

to build a village in the great cave.

The result of all these steps is Cliff Palace. We have reached our goal and are ready to enter the living scene. The prologue is ended; the play is ready to begin.

Before we take up actual residence in Cliff Palace we should answer one question, a question that is asked very often. How can we know what was happening in a city that was abandoned almost seven hundred years ago? The former inhabitants have disappeared, they left no written records! How will we be able to see the intimate details in the lives of those people?

It is a good question. It is often in the minds of visitors as they walk through the silent city and listen to the stories that are told about the former inhabitants. Intimate details in the lives of the Cliff Dwellers are laid bare. Assertions are made for which there is no visible evidence. The visitor can scarcely be blamed for wearing a skeptical look in his eyes.

Our knowledge of the intimacies of Cliff Dweller life has come from a number of sources. Through intensive study archeologists, ethnologists and historians have worked out the details that go toward making a complete story. From countless sources they have garnered the bits of information that fit together in jig-saw fashion to give us a picture of Cliff Dweller life. Unfortunately some pieces of the picture are still missing; here and there are rather large and distressing holes. In some lines of research blank walls have been encountered. Mystery still enshrouds some of the phases we would like most of all to see.

On the whole, though, the picture is rather complete. By fitting together all of the bits of knowledge that have been given to us by various scientists we can see very well the happenings in one of the ancient villages.

The archeologists have done the actual work of exposing the material details of the ancient cultures. Decades of inspired blunderings have gradually made

actual fact of the long story we have just followed. Through their efforts we know the background of our people of Cliff Palace and thus, in a general way, we know their viewpoint on the vital matters of life.

We know we are going to deal with Mongoloid peoples so we may expect to find that their outlook on life had a slight oriental cast. We saw them inherit a farming culture handed down to them through a thousand years of successful dependence upon agriculture. We know they saw life through the eyes of farmers. All events of nature were evaluated according to their effect upon agriculture. The religion was a farmer's religion. Ceremonies concerning the hunt were of minor nature; the great ceremonies had to do with the production of a bountiful harvest. The social organization also reflected their economic pattern for it had grown out of a stable farming culture.

That is the racial and cultural background: we are going to deal with a group of Mongoloid farmers. The Mongoloid aspect is not of profound importance, for these people had left Asia before oriental culture, as we think of it today, had evolved. The importance of agriculture, however, can not be over-emphasized.

In addition to giving us the background the archeologists have given us the material details of the ancient city. Through their excavations the actual remains have been brought to light, studied and interpreted. When we walk through Cliff Palace we appreciate the tremendous overhanging cave roof that protected the entire city. We see the results of the physical labors of the people; the houses with their smooth walls and bright paintings, the storage rooms, kivas, open courts, narrow winding passageways, firepits, and in the back of the cave the trash room where the turkeys roosted.

In the nearby museum we see the actual physical remains, the skeletons and mummies, of the people themselves. We see their clothing and their jewelry. There also are the utensils and tools; pottery, basketry, bows and arrows, stone knives, bone awls and needles, grinding stones, fire drills, planting sticks,

stone axes and mauls; an endless array of things that were once in common use among the Cliff Dwellers.

All of this has been given to us by the archeologist. He has shown us the long background of the people and has unearthed, restored and interpreted the actual material things from the ruin. To many people these things seem cold and inanimate. They seem dead; just stone, bone, wood and clay. There is life in them, though, for they are the expressions of the desires, ambitions, loves and hates of the Cliff Dwellers. Every single article was produced because of some human desire or need.

The person who keeps this in mind is able to walk through Cliff Palace, even today, and see the Cliff Dwellers. In the results of their efforts they still live. Many visitors forget this and do not see the people. Even the archeologist often fails to see them. He is a scientist who deals only with realities. Sometimes he can not see the people for the walls.

Historians have also contributed to the story of ancient Indian life. The musty records of the early explorers of the Southwest contain many extremely valuable observations concerning the Pueblo Indians. These the historians have ferreted out.

As early as 1540 the Spaniards began to enter the Pueblo country when Coronado traversed almost the entire area. Other Spanish explorers followed Coronado, missions were established in many of the pueblos, Spanish colonies were founded and for almost three centuries the Spaniards were in close contact with the Indians. Later the American explorers entered the Southwest and they too came in contact with the Indians. The chronicles of these explorers, both Spanish and American, contain many passages concerning the life and customs of the Pueblo people. Many of these early records have been translated and compiled and from them we gain knowledge of Pueblo life during the last four centuries. It is true that not all of the observations were accurate. Many were spiced with prejudice and deliberate fallacy but still they have been of value.

The first Spaniards met the Pueblo Indians less than three centuries after the end of the Great Pueblo period, the time of Cliff Palace. The Indians were still living in terraced pueblos. They were still farmers; corn, beans and squash still dominated the food bowl out of which each family ate. In a material way they had changed little so it is safe to assume they had changed little in their social and religious customs.

Even after the white man arrived there was little change in the life of the Pueblo Indians until within the last few decades. For that reason the early records, when properly interpreted, add much to our knowledge of the ancient cultures.

Ethnologists have done a vast amount of work that supplements the labors of the archeologist and the historian. The ethnologist is a scientist who makes an actual detailed study of a group of Indians. Every cultural detail is recorded and there have been ethnologists who knew more about the Indians whom they studied than the Indians knew about themselves.

Some of the ethnologists have lived in the pueblos for long periods of time. In some cases they have been accepted by the Indians and have even been taken into the priesthood. Such men have been able to give us detailed knowledge of the legends, superstitions, religion, ceremonies, social customs and daily life of the Pueblo Indians.

Since these people are the descendents of the ancient people this knowledge has enabled us to answer many questions. The person who walks into Cliff Palace and views a kiva for the first time has not the slightest chance of guessing its original purpose. It is absolutely remote from anything he has ever seen. But when he is told that these same strange rooms still survive in the present-day pueblos and are used as club rooms and ceremonial chambers the use becomes immediately apparent. In the center of the ancient kiva floor is a tiny hole that has no obvious purpose. That same hole is still found in present-day kivas and the Indian explains that it is the spirit entrance to the earth. Even the wisest archaeologist could never have

guessed that.

Without the help of present-day Indians it would be almost impossible to answer questions about such non-material things as religion and social customs. We can dig up the bones of a man, every bone he ever possessed. But who can look at those bones and tell how many wives he had? Some people think it should show but it doesn't. In order to answer the question we simply go to the descendent of that man. Without doubt they still have the same customs.

From all this it can be seen that the ethnologist has added much to our story. Since the Pueblo Indians of today are the descendents of the Pueblo Indians of a few centuries ago a thorough knowledge of their culture is the soundest approach to an understanding of the ancient cultures.

As we move into Cliff Palace to spend a year with the Cliff Dwellers we must not forget these sources of our knowledge. First, we have the cultural background of the Cliff Dwellers, their rise from savage hunters to stable agriculturists; second, we have the great ruin itself and the things the people left in it; third, we have the interpretations of Indians who are descendents of the ancient people. All these will be added together to complete the picture.

Perhaps we should not indicate that the picture will be entirely complete. There are still unanswered questions; some problems will never be satisfactorily solved. In order to live with the Cliff Dwellers certain guesses will have to be made; certain inferences will need to be drawn. Sometimes the fine details of events will be missing. Yes, there are uncertainties, but by applying the knowledge that has been compiled and by always remaining within the realm of plausibility we shall be able to follow the Cliff Dwellers closely as they go through the routine of their daily lives.

When we step into the scene at Cliff Palace we will be going back seven hundred years to the New Stone Age. That was the Age when ancient man took the greatest step in his long climb toward civilization. All

people who have risen to a civilized or near-civilized state have passed through it. The elements were the same throughout the world; in Egypt, China, Italy, Switzerland or the Mesa Verde. During this age primitive men made several very important discoveries. They acquired polished stone tools, pottery, the bow and arrow, domesticated animals, houses and agriculture. The Cliff Dwellers had all of these things. They were on the same cultural level as all other men of the New Stone Age.

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Now we are ready to turn back the centuries. We are ready to walk into Cliff Palace and live with the people. How better can we see the life of the ancient city? We will follow the Cliff Dwellers, men, women and children, as they go through the daily round of life. Spring, summer, autumn and winter will pass. We will see the work, the play, the dreams, the desires, the happiness and the bitter disappointments in the lives of the Cliff Dwellers. We will take no part in the activities. We will merely watch the people.

What year shall it be?

It makes no difference as long as it is a good year, a normal year, with an abundance of snow and rain. Those were the most important factors in the lives of the Cliff Dwellers because of their effect upon the harvests. Tree ring records show that 1261 and 1262 were normal years, also 1265, 1266, 1267, 1268, 1269, 1271 and 1272. All of those were good years and that was the time when Cliff Palace was at its height. The people had been living in the cave over two hundred years and the great city was surely at its peak.

Let's take the year 1266. It is as good as any. It was a normal, happy year for the Cliff Dwellers.

Let the centuries roll back--it is 1266 A. D.

As we walk into Cliff Palace we find it at the very peak of its development. For two centuries it has been growing until now it fills the great sheltering

cave. There are over two hundred one-room houses in the city; they fill the cave from end to end and rise in terraces to a height of three and even four stories. At the south end and again at the north end the terraced structures rise to touch the cave roof.

Scattered about the city are twenty-three kivas, the underground chambers belonging to the men. Their flat roofs serve as courts where many of the activities take place. The roofs of the terraced houses are also the scene of much activity and throughout the city many ladders lean against the walls, leading from one level to the next.

To us Cliff Palace seems like a great two-hundred-room apartment house. To the Cliff Dwellers it is a city of two hundred houses, occupied by almost that many families. Over four hundred people live in the city; they swarm about the courts and on the roofs like so many busy brown ants.

As we enter the city we notice immediately the appearance of the people. They are typical Indians. They seem rather short, the men averaging about five feet three inches in height and the women about five feet. They are heavy-set and as we watch them we get the impression that as a rule they are a short, stocky people. The skin color varies from light to dark brown; some of them are so dark they seem almost black. The eyes are also brown and the hair varies from dark brown to a deep lustrous black.

The Cliff Dwellers have broad heads and the back of each head is flattened, a deformity caused in infancy by a hard cradle board. The faces are broad and the cheek bones are prominent. Extremely noticeable are the "slanting" Mongoloid eyes. These people are definitely Mongoloid and practically all of them have the odd fold of skin at the inside corner of each eye that causes it to seem to "slant."

This city where we are going to spend the year is simply a large terraced apartment house built in a great cave. In the two hundred or more rooms live at

least four hundred Indians; short, stocky, brown-skinned, Mongoloid people whom we have followed from Asia. We will know them well before the year is over.

The centuries have rolled back to the year 1266 A. D.

It is spring.

VI

Spring in Cliff Palace, 1266 A. D.

Spring is a happy, joyous time for the people of Cliff Palace and there is much laughter and gaiety in the great cave. The bleak, uncomfortable winter is over; there is a feeling of freedom and broken bonds. Everything in nature indicates that a new year and new life are beginning and the people respond just as do the animals and plants.

The winter that is ending has been cold and even though the people became accustomed to it there was suffering and sadness. Many of the older people who were afflicted with rheumatism and arthritis suffered terribly and the children developed colds and other diseases against which the medicine men were powerless. Several deaths occurred in Cliff Palace last winter and at times there was sadness in the cave city.

Now spring is here and the people are gay and lighthearted. Spring is ever a happy time for farmers. The miracle of new life never loses its thrill. Spring, the season of new life; summer, the season of growth and development; autumn, the season of ripening and harvest; winter, the season of eclipse and death and sorrow. Then, spring again and the eternal cycle has another joyous beginning.

In March the sun begins to be warm. During the morning, while still in the shadow, the cave is cold, but in the afternoon when the sun creeps in it grows very pleasant. Some days the sun is actually hot as it beats into the sheltered cave. Chipmunks and squirrels, even the lizards, come out of hibernation to sun themselves on the warm rocks. The Cliff Dwellers do likewise.

Cliff Palace, looking toward the south end of the city.
On the upper ledge are the storage bins.

As the sun begins to climb into the cave each afternoon the people come out to meet it. Uncomfortable winter clothing is thrown aside and soon the entire populace is sunning itself on the front terraces. Every one is happy. There is much laughter and boisterous shouting. The aged men and women bring their rheumatic bones out into the warm sunlight and immediately feel new life. Gaunt old men, whose creaking joints have not climbed the cliff trails for years, get a new gleam in their eyes as they vow they will raise a crop of corn this summer. Aged women begin to twist their gnarled fingers as they dream of making pottery again.

The able bodied men sit in small groups, dreaming and talking of the planting time that is coming. Wrinkled old priests assure them that it will be a fine season. All signs are right; the gods are smiling on their people. The women think of new pottery they must make, repairs they plan for their houses, and marriages they must arrange for their daughters. Young wives, in whom romance has not been dulled by too many children, playfully comb the lice from their husbands' heads and dream of babies soon to come. Spring is a fine time for that.

Here and there young unmarried men lean against the walls, presumably dozing in the sun. But they are the busiest of all. Each one is endeavoring to catch the eye of some dusky young maiden whose full-rounded curves are causing her mother to think of a son-in-law. The young man's eyes seldom connect; the ever vigilant eyes of mothers and aunts come between.

The only active members of the populace are the children. Some play on the trash pile in front of the cave, others scramble over the boulders that litter the slope below. Their rich brown skins flash in the sun as they endeavor to make up in one afternoon for all of the cold inactivity of the winter. Their shouts and laughter are mingled with the barking of their dogs and the gobbling of the turkeys they are disturbing. During the winter the turkeys stayed close to the cave but now they are scattered over the slope, nipping off the early buds and searching for the first insects of spring.

Not every March day is warm: some are blustery with the changeable weather of spring. A clear blue sky turns black in only a few minutes and heavy wet snow swirls into the canyons. The snow soon changes to rain, then a cool breeze swings down from the north and the rain becomes icy pellets of sleet. In a few minutes the clouds blow away and the warm sun shines again on a dripping, steaming world. Sometimes during the night warm, wet snow falls, snow so heavy that its weight snaps limbs from the trees. The warm rocks and the bright sun melt it rapidly and all day long there is a roaring waterfall over the front of Cliff Palace cave as the water rushes off the mesa top.

The weather grows steadily warmer and winter is left behind. There is much activity in the city. During the winter the cave has become damp and musty; everything needs to be aired out. Clothing, blankets, robes and floor mats are spread out on the terraces and roofs to bake in the sun. The women tie small bunches of stiff grass with cords and with these brush-like brooms sweep the houses and courtyards thoroughly. Trash is swept into the back of the cave where the turkeys roost or out on the ever-growing trash pile that slides far down the slope in front.

Even the kivas, the underground, ceremonial rooms of the men, are cleaned out. The men themselves do the work for women seldom enter the kivas, except on special ceremonial occasions.

A part of the spring cleaning is the repairing of the houses. It is work that never seems to end for repairs and alterations are always in progress in some part of the city except in the winter when it is too cold. Spring is the best time for the repair work for there is an abundance of water for the mortar and the home owners are filled with a desire to build and improve. Cracks are merely filled with mud and small chinking stones. Sometimes a small section of wall has bulged dangerously and must be replaced. Often the walls have been built on a foundation of loose trash and as a result settle until they are in danger of falling. Such walls, sometimes entire rooms, must be

torn down and rebuilt. Sometimes a house is deserted by its owners for some reason and gradually goes to ruin. As it crumbles the stones and the roof poles are used in the repairing or building of other houses. It is an endless cycle, this building and repairing of houses, and all stages of it can be seen in the city at any time.

Most of the repair work is done by the women for the houses belong to them. When there is heavy work, new poles to cut or new stones to shape, the men help but even then the women supervise.

Very often, as is true among all people, the women change the decorations of their houses. A new whim stirs the housewife's imagination and in an hour's time the entire scheme is changed. The husband never knows what to expect when he returns from a day in the fields. Decorations are easily applied for they merely consist of thin layers of thick clay mud, spread on the walls with the hands. Sometimes the entire house is smoothly plastered with red, yellow, grey, brown or white clay. Other houses are plastered only on the outside; some only on the inside. Here is a house that is plastered half-way down from the ceiling; next door is one that is plastered half-way up from the floor.

Many of the walls are decorated with bright paintings. Red ochre makes a rich red plaster while upon the mesa top is a layer of clay that gives a clean chalky-white color. When the two are combined the effect is striking. Most of the paintings are small; the picture of an animal, a geometric design or perhaps just a band of color across a wall. In the center of Cliff Palace is a house that has a row of nine bright red hands painted above the door. The woman who lives there placed her left hand on the wall and traced it nine times. Then she filled in the outlines with red ochre to produce the odd decoration.

Near the south end of the city is the most beautifully decorated house of all. It is the third-floor room of the great four story tower, the tallest structure in the cave. The young lady who lives there is very artistic and all four inside walls are

beautifully painted in red and white. The lower half of the walls she painted with red ochre. The upper half she covered with the chalky-white clay. Where the two bands of colors came together she painted large red triangles in groups of three. Thus the edge of the red border consists of three triangles, or peaks, then a straight line, three more triangles, and so on around the room. On the white upper portions of the walls are geometric designs painted in red; parallel straight lines, parallel zigzag lines and parallel fringed lines.

The painting was cleverly done and the final effect is strikingly beautiful. The young woman is artistic in everything she does. Her pottery designs are the best in the city and she even wears her little yucca-string skirt at an artistically rakish angle. The men of the neighborhood often speak of her artistry. Their wives speak of her extremely poor cooking.

As spring progresses the weather grows warmer. The wet, heavy snows come less frequently and most of the days are full of sunshine. Sometimes sharp winds sweep off the snow-covered mountains to the north and cut across the mesa tops but the sheltering cave keeps them out of Cliff Palace.

As April arrives the effects of sunshine and moisture become evident. The grass is green, leaves are coming out on the shrubs and the earth is broken by the first tender shoots of myriads of growing plants. There is a damp, earthly smell in the canyons; the dank odor of rotting leaf mold, the heavy odor of wet clay. Through it all is the delicate fragrance of growing, budding plants. Back from the south come the first birds and spring is definitely in the Mesa Verde.

The earth-loving Cliff Dwellers are bursting with restless energy. Everyone is busy. Sometimes the city is almost deserted as the call of spring draws them out of the cave. The cliffs echo with the laughter of small children as they play along the slopes and down in the bottom of the canyon. During the winter in the shadowy cave their skins became pale but already the spring sun is tanning them to a warm brown. Their hearts are light, they are like unrestrained little

brown animals as they play the days away. They have fewer cares and troubles than the chipmunks and squirrels whose lives they make miserable. Each small boy carries a bow and each one knows how to set cord snares in the runways among the rocks. Sometimes a small hunter is successful and the cliffs ring with his exaltant shouts as he brings a chipmunk or a squirrel or even a fat rat to his mother. At the next meal he is a hero and receives the choicest morsels from his kill.

Some of the older boys go out on the mesas for larger game. The wet, silent earth makes it easy for them to stalk the deer and mountain sheep that have never been alarmed by the thundering reports of firearms. At long range their flint-tipped arrows are not effective but they are clever stalkers and at close range the silent arrows are deadly. In the evening they return with their game. They trot proudly down the precipitous trails and through the city, hoping that the eyes of the maidens will rest upon them. But the soft brown eyes are always turned away--still they see.

Most of the men climb up to the mesa-top fields even though they are too wet to be worked. Their love of the soil draws them to their farms and they boast about the crops they intend to grow, or listen to the old men as they tell of the miraculous crops of bygone years.

Even though it is too early to farm the men are soon busy. New land must be cleared to replace fields that have been farmed too long. The sage brush and shrubs are pulled up or are dug out of the ground with digging sticks. Small trees are cut with stone axes but the larger trees are burned and in all parts of the Mesa Verde columns of smoke rise as men of the different villages clear the land.

The fields are owned in common by the clans but usually each man works a certain portion that he feels is his own. If he neglects it the clan leaders may give it to someone else. Young men, whose hearts are swollen to the bursting point with thoughts of marriage, are given small bits of farming land but each takes a

fierce pride in clearing a new plot that he can consider his own. It is community farming for the good of the clan but each man likes to feel proprietorship over a certain portion.

In the early spring no one is busier than the women. Each day they scour the canyons and mesas for the early plants that will lend a variety to the diet. During the late winter the food became monotonous. Day after day it was cornbread, beans and meat. Principally it was cornbread and although it could be prepared in a number of ways it became tiresome.

The early spring plants bring a welcome variation. Some are boiled and eaten as greens, others are used to give flavor to stews and gruels while some are made into teas that serve as spring tonics. Innumerable plants are edible and by countless generations of experimenting the Indian women have discovered the good qualities of each. They know exactly how to use each plant and new aromas rise from the cooking pots.

During the winter the people ate the monotonous food because they needed the nourishment. Now they eat for the joy of eating. Eyes gleam with anticipation and mouths water as each family gathers around the fire where the mother prepares the food. There is cornbread, made in any one of a dozen ways. There is roasted or boiled meat or a thick meat stew. A bowl of boiled greens, or a pot of beans flavored with some spring plant, bubbles on the fire and a great steaming pot of tea simmers on its bed of coals. At last the meal is ready and the steaming pots are placed on the ground in the midst of the family group.

The only tools are the fingers and they are plunged eagerly into the food, hot though it may be. Chunks of meat are picked out and if too hot are held on a piece of bread. Bones are gnawed on, then dropped back into the pot as the fingers are needed for something else. Dunking is common and the bread is used to scoop up the thick stew. Toothless old men, becoming impatient, pick up the bowls and drink over the edge. There are long handled ladles for dipping out the soup and broth, and stein-like mugs for the tea.

Usually the men begin to eat first and as they lag the women and children join in. There is little talking; the accent is on the food. The only noise is the licking of the fingers and the loud smacking of lips that express appreciation for especially succulent morsels. As the men settle back, swollen from overeating, they seek relief in deep rumbling belches, each of which is a pat on the back for the cook. No words are necessary. A slow rumbling belch is far more expressive. It speaks of a full, happy stomach, complete relaxation and sleepy contentment. Each belch brings happiness to the fond wife and mother and she smiles as she removes the empty pots from the midst of her gorged sleepy family.

As darkness falls the day's activities are ended and quiet settles over the city. Mats, skins and blankets are rolled out on the floors of the houses and soon the people of Cliff Palace are asleep. The quiet of the night is broken only by the snoring of tired men and the barking of a fox across the canyon. The tiny sliver of a new moon sinks behind the western mesa leaving brilliant, low-hung stars to watch over the sleeping people.

During the early spring one of the most important activities of the women is the making of new pottery. Very little was made during the winter because of the cold but much was broken. Numb fingers often let the vessels slip and now each woman needs to replenish her stock of water jars, cooking pots, bowls, ladles and mugs. The greatest need is for the large water jars. In the early summer there will be a long period of dry weather. For at least a month, possibly for two months, there will not be a drop of rain on the Mesa Verde. The springs will dwindle and the great pools in the bottom of the canyon will shrink. There must be additional stored water.

There are no wells or cisterns so water will be stored in the large jars. The women must make countless dozens of them, each one large enough to hold four or five gallons of water. During the late spring rains they will be filled and set away in small storage rooms that were emptied of their corn and beans during the

winter. When the dry weather comes the stored water will be of vital importance.

The women of Cliff Palace make the beautiful black-on-white pottery that is typical of all the Cliff Dwellers of the Mesa Verde. They are proud of the graceful shapes and exact designs and each woman strives to excell her neighbors. All of the women use the same methods and there is a surprising sameness about their products. Each one varies her designs and no two pieces are exactly alike but all are of a standardized type. Each piece proclaims its Mesa Verde origin.

The women are very proud of their pottery and seldom swerve from the conventional type. Sometimes when the men go to distant regions on trading trips they bring home a few pieces of foreign pottery. Their wives compare this pottery with their own and are always satisfied. They feel that their wares excell all others and continue to make the same types that their mothers and grandmothers made.

Pottery making is a long detailed process that requires much skill and it is only after many years of practice that women are able to make pieces of the finest quality. Each step must be carefully and thoroughly executed or the final result will not make a woman's husband proud when he compares her pottery with that of the other women.

Two ingredients are needed for the actual construction; pottery clay and a tempering material. The clay occurs in a shale layer at the foot of the upper cliff of the canyon wall. There are many deposits, large and small, and each woman has a favorite place from which she obtains her clay. A mile up the canyon from Cliff Palace, at the head of the right-hand fork, is an excellent deposit that is favored by many of the women.

The nights are now without freezing temperatures that would render the digging too difficult so the women begin to make pottery. Early in the morning the potter leaves Cliff Palace and sets out for her favorite clay bed. She carries a large basket and a digging

stick and is accompanied by any of her daughters who are learning the art. The clay is usually soft and easy to dig and she soon returns with a basket of blue-gray earth.

The clay is spread out in the sun to dry and all stones and foreign particles are picked out. After drying thoroughly it is ground very fine on a metate, the same flat stone on which corn is ground. It is now ready for use.

The tempering material comes from an odd source. The woman simply goes out on the trash pile below the cave and picks up a quantity of broken pottery. This she grinds up just as she did the clay until it looks like fine sand. This tempering material is very important for it keeps the vessels from shrinking and cracking as they dry. Many centuries ago the ancestors of the Cliff Dwellers used sand and grit for temper. Some still use them but most of the women use ground-up potsherds. They are just as good and are much easier to obtain. Year after year the broken pots have been ground up and used again. Some of the particles the women are using today may have been used by their ancestors centuries ago.

When the clay and the temper are ready they are mixed, about one part of temper being used to two parts of clay. With her fingers the potter mixes the dry materials very thoroughly for a poor mix will give the pottery an uneven quality. Finally she is satisfied and water is added until she has a thick heavy paste that does not stick to her hands as she works it. After this paste has been very thoroughly kneaded actual construction of the pot begins.

From the mass of paste the potter pinches a small piece. With the palm of her hand she rolls it on a smooth stone until she has a rope of clay smaller in diameter than her little finger and eight or ten inches in length. The paste is so strong that she can pick the roll up without breaking it. Starting at one end she begins to coil this rope of clay around and around on itself, just as a snail shell is coiled. As she adds each coil she pinches it to the last one with her

thumb and forefinger. When the rope of clay is completely coiled she rolls out another and adds it to the first. Coil after coil she adds until the rough pot is completed. At this point it is merely a long slender rope of clay that has been coiled around and around, up and up, into the desired shape, each coil being carefully pinched to the one below. The spiral nature is very evident and thousands of evenly spaced thumbprints remain as evidence of the pinching together of coils.

If a cooking vessel is desired the inside of the jar is smoothed carefully but the outside is left rough and corrugated. Nothing is to be gained by smoothing and decorating. the outside of a cooking jar for it will soon be blackened with soot.

If a water jar, or a bowl is being made the work is only half done for it must be smoothed and decorated. Very carefully the potter rubs the vessel until the inside and outside are as smooth as she can make them. The vessel is still pliable and by working with her hands and a curved piece of gourd rind she can correct the shape slightly to make up for any mistakes she made in the coiling. At last the vessel is smooth and shapely and the potter is satisfied. She places it in the sun to dry and begins to coil another.

After a number of vessels have thoroughly dried in the sun the next step begins. From the mesa top, where it occurs just under the red top soil, the potter has brought a quantity of white clay. A small amount of this is ground up and mixed with water until a white, soupy liquid results. This is the "slip" and it is painted over the entire surface of the vessels giving them a chalky white covering. After the slip has dried each pot is carefully polished with a smooth pebble. Short, brisk strokes are used and the entire surface is polished until it shines. This polishing is a tedious but important step for the smoothness, luster and hardness of the finished vessel depend upon it.

At last the pots are ready for the decorations and this is the part the potter likes best of all. It is her opportunity to demonstrate her creative ability.

Among the Cliff Dwellers the designs are always black, a color that is made from a local plant. The shoots of the common Bee Weed are boiled until a thick brown liquid results. Pottery designs are painted with this liquid.

Out of thin air the woman snatches a design. She has a fierce pride in her ability to create these designs for she knows that later her finished pots will have to bear comparison with those of her neighbors. No tracings or trial pictures are made. She merely selects one of the sun-dried vessels, notes its size and shape and develops in her mind a design that will fit it. Following this mental picture she paints the vessel with the brown liquid. The brush is a small piece of yucca leaf, one end of which has been chewed to loosen the fibers. Her free-hand strokes are swift and sure and soon the vessel bears an accurate, carefully-balanced geometric design. At this stage it is drab looking for the brown lines are not attractive.

At last, after many hours of tiresome work, the potter has a number of pots ready for firing. This is the crucial step and the excellence of the pottery depends upon its success. The pots are carried down to one of the lower terraces at the front of the cave and stacked in a shallow pit that has been scooped out. Over them the potter piles the fuel; wood, bark and cakes of rotting humus from under the trees. When it is ignited it burns and smoulders for hours, subjecting the pots to an intense heat.

When she is satisfied that the pottery is well-fired she rakes it out of the fire, polishes it with a piece of cloth or buckskin and her work is finished. The brown paint has been changed by the heat to a deep black that stands out in striking contrast against the light gray background. From the simple ingredients; clay, ground potsherds and Bee Weed, has come this beautiful, enduring pottery. It is the highest artistic expression of the Cliff Dwellers.

As the potter finishes her work she places the finest pieces in a row along the edge of the terrace or on her roof for all of the women to see. The poorer

pieces she puts back in the dark corners of the house where they will not be noticed. Out of the corner of her eyes she sees other women placing their pottery on display and she smiles with satisfaction as she notes that her work is as fine as any. There is much good-natured competition among the women and each one tries to out-do her neighbors.

Most of the women make pottery of a good grade. A few, such as the little lady who lives up in the painted house make exceptionally fine pottery. Some do not like to make pottery at all. They excell at other crafts, such as basket weaving and leather working, and trade for the pottery they need.

As the spring progresses tremendous quantities of pottery are made. All through the cave women are at work and pottery in all stages of construction is to be seen along all of the terraces and in every courtyard. Spring is the most popular time for this task. The winter is too cold; in the summer water is often scarce. During the spring all conditions are perfect and the nimble fingers are busy until every household is equipped with an ample supply of vessels of all kinds.

Occasionally, during the spring, a marriage takes place in Cliff Palace. When this happens there is much excitement and activity among the two clans affected. There are long preliminary steps and almost every person in the clans plays some part.

The clans are social divisions within the tribe. Each individual is born into a clan and that remains his social group throughout his life. In Cliff Palace with its large population there are a great many while in a small village there may be only one or two. The clans have very little to do with the religious life; they are a part of the social organization.

The Cliff Dweller society is matrilineal. This merely means that the line of descent is through the women, not through the men. A child is born into its mother's clan, never into its father's. Property also belongs to the women. Thus all inheritance is figured through the female line and there is no continuance of the male line from one generation to the next. The

husband lives with his wife in her house and his children belong to her clan. Marriage can never take place between two members of the same clan. This is a rigidly enforced taboo so the boy and girl must belong to different social groups. All of the members of a clan are considered as brothers and sisters, consequently there is no temptation to overstep this rule.

When a boy reaches the age of fifteen or sixteen and seems to be growing into manhood his family begins to think of marriage for him. It is the responsibility of his elders to arrange this for there can be little happiness for a single person in a society of this type.

The boy himself has little opportunity for active romance. For some time he has been sending highly expressive glances in the direction of a certain young lady of a neighboring clan, glances loaded with question marks, interrogations, and many other signs from that most universal of all signal codes. Now and then an answering message flashes from her warm brown eyes. In a very short while, and without a spoken word, an understanding grows up between them. Each would like to slip away to some quiet nook in the cliffs to take the matter up a little more directly but it is virtually impossible and decidedly unwise. The girl's mother and her aunts have not missed a single one of those expressive glances. They do not disapprove in the slightest but they never give the girl a chance to slip away into the twilight. They may not distrust the girl but they certainly do not trust the spring moon that bathes the canyons in its warm yellow light. Sometimes a young couple, unable to resist the call, does slip away into the night but it is very foolish. There is no secrecy in this crowded community and a twilight tryst never goes unnoticed. The juicy morsel spreads, for Cliff Palace, being full of human beings, has its gossips. The marriage value of the young lady is lowered.

In the normal course of events the young man who has been carrying on the optical conversation with the certain young lady is finally unable to curb his emotions. He goes to his favorite uncle, or possibly

to his mother and pours out his heart. Boasting of his manhood, his hunting ability and his plot of farming land he concludes that it is high time for him to have a home of his own. And he would like to marry a certain young lady.

Immediately a family counsel is called and the proposition is discussed at length. If the elders do not approve of the young lady the young man is immediately squelched. There is no resisting the decision. The brokenhearted youngster will either nurse his sorrow until another maiden captures his fancy or meekly marry some girl whom his family selects.

If, on the other hand, the family counsel approves of his judgment a delegation is soon sent to talk with the family of the girl. The virtues of the boy are extolled at great length and there is a mention of certain presents that the boy's family will give to the family of the girl. The relatives of the girl tell of her virtue, industry and excellent health and let it be known that certain presents will be expected.

If the two families fail to reach an agreement the romance of the young couple is ended but if they finally talk around to happy settlement the marriage is definitely on. It will not take place for weeks but there is much to be done. The boy and his family must get the gifts ready and it is the custom for the girl and her relatives to build a house.

In addition to presents that his family has promised to give to the girl's family the boy makes certain personal presents for his bride-to-be. He may make her a fine pair of sandals or a pair of buckskin moccasins. He may weave her a soft, warm turkey feather blanket or even a beautiful white blanket of cotton.

The weaving of a cotton blanket may send him far afield. If his near relatives do not happen to have enough cotton on hand he is forced to make a long journey to the desert lands hundreds of miles to the south. The Cliff Dwellers do not raise cotton and it is obtained by trade with tribes in the warmer lowlands. There are several men in Cliff Palace and other nearby cliff dwellings who are in need of cotton so

an expedition is formed. These journeys are made each year and many of the older men are familiar with the route. Some of them act as guides for the young fellows who are going for the first time.

Such trading expeditions are happy experiences for the men. They not only love to travel and meet other people but they love to trade. All along the route are villages of friendly Pueblo Indians and almost every night the travelers will be honored guests in one of these villages. Traders are always welcome for they not only offer an opportunity for trading but they bring news from far countries.

The departure of the trading party is a gala occasion and all the people in Cliff Palace join to give it a noisy send-off. It is the first expedition of the spring so a great many men are in the party. Some are going for cotton, some for turquoise, while others will bring back salt and sea shells.

As the men start off down the canyon they carry large packs on their backs. Each man bears his weapons, his blankets and a little food. In addition he has the articles that he will offer in trade when he reaches his destination.

In two weeks the men begin to return in small groups and within a month all are back. Some went straight to the south for cotton and salt. Others swung off to the southwest for seashells, not going all the way to the seashore, but trading with other Indians that did. Some of the men went far to the southeast for turquoise and returned with the rich blue stones that are found only in that region.

As the men return there is rejoicing in the cave city. Everyone is relieved when the last group of traders arrives home safely. Sometimes men fail to return from these trading trips. It merely means that they encountered a band of nomadic, war-like Indians and perished. Groups of savage hunters sometimes slip into the Pueblo country to prey upon the peaceful farmers and the pressure from these nomadic Indians is being felt more and more. There was a time, many generations ago, when the Pueblo people had no outside

enemies and they spread far and wide over a large area. Then a new people, tall rawboned Indians who lived by hunting, began to drift into the Pueblo country. They raided the small villages, murdered the men, enslaved the women and children and stole the corn. In the border regions that were sparsely populated village after village was destroyed by the raiders. As the pressure continued some areas were completely abandoned because of the constant threat of murderous raids.

Cliff Palace and its neighbors have not been molested. There is so large a population that the raiders have not dared to enter the Mesa Verde. But the Cliff Dwellers live in fear as the enemy comes closer and closer. This fear of the nomadic people was one of the reasons why most of the Pueblo Indians of the Mesa Verde left the mesa tops a couple of centuries ago and built the cliff dwellings in the caves. Some of the people still live in pueblos on the mesa tops. They will be the first to suffer if the enemy ever comes.

This spring none of the men who went south to trade encountered enemy groups so all have returned safely. They were received hospitably in Pueblo villages along the way and they have brought home a good supply of the things the Mesa Verde does not provide: salt, turquoise, cotton and sea shells. They have also brought news from all the country to the south. Fires burn far into the night as the people listen to the tales from the outer world. The young men who made their first trip have become heroes and they make the most of the opportunity as they tell magnificant tales of the things they have done and seen. Most of them did well with their trading but a few gambled and lost, and have returned with nothing but their loincloths. That is not serious, however, and the great cave rings with laughter as the people torment the unfortunate gamblers.

The young man who needed cotton for his marriage blanket sets up a loom in his kiva and begins to weave. Older men in the clan help him with the spinning and the blanket grows steadily. The yarn is spun by hand until it is fine and even and the young weaver

listens attentively to the advice of the older men as his weaving proceeds. This blanket is an expression of his feelings for the young lady and he makes it as nearly perfect as possible.

The bride-to-be is also busy for she and her relatives on her mother's side must provide a house. The spot is chosen, either beside her mother's house or on top of it and the walls begin to rise. The house will be the property of the girl and her wishes are respected but the real supervisor of operations is her mother. She is experienced in such matters and her tongue is sharp as she directs the many workers. All of the girl's clan relatives help. The men do the heavy work of cutting roof poles and shaping the stones while the mortar work and plastering is the work of the women.

Stones for the house are not quarried. The men simply go out along the canyon slopes and pick up small rocks that are of the proper size, though of irregular shapes. As soon as a large pile is accumulated the men begin to dress the stones. A few well-directed blows from a heavy maul or hammer give a stone the general shape desired, while a thorough dressing with small pecking and rubbing stones gives it the final finish. Half an hour of work results in a well-shaped building block. The sandstone is soft and the men are skillful, so in spite of the simple tools the building stones are turned out surprisingly fast.

Mortar for the walls is prepared by the women. Gray clay is generally used and it needs only the addition of water to make a heavy, sticky mortar. The women also lay most of the stones in place with the girl herself doing much of the work. When the walls are as high as the builders heads three or four heavy poles are laid across as main roof supports. Over these is spread a thatch of brush and withes and the roof is finished off with a layer of adobe three or four inches thick.

It takes only a few days to build the house if the builders are in a hurry but they seldom are. The house can be completed long before the boy's weaving is

done so the work is done leisurely. House building is a pleasant task. All of the close relatives in the girl's clan work together and the hours are filled with laughter and practical jokes. There is much feasting and of course a happy celebration when the house is finished.

As the little structure rises there is a deep satisfaction in the hearts of the builders. They are helping a young couple reach their ultimate goal. To the home-loving Cliff Dwellers this goal is marriage, a home and children. Their lives point toward that end.

This tiny room will be home to the young couple for the rest of their lives. It is small, not over six by eight feet in size and the roof is so low that the husband will have to duck his head to miss the beams. The one door is very small, measuring only sixteen inches in width and twenty-four inches in height. The door sill is almost three feet above the floor and it will be awkward for the short, chubby little bride who is scarcely five feet tall. She will have difficulty straddling through the high opening, and will not dare grow too fat in later years. Older women often get so heavy that they can hardly squeeze through the tiny doors. But it has always been the custom to make the doors small and time-honored custom means more than the comfort of fat women.

There are no windows in the house and it has no firepit. Few of the women have their fires inside their houses and cooking is done in the courts. Some of the older women who suffer from rheumatism and arthritis have fires in their houses but the smoke is very bad.

The final step in the construction of the house is the plastering. This is left to the young bride-to-be and she does it with loving care. A smooth coat of plaster, a few red designs and the house is finished. Her husband will come to live in it with her but it will always be her property. She is terribly proud of it. Being uncivilized she feels that her home will be the most important thing in her life.

All of the houses in Cliff Palace are much like this one. They are small, simple rooms that serve principally as sleeping quarters and for the storage of possessions. Most of the activities take place in the open courts and on the roofs of the terraced structures so there is no need for large houses. They would be difficult to warm in winter and would reduce the number of families that could live in the cave.

When the boy has finished his weaving and the girl's house is ready the wedding takes place and the boy moves his personal property; his clothing, weapons and tools from his mother's house to the girl's house. They are now husband and wife. Although he is sixteen and she only fourteen they have entered the serious phase of life and must bear their share of the community responsibility.

The first few weeks of married life are difficult for the young husband. He is living in the midst of his wife's relatives who are watching him critically. If he fails to fit in life will be miserable for him and he may come home some evening to find that his wife has thrown all of his possessions out of the house, indicating that he is no longer welcome. Few marriages end that way, for the young husbands, being still pliable, are able to fit themselves into the groove their in-laws cut for them. In some cases the house may not even be built until the young husband has lived with his wife's relatives for a time and has been fully approved by them.

The individual is not important to the Cliff Dwellers. The social unit is the family and a group of closely united families means a strong, self-sufficient family group or clan. The interests of each person are important only as they affect the welfare of the clan group. True courtship, personal privacy and individual ownership of property are practically unknown. The interest of the individual is welded into the far more important interest of the family group or clan. As the clan prospers so does each individual prosper and class distinction does not exist.

Marriage is an important function and the union of strong healthy boys and girls is a responsibility that falls on the older clan members. Occasionally a headstrong youth who has allowed a deep, long-distance love to grow upon him rebels against a dictated marriage. In his heart, however, is an inborn, confident reverence for his elders and he is soon frowned into line.

Toward the end of April a period of frenzied activity begins for the men of Cliff Palace. It will soon be planting time and the fields must be prepared for that all-important time when the precious seeds will be placed in the earth. The frost has left the soil and it is dry enough to be worked. Each morning the men and boys trot up the trails to the mesa tops to spend the day preparing the soil for planting. The fields are scattered far and wide over the mesas. Most of the men from Cliff Palace have their farms nearby but some trot miles across the flat mesa tops to farm certain favored plots. These men who have descended from a thousand years of farmers have an uncanny ability to select the best areas for farming.

The fields are seldom large and they are never regular in shape. An acre here, a few acres there, they dot the mesa tops, the rich red soil standing out sharply against the green cover of the vast "green table." The heavy snows of winter have filled the earth with moisture that will carry the crops through the dry, hot weather of early summer. Then the late summer rains will come and the worries of the farmers will be over.

Many of the men like to farm in the low draws above the heads of the canyons. There is deep rich soil there and a concentration of moisture that produces the finest crops. Such draws are not large but they make excellent farming areas. The men even enlarge them by building terraces where the draws are too narrow and steep for normal farming. Low dams of stones are built across the drainage, seldom more than three or four feet high and twenty or thirty feet long. The heavy rains of summer wash rich soil from the mesas and deposit it behind the dams. Soon each one becomes a

terrace large enough for a few hills of corn, beans or squash. Sometimes there are as many as a hundred of these terraces in a single small draw. In a dry year, when the plants on the mesa tops die from lack of moisture, these terraces usually produce a crop. Even a slight rain causes water to drain down across them and they assure the Cliff Dwellers of a small harvest.

The early spring work consists of clearing the trash and weeds out of the fields and stirring up the soil for the planting. Dead weeds are pulled out of the ground and burned and the first green weeds of spring are prodded out of the soil with digging sticks. Some of the men even begin to stir up the soil where they will later place the seeds. The Cliff Dwellers plant all of their crops in widely-spaced hills and the planting is very deep. Corn is sometimes planted a foot in the earth so each hill requires a great deal of effort. The plants grow better if the soil is loosened up so the men select the spots for the hills and begin to dig up the soil and turn it over.

The only tool is a digging stick, a slender hardwood limb that has one end sharpened into a chisel-like blade. Small digging sticks may be only an inch in diameter and a foot in length but the large ones are sometimes three inches in diameter and five feet long. The upper end of the large ones is rounded into a knob that serves as a handhold and near the base may be a prong so the foot can be used in forcing the blade into the soil.

Sometimes a stone blade is attached to the digging stick. The stone for these blades is found down across the San Juan River, forty miles to the southwest. That is only a short easy journey; the young men make the round trip easily in three or four days and return with long, thin slabs of stone. For days the men grind these on pieces of sandstone until a long thin blade, two or three inches wide and from six to ten inches in length, is formed. The stone is a light tan color, with thin bands of red and brown and it takes a beautiful polish. When one of these blades is bound firmly to a long handle it makes a very serviceable tool for turning up the soil and chopping out weeds.

While the men are preparing the fields the medicine men are watching the weather very carefully. It is their duty to set the planting date. There are countless signs that they must take into consideration. They watch the sun in its movement along the horizon and they note the position of the new moon. The return of certain birds from the south is observed and the appearance and growth of spring plants is watched carefully. The clouds and the sky are observed constantly and the wind is tested many times a day. All of these things have a meaning. Countless generations of medicine men have developed a "weather sense" and barring occasional mistakes they are quite accurate in their predictions.

In addition to setting the planting date the priests must also perform certain ceremonies over the seeds that are to be planted. Spring is not an important ceremonial season for the men are too busy to spare time for the long, elaborate ceremonies. Certain rites must be performed, however; offerings must be made to certain gods so they will smile upon the people. It is a simple form of "crop insurance."

The fertility rites are especially important for unless the gods of fertility and reproduction are pleased the seeds will rot in the ground without sprouting.

Around the precious seeds the priests and their helpers perform the ancient rites. Year after year the ritual is the same; countless generations of priests have developed this elaborate formula that is followed in the finest detail. There is endless chanting, parts of the legends are dramatized, and there are offerings of prayersticks, corn pollen, cornmeal and perfect ears of corn. If the ceremonies are performed properly the germ gods will be pleased and the seeds will sprout and grow well.

As the end of spring draws near everything is in readiness. The germination ceremonies are over and the fields are ready for the planting. The eager farmers await the nod of the priests that will send them scurrying to the fields to plunge the seeds into the earth.

In any normal year in the Mesa Verde there are several days of rain about the middle of May. The Cliff Dwellers like to plant their crops just before the rains come in order that they may get the greatest benefit from the moisture. If the planting is done too early, however, there is danger of late frosts so the medicine men are in a dangerous position. If they sanction the planting too soon frosts may nip the tender young shoots, while if they hold off too long the rains may come. Not only will the planting be delayed many days but much of the benefit of the moisture will be lost.

Carefully the priests watch the signs. The birds, the plants, the sun, the moon; everything goes through the regular progression of spring. Then comes a day when there is a slight haze in the sky and the air feels cool and damp. That is the signal. The moisture is in the air; only an east wind is needed to bring it down. The planting must be completed before the east wind comes. All of the men and boys, even some of the women help with the planting. The moist red earth is easy to dig and with the abundance of help the work proceeds rapidly. From sunrise to sunset they work, always keeping an apprehensive eye on the weather.

The first few hills in each field are planted ritually. They are laid out in a certain manner and brief prayers are chanted. After this ceremonial beginning the rest of the hills are planted helter-skelter. There are no rows, simply individual hills planted from five to eight feet apart with no effort toward orderliness. The only care exercised in the location of the hills is that they are not in the same spot as those of last year. Enough stubs from last year's crop have been left in place to indicate where not to plant. By changing the location of the hills each season and by wide planting the men save the soil, for it may be years before two hills are planted in the same spot.

Planting methods are very simple. A hole is dug, the seeds are dropped in, and the earth falls back into place. Light pressure with the foot compacts the moist soil about the seeds. Corn is planted almost a foot deep and eight or ten kernels are placed in each

hill. Beans and squash are given a shallower planting with fewer seeds in the hills. Sometimes the corn, beans and squash are planted in separate plots but often they are all planted together in the same field.

The planting proceeds rapidly with the men digging the holes and the boys and girls dropping the seeds. Plot after plot is completed and the tension begins to lessen. In a few days every field is planted and the happy farmers sit back to wait for the rain. It is not long in coming. One evening the wind swings to the east and during the night the Cliff Dwellers are awakened by the pleasant sound of rain in the canyons. There are contented smiles on their faces as they are lulled back to sleep by the swishing waterfall that pours over the front of the cave.

The rain lasts for days. It is a soft, warm spring rain, a female rain. There is none of the bluster that will come with the male rains of late summer. Day and night it falls, and the earth, well-loosened by the winter frosts, drinks up the moisture.

There is happiness in Cliff Palace for an abundant harvest is now almost assured. The men gather in small groups along the front terraces, chatting gaily as they watch the rain. In their minds they see the grains of corn swell and burst, to send thin green shoots toward the light. In spite of the rain and mud some of them trot up to the mesa tops to look at the fields. They know exactly how the fields look but still they must see them. Nothing has happened. The earth is taking up the moisture, weeds are shooting out of the ground, but none of their plants have broken the surface. Drenched, they return to the cave to spread the word that all is well up on the mesa top.

The rainy days are days of rest for the men but they are days of strenuous activity for the women and girls. All of the great water jars must be filled and stored away. As soon as the spring rains are over the dry period will begin. It may be two months before there is another drop of rain so the storage of abundant supplies of water is of vital importance.

In the canyon below Cliff Palace is a series of dams. The first one is just below the trash pile at the front of the cave while the last one is far down the canyon. Several of the dams are quite large, five or six feet in height and over twenty feet in length. These dams are not like the farming terraces up on the mesas. They are for water storage, so they are kept cleaned out and are not allowed to silt up. Being made of large stones, chinked with smaller stones and adobe, they act as perfect barriers for the rain water that drains down the canyon. All of the dams have been cleaned out and repaired during the spring and the rain soon fills each one to overflowing. The great pools of water thus retained sometimes last the people of Cliff Palace until the summer rains come.

In addition to the storage pools the women also store great quantities of water in their jars. Hundreds of the large vessels have been made; each woman has several. As the rain sends streams of clear water cascading down the cliffs the women fill these jars and set them away in the cave, each one covered with a close-fitting stone lid. Scattered through the city are innumerable small rooms that are too small for living purposes. They are for the storage of corn and beans. Many of the rooms are still full of grain but some were emptied last winter and they now make a perfect place for storage of the precious jars of water. Long before the spring rains are over the jars are all filled and safely stored away.

As the rains begin to show signs of subsiding the men keep watchful eyes on the dams in the canyon. Some are built higher, others are strengthened so that when the rains cease and the dry weather begins they will be holding every possible drop of water. The great pools are shaded by cliffs and trees and they will keep the water cool and fresh far into the summer. With the water that is contained in the pools and the water jars, and the daily flow from nearby springs the people have little fear of water shortage.

After several days of almost continuous rain the skies clear and the sun beats down on a damp, green world. The warmth and moisture cause every growing

thing to reach for the sky. Weeds and flowers spring up everywhere and after a few days the red soil of the fields is broken by the green shoots of sprouting plants. There is a splendid stand; the gods of fertility have heard the prayers of the people.

As spring slips into summer the people of Cliff Palace are happy. They have not a worry in the world. All indications point to a normal prosperous year and it is easy to face it with a smile. The spring has been a busy one; spring is always like that for certain things must be accomplished. Those tasks have been completed. The repairing of houses, hunting, gathering of early spring plants, clearing of fields, pottery making, marriages, house building, trading journeys, fertility ceremonies, planting of crops, storage of water; all have been successfully carried out.

The people of Cliff Palace are happy and contended as spring turns into summer.

VII

Summer in Cliff Palace, 1266 A. D.

Summer is an easy time for the Cliff Dwellers, a warm, lazy time. There are certain tasks to be performed but there is also much leisure time for sleeping in the shade, gossiping, gambling and trading. There is not the restless activity that was so evident during the spring. Life proceeds at a slow, easy pace.

The early summer is dry and warm. Little rain can be expected until well along in July; sometimes it does not come until August. The crops in the fields must live on the moisture stored in the earth and the Cliff Dwellers must live on the water they have stored in their pools and water jars. Water is always the critical problem but this year conditions are very favorable.

June is often the hottest month of the summer. The sky is cloudless and the sun beats down day after day drawing the moisture out of the earth. In the sun the temperature is high but the shade is cool and pleasant. The air is dry and a light breeze always blows across the mesa tops. The shade of even a small tree brings relief from the warmth of the sun.

Little clothing is worn. The women have small aprons of dangling yucca fiber strings, the men have loin-cloths of buckskin or cotton cloth but either article may be discarded at any time. Children wear nothing at all. Yucca fiber sandals are usually worn by men, women or children when they leave the cave but they are not essential about the city itself.

The people of Cliff Palace are not clothes conscious and with their rich brown skins they need no protection from the sun. Even the men, who spend long hours in the sunny fields, need no covering.

The farmers are all smiles for their crops are growing prodigiously. Corn, beans, squash; all are doing well. Weeds are also prospering and the men are busy day after day pulling them up or chopping them out with their digging sticks. If the weeds are not destroyed they take moisture that the crops need.

Every morning, not long after sunrise, the men trot up to the fields. For a few hours they work industriously, chopping weeds or loosening the soil around the plants. Earth is kept piled up around the stalks of corn: it was planted almost a food deep and this heaping up of the earth around the hills puts the roots even farther underground. At that depth there is an abundance of moisture in the soil.

Along towards noon, when the sun is high over head and the heat becomes noticeable, the men end their labors. Some of them trot back down to the cave, others merely seek the shade of the trees that border the fields, and the warm midday hours are slept away. When the heat has passed they return to their work.

These men have a deep, inborn love for farming. They are descended from a thousand years of successful farmers and a fanatical desire to make things grow is in their blood. They often go to the fields when there is nothing to be done. The weeds have been cut, the soil is well-loosened up, everything is just right. Still the men go to the fields to spend the hours among the growing things. Every hill of corn, every bean plant receives individual attention. Endlessly the men work about the fields, even though they only pick an occasional bug off the plants.

During the midday siesta the men often gather in little groups and while away the hours telling of crops of the past or dreaming of the harvest that is to come. Those hours are not always spent idly for there are many tasks the men can do as they sit in the shade. One man may chip arrowheads; another may whittle away on his new bow. Here a man is patching his sandals while his neighbor puts a new blade on his digging stick. Much can be accomplished during these hours when the sun is high and the shade is welcome.

The fields are never left without watchers. All day long someone is on guard and even during the night the young men and boys take turns watching the precious crops. Corn and squash seldom suffer but the bean plants are highly prized by rabbits and squirrels. In a few hours time a field could be ruined. Later on in the summer crows, jays and ravens will tear at the ears of corn and eat great holes in the tender squashes. Even the coyotes like the squashes and as one of the animals trots through the field he may take great bites out of half a dozen. Faced with this danger the Cliff Dwellers are forced to watch the fields day and night. The unmarried boys build brush shelters in the fields and spend much of the summer there, dreaming of the chubby little maidens for whom they will soon be farming.

As the dry weather of summer continues the people show much concern over the water supply. They know that if the late summer rains come normally they will have more than enough. But if, as sometimes happens, the rains fail to come they will be in serious trouble. They prepare for this possibility by conserving the supplies religiously. In order to save the water that is stored in the jars and in the pools below the cave the springs are utilized to the utmost. There are many of these springs along the canyon walls at the foot of the cliffs, and others are to be found in the bottom of the canyon beyond the pools. One of the finest springs is across the canyon, under the great ceremonial building where the priests hold their most important ceremonies. It is almost half a mile by trail to that spring but it has a strong flow of water. In spite of the long, tiresome journey the water must be saved. That is one of the tragedies in the lives of the Cliff Dweller men. They are forced to carry the water home from distant springs--on their wives' heads!

Each morning the women make the round of the springs to gather the water that has accumulated. At each place where there is a seepage they have made a basin of well-tamped blue shale. The water does not seep through this shale readily and a pool of clear

water results. The best springs are visited several times a day so the pools do not overflow. With their long-handled ladles the women dip the water into their jars, some of which hold as much as five gallons. The heavy jars are then borne home on their heads. Years of practice have given them strong necks, straight backs and a smooth, flowing stride. They chat happily as they trot home with their burdens: life is gay and easy with nothing to do but carry water up out of the canyon. By carrying the water jars on their heads the women have their hands free when they climb the rows of toe-holds that are cut into the more precipitous cliffs. Ladders that lead up over the terraced houses are simple: the water carriers trot up them without deigning to touch their hands to the poles.

Each woman has a small pad of yucca fibers, shaped like a large doughnut, that she places between her head and the water jar. This pad helps in balancing the burden and keeps her calloused head from cracking the precious jar.

Every effort is made to conserve the water supply for as the warm weather continues the springs begin to dwindle and the pools shrink. There is no repairing and building of houses; water cannot be spared for the mortar. Pottery is seldom made at this time for that too, requires water. By using it only for the human needs the supply can be drawn out for months if necessary.

In addition to their water carrying activities the women are also busy gathering the edible plants that are so common during the summer. These plants give a variety to the diet and help to conserve the stores of grain. In June the mesa tops are covered with flowers of all kinds and the women admire them and call them by name as they search for the plants that have value as food or medicine. The leaves and fruit of the prickly pear are eaten; also the beautiful waxy flowers and the tender flower stem of the yucca. Lily bulbs, wild onions, "wild potatoes," bee plant, wild gooseberries, wild currants, sumac berries, and Mormon tea are only a few of the natural products that the women gather. They know every seed, root, bulb, berry

and plant that has value and they search the mesas and canyons in order to add them to their larders.

Occasionally the women interrupt the usual routine of their daily tasks in order to give birth to babies. It is a pleasant diversion for children are highly prized in this society. A woman continues her regular work until almost time for the happy event. Being strong and active she ordinarily goes through it easily and in a few days returns to her regular tasks. Older women of her clan help her through the ordeal, or if all does not go well a medicine man may be called to chant her through her troubles. After the child is born certain little ceremonies must be performed. Offerings are made and evil spirits are invited to stay away. On a certain day the child is dedicated to the Sun Father, while on another day there is a naming ceremony and the child is given a name by some near relative. After these minor rituals are over the child takes its place in the community.

For the first fifteen months it will spend most of the time on a cradle board. This is merely a thin, smooth board to which the child is bound with soft folds of cotton cloth or buckskin and a lacing of strings. No pillow is provided and the soft, pliable head rests on the hard board month after month. The result is obvious. Gradually the back of the head flattens until it fits the board.

This change of head shape has no effect on the child except in the matter of appearance. As the skull presses in at the back it bulges our over the ears. The brain adjusts itself to the changing shape of its container and suffers no ill effects. As a result of the use of this hard cradle board all of the Cliff Dwellers have the deformity on the back of the head. Sometimes it is terrific and the head is as wide as it is long.

The cradle board makes the care of the child very simple. The mother may carry it on her back as she goes about her work. She may hang it on a tree or a roof pole or lean it up against the house. When the child is on its cradle board it is in no danger of

rolling off the roof or over a cliff. Occasionally it is taken off the cradle and the juniper bark pad that serves as a diaper is changed. When the child reaches the age where it must learn to walk it will be released from the cradle and will be placed in the constant care of an older sister or some other little girl of its clan. The child automatically belongs to the clan of its mother.

As the dry weather continues through June the men keep an anxious eye on the sky. Certain conditions must develop before the rains can come. Late in June there is a sigh of relief from the farmers. The sky is no longer a solid canpoy of blue. Along the northeastern horizon great white clouds begin to appear. At first they are small but each day they grow larger. Soon they are tremendous, billowy, white thunderheads that boil up until they cover half the sky. Soon they will break and the worries of the farmers will be over.

The crops are growing well. By the end of June the corn is almost two feet tall and the men thin it out. The weak stalks are pulled out of each hill leaving the five or six strongest ones. The fight against weeds is continued but during most of the summer the men have a great deal of time for other activities.

During the times when they are not completely occupied with their farms they work at their various crafts and as a result there is much trading. Each man needs certain things, such as turkey feather blankets, cotton blankets, jewelry, tanned buckskin, sandals, leggins, bows, arrows, planting sticks, stone knives and scrapers, yucca fiber cords and ropes, axes, hammers, and countless other things. Some of the men can and do make any or all of these things. Most of the men, however, specialize on the things they can do best and trade for their other necessities.

In one house lives a man who makes splendid arrowheads. Next door is an old fellow who is famous for his fine yucca fiber sandals. Upstairs is an axe maker and still higher, in the third story house, is a man who specializes on tanning buckskin. Across the court is a young fellow who is especially adept at twisting

yucca fibers into cords and ropes. In another part of the city is one who makes turkey feather blankets, somewhere else is a jeweler. Some of the men make a number of different things but few of them make all of the things they need.

The result of this semi-specialization is that there is much trading. This is true not only within Cliff Palace but also between villages. Within a mile of the large city are a dozen smaller cliff dwellings. Up the canyon are four small ones, and directly across the canyon, within easy calling distance, is a very small cliff dwelling having only six or seven families. Around the point in the canyon back of the great ceremonial building are three good sized ones and on down the canyon are several more. In more distant canyons and up on the mesa tops are hundreds of other villages, large and small.

Trails lead from one to the next and when a man needs something he trots off to the place where he knows he can find it. He spends the day at his trading even though he needs only a single stone knife. He may visit two or three men who make knives, haggling with each. In between times he gossips with friends. When meal time comes he pulls up beside any convenient food bowl and is a welcome though uninvited guest. After overeating he takes a nap, then returns to his trading. Toward the end of the day he makes a deal and sets out for home. The same bargain could have been made early in the morning but that would have robbed him of all the day's pleasure.

Since Cliff Palace is so large it is the scene of much trading for men from the smaller villages can find anything they want somewhere in the city. Early in the morning they come trotting up the trail to spend the day in the cool shadowy cave trading for what they need. When the heat of the day is over they set out for home with their new possessions.

Sometimes men of other tribes come to trade and there is great excitement in the city. The strangers not only bring beautiful jewelry and much-needed cotton and salt but they bring news from the outside world.

This is almost as important as the actual objects of trade. Before the trading can begin the people must hear what is going on outside their own little world.

The news that the welcome traders bring is of an infinite variety. It may concern the weather, the crops, the hunting conditions, or the private affairs of the people. The news may be bad: somewhere a village has been visited by a scourge of dysentary and half of the children are dead; in one region a plague of grasshoppers has destroyed the crops; somewhere else a forest fire has wiped out the entire population; in another place the enemy tribes are becoming stronger and village after village is being wiped out. There is no joy when these things are told. But more often the news is good: there is a fine crop of pinon nuts on a certain mountain; in a certain region the deer are as thick as lice on an old man's head; a new vein of turquoise has been discovered that yields hard, blue stones. Much of the news is of a personal nature: there has been a murder; in a certain village a woman has had triplets; a man has been thrown out by his mother-in-law because he snored too loudly; a certain priest is having miraculous luck with his healing ceremonies; a deformed child has been born; a well-known chief has gone blind.

Much of the news is pure gossip and it is repeated time after time, gaining spice and details with each telling. There is no restraint in discussions concerning intimate personal affairs and every new bit of scandal is relished by the fireside listeners. The travelers who bring news from distant regions expect an even trade: they must return home with a full stock of news for their own people.

The news that has the greatest effect upon the Cliff Dwellers it that concerning the enemy raiders. For generations the threat has been increasing. The Pueblo people have been forced to band together for protection but the enemy grows stronger.

So far the Mesa Verde has not suffered but the people know the danger is coming closer each year. There are so many villages on the great, protective

mesa that they have always felt safe. In the caves are hundreds of cliff dwellings, all easily defended, and on the mesa tops are additional dozens of pueblos with thick defensive walls. Each village is within shouting distance of the next and help could be quickly summoned. But the savage raiders grow bolder and stronger. Sooner or later they will come climbing up to the top of the Mesa Verde to steal women and corn, even though it is a long way to go for corn.

Except for these alarming bits of news the visits of the traders are festive occasions. Everyone marvels at the things they bring. The men bargain endlessly, and the exchange of news continues day after day. The women cook their finest dishes and the dusty travelers are honored guests. After days of friendly visiting and trading they start back down the trail bearing the good wishes of the people of Cliff Palace.

Gambling is also a common indulgence among the men and much of the exchange of goods is through gambling rather than trading. At any time of the day a knot of interested onlookers can be seen somewhere in the city, silently watching some game of chance. Anything that has the slightest value can be gambled. Sometimes the stakes may be only insignificant objects, while other times a man may stake everything he possesses against a single fine piece of jewelry. It may be a guessing contest, a game of skill, or a pure game of chance: someone wins, someone loses and no one is hurt. By a few days of diligent labor a man can easily replace the things lost. Jewelry has the greatest value of any of their possessions. Necklaces, pendants and earrings are made of turquoise, colored stones and sea shells. Some of them are exquisite: the beads of turquoise or stone are sometimes so fine that there are thousands of them on a single necklace.

Toward the middle of July there is an ominous threat in the air each afternoon. Billowing thunderheads fill the sky and turn to a dark, angry shade. Sudden gusts of wind rip across the mesa tops threatening to uproot the corn and there is a distant roll of thunder. The air is heavy and depressing. Each day the skies become darker. Except for the men who are

watching fields the people stay close to the cave. No one wants to be far from shelter when the storm breaks.

At last the day comes. By noon the sky is filled with heavy clouds. Shortly after noon there is a sudden roar of wind. Cannonading crashes of thunder echo constantly through the canyons and searing tongues of lightning flick the tree-tops. Suddenly all is still. Not a leaf stirs; the world is breathless. The storm draws back its arm for one quiet moment, then mercilessly lashes the earth with floods of rain. Wind, thunder and lightning resume and for a noisy hour the mesas bow their heads under the wrath of the elements.

A roaring waterfall shoots out over the front of Cliff Palace cave and from the bottom of the main canyon comes the roar of a rushing stream. The people are silent as they watch the storm from their sheltered housetops. There is joy in their hearts, for the rain ends all worries, but there is an ominous note in the terrible fury of the story. The male rains of summer are often like this. They make a great show of noise and power, far different from the gentle female rains of spring.

In an hour the storm ends as suddenly as it began. The rain stops, the clouds break up and the sun beams down on a dripping world.

Immediately the men are off to the fields to see if the crops have suffered. The drenched watchers, whose brush shelters were poor protection against the storm, assure them that little damage has been done. Some of the corn is down but it will straighten up. The only real loss is that a few terraces have washed out but that is not serious for the terrace crops are important only in dry years when the mesa-top fields fail.

There is great rejoicing in Cliff Palace. The harvests are assured for now that the rains have started they will continue. Every few days for the rest of the summer there will be a rain, sometimes heavy, sometimes light. The danger of water shortage is definitely ended. All of the pools are full of

fresh water and the springs will soon flow with renewed vigor as the rain water reaches them. There is water in abundance and the people no longer need to use it so sparingly.

With the arrival of the rains the heat is broken. The days are cooler now and large, fluffy clouds float about the sky, sending their cool shadows racing across the earth. The nights are sometimes so cool that a turkey feather blanket is necessary for comfort.

As July turns into August the Cliff Dwellers are happy, contented people. All goes well; there are no threats to their security. The fields are bursting with growth and the springs are flowing freely. Those are the two important things in their lives. There is no press of work at this time of the year and the people take life easy. The men watch the fields and work leisurely at their various crafts. The women still gather plants for food and now that there is an abundance of water they make a little pottery and repair their houses.

As always, the children are restless and active. They imitate their elders, doing everything in miniature; miniature farms, miniature bows and arrows, miniature houses and miniature pottery. Sometimes they capture young animals; birds, chipmunks, squirrels or rabbits and while away the hours in more or less successful efforts to tame them. They are never without their dogs and as they play about the canyon they keep watchful eyes on their flocks of turkeys lest they stray too far and fall prey to coyotes and foxes.

Life is full of joy for these children. Day after day they do nothing but play Indian!

During the summer there is only one threat to the happiness and security of the people. Only by terrific effort are the medicine men able to avert a calamity that would wipe out the entire population. One afternoon a terrified scream comes from the small cliff dwelling across the canyon. A man is dancing about on the cliff, waving his arms and pointing frantically toward the sun.

Alarmed, the men shade their eyes and look at the sun as best they can. Immediately they realize the awful calamity that threatens them. Half of the sun has turned black: some frightful monster is swallowing the Sun God. If it succeeds the world will become dark and cold. Life will end.

Instantly the priests go into action and from the kivas come the sounds of their frenzied chanting. Offerings are made, prayers are sung: they perform every magic trick they know that might force the monster to spit out the sun. Everyone in the village joins in. The men came running from the fields. Only a disaster like this could force them to leave the precious crops. For a frenzied hour the hysterical people call upon their gods to drive away the monster that threatens their Sun God.

For a time the blot on the sun grows larger, then, as the priests redouble their efforts, it begins to diminish. At last it is gone and the exhausted people give thanks to their gods. Once again the power of the priests has saved them.

This thing has happened often, sometimes to the sun, sometimes to the moon. Only a few years ago the monster swallowed the moon completely. The oldest men can remember a time when the sun was swallowed completely and the earth grew dark. But in each case the power of the medicine men prevailed and the moon and sun returned undiminished.

Emergencies of this kind give the people renewed faith in their priests. Sometimes they fail to produce rain or cure the sick but such failures can be overlooked when they are able to over-power a demon that threatens the very existence of the people. Never yet have they lost the battle against this demon that threatens to swallow the moon and the sun. Surely their power is supreme.

Throughout the year the priests have a regular round of ceremonies. Fall and early winter are the great ceremonial seasons but there are certain ceremonies that must be performed at other times. Healing

ceremonies are performed whenever there is need. In the spring the fertility rites must be conducted and during the summer certain ceremonies must be performed that will cause the gods to send rain. In a dry year these rain ceremonies are of utmost importance but in years like this one, when the rains have already come, the ceremonies are more in the nature of thanksgiving. Even though the gods have sent the rain the ceremonies are performed. If they were neglected the gods would be offended.

When the prescribed date arrives the elaborate ceremonies begin. For days there are secret ceremonies in the kiva of the religious society that conducts this particular rite. As a climax the tired priests come out of the secret chamber and perform the public part of the ceremony. Housetops are crowded as the people gather to watch the costumed priests go through the ritual that has been handed down through countless generations of priests. Year after year it is the same but the people never tire of it. Every chant, every offering, every bit of action has a meaning. It is all a part of the yearly cycle of ceremonies that brings happiness and prosperity to the people. This ceremonial cycle is the responsibility of the priests and the people have profound confidence in their abilities.

Just before summer slips into autumn the corn fields are the scene of a gay festival. The corn is now as high as a man's head and although the ears are fully formed they are still tender and milky. The grains are still white; the brilliant hues will not appear until they begin to harden. Each day the men examine the ears and when the corn seems to be just right they set the date. One of the men, whose position in the city is similar to that of a town crier, steps out on his high roof that overlooks the entire cave. Gaining the attention of the people he announces the green corn festival will be held on a certain day. His announcement brings a great flurry of excitement. The women begin to prepare for the feasting that will take place.

On the appointed day everyone troops to the

fields and preparations are made for the feast. The men have already dug great pits and fires have been roaring in them for hours. When they are super-heated the coals and ashes are raked out and the pits are lined with corn shucks. Hundreds of ears of green corn are poured in and the pits are covered with more shucks and a thick layer of earth. All through the day the corn cooks in the steaming pits.

While the corn is cooking the priests perform ceremonies of thanksgiving and the women prepare vast quantities of food. The children romp about the fields; wrestling contests and games of skill occupy the boys and young men. The older men loaf and talk and, of course, gamble a little. As the day passes the excitement mounts and at last, as the cool evening breeze begins to rustle the corn leaves, the feasting begins.

The pits are opened and the steaming, tender ears are passed out to the famished crowd. It is a joyous feast for green corn is a favorite delicacy. Great quantities of food are consumed and a contented silence settles over the gorged, happy people.

Just as a monstrous full moon rises out of the eastern mesa they return to their homes. They thrill at the sight for it is something many of them seldom see. Cliff Palace faces west and they can see the full moon only by climbing to the mesa top.

With the green corn festival over summer slips quickly into autumn. The slow, easy days of the growing season are over. The strenuous activity of the harvest season faces the people of Cliff Palace.

VIII

Autumn in Cliff Palace, 1266 A. D.

With the arrival of autumn the most perfect weather of the year begins. For three months it will continue, until winter sweeps down out of the north. In early September the days are still warm but the nights have a pleasant coolness. As the season progresses the daytime warmth continues but the nights become cooler and cooler. By October they are crisp and finally there is frost. The mesas flame with the colors of autumn, the distant mountains are cloaked with a blue-gray haze and for weeks the Cliff Dwellers enjoy the brisk invigorating weather of Indian Summer. Late in October, or in November, there may be a quick flurry of snow, a warning of what is to come but it disappears as quickly as it came. Far into the autumn the warm days last: sometimes the winter storms do not begin until after the sun has started to return from the south.

Autumn is happiest season of the year for the people of the Mesa Verde. It is a season of tremendous activity for now they must reap the rewards for the prayers of springtime and the labors of summer. During the spring they were gay and happy but it was not the full unrestrained happiness of autumn. As the farmers planted their crops last spring they felt a certain helplessness. With each tiny seed they planted a prayer; that was the only aid they could give it. Then they were forced to stand by while the forces of nature; the sun, the rain and the earth, did as they pleased with the precious seeds.

Autumn has brought the rewards for their prayers and labors. There is no uncertainty about it. Nature has smiled, the fields have prospered and nothing can rob them of a bountiful harvest. The cooling weather is turning the fields yellow and the weeks of strenuous activity will soon begin. Every grain of corn, every bean, every squash must be carried down to

the cave and safely stored away.

The fields are guarded constantly. Ravens, jays and crows are trying to get at the corn and the men and boys are forced to keep constant vigil. As they walk about the fields they gloat over the success of their farming efforts. The corn is higher than their heads and heavy ears bend toward the ground. The bean vines are full of fat pods and the fields are dotted with great yellowing squashes. It will be a wonderful harvest: the fields are full of song and laughter as the proud farmers rejoice over their success.

Even before the main harvest starts the products begin to trickle down to the cave. There is an abundance of help for even the children and women join in. Each plant is given individual attention and when an ear of corn, a bean pod or a squash ripens too soon it is picked and carried home.

As the first light frosts of October begin to bring color to the mesas the harvest is on. Everyone helps and from dawn until dusk the trails are full of happy carriers as the fields pour their products into Cliff Palace. The harvest will last well into the fall for it is slow work. Many of the fields are far off across the mesa tops and in a day's time each person will be able to make only a few trips.

A single, fat slippery squash is all that can be carried at one time and it takes only a few large ears of corn to fill a basket. Dozens of trips are required in the harvesting of even a small field. Early in the morning the carriers trot down the trails but as the day wears on the pace becomes slower.

Some of the corn is husked in the fields and only the ears are carried home but much of it is snapped off the stalks and taken home to be husked later. Sometimes the stalks are cut and the entire plant is carried down to the cave for the stalks, leaves, tassels and shucks are used in many ways. The beans are usually threshed in the fields. A smooth plot of ground is selected and the women flail the vines with long sticks until the beans are free from the pods.

Then the whole mass of beaten vines is poured from baskets held high above their heads and the breeze blows the chaff away, leaving only the clean beans. Sometimes the vines are picked and carried down to the cave for threshing but that is more difficult for in the cave there is no breeze to blow away the chaff.

As the harvest progresses Cliff Palace becomes a parade of color. Everything must be spread out on the roofs and in the courts to dry and soon the people can scarcely move about. The corn is brilliantly tinted; red, black, blue, yellow, white and speckled, and the city becomes a flaming riot of colors. Corn is everywhere. It is piled high on the roof tops, it is spread out in every court and long strings of brilliant ears hang from the ends of roof poles. Piles of rich brown beans and waxy yellow squashes add to the color and the confusion. The terraced houses of Cliff Palace are now solid banks of color and still the harvest continues.

Like busy brown ants the women and girls move about the throbbing city. From morning until night they are busy shucking corn, threshing beans, braiding strings of corn, turning the corn and beans each day so they dry properly, and finally storing them away in the bins. The storage of supplies is always a responsibility of the women. While the things were growing in the fields they belonged to the men but now that they have been harvested and brought down to the city they have become the women's property. The women of each clan store their foodstuffs in common and apportion them out to the various families of the clan as they are needed.

High up in the back of the cave, in a long narrow crevice, is almost a score of storage bins. They have been chinked carefully against rats and mice and a lining of dry corn leaves and tassels has been added to protect the grain from any dampness of the rocks. Up the ladder flows an endless line of heavy baskets. When a bin is full a stone slab is sealed into the door with adobe and the workers move to the next one.

Throughout the city there are countless other

storage rooms. One after another they are filled until every available bit of storage space has been used. As the harvest slackens the final products are stored in baskets and even in the large jars that were used during the summer for water. When the harvest finally ends there are enough beans and corn in storage to last not only until the next harvest, but on through two or three years if coming harvests should fail. By carefully conserving the supplies the people could survive two or three seasons of drouth. That is the possibility for which they must always be prepared for normal harvests do not come every year.

Although the agricultural products are of first importance to the people of Cliff Palace there are in addition countless wild products that they must gather and store away. Throughout the autumn, when they are not busy with their harvest, they search the mesas and canyons for these natural foodstuffs. Corn, beans and squash would be a tiresome diet so meat, nuts, roots, fruits, seeds and berries are added.

During the summer there was little hunting, for the deer and mountain sheep drifted north into the higher country. Now they are returning and the men find them easy prey. After an animal is skinned the meat is cut into long thin strips. Strings are tied to pegs in the walls and across the ends of roof beams and soon the houses are festooned with drying meat. Almost every part of the animal is used. The skin is tanned with the brains; practically every internal organ, as well as all of the meat, is eaten and the bones are made into tools. Smaller animals are also brought in; grouse, squirrels, prairie dogs and rabbits. The cave is strong with the odor of drying meat.

This year there is a splendid crop of pinon nuts and the women and children are busy gathering them. The early frosts have opened the cones and the ground under each pinon tree is covered with the brown nuts that are scarcely larger than beans. Squirrels, chipmunks and Cliff Dwellers engage in a lively contest for them but there are more than enough for all. They are stored away in baskets to be eaten later in the winter. Usually they are cracked one at a time with

the teeth and eaten raw but sometimes they are ground, shell and all, into a oily butter and eaten with corn bread. Pinon nuts are highly prized but they cannot be depended upon regularly. Sometimes five or six years elapse between crops.

In addition to pinon nuts many other plant products are gathered, dried and stored for the winter. Yucca pods, cactus fruits, berries, roots and seeds all have their uses. Medicinal herbs are also gathered as well as plants that will be needed for dying cotton cloth and buckskin. Bundles of drying plants hang on the walls of every house.

Throughout September and October and on into November these harvesting activities occupy the Cliff Dwellers. When evening comes they are tired from their labors but they are happy as they sit around the fires that have been lighted to drive off the chill. They face the winter with light hearts for the walls are bulging with the supplies of food that have been stored away.

It is the same all over the Mesa Verde. In every cliff dwelling, in every mesa-top pueblo there is contentment. This has been a good year for the whole tribe and the people are enjoying the reward that has come from their labors.

Even though the strenuous harvest days are over the people are still busy. A cold winter is coming and preparations must be made for it. When December and January come there will be snow and ice. Cold, bitter winds will sweep across the mesa and although the sheltering cave and the stone houses will give protection there must also be an abundance of warm clothing.

The most important articles of clothing are the feather blankets. Weaving them is a slow, tedious task but they are splendid protection against the cold. In making a feather blanket only two things are used; small, fluffy turkey feathers and heavy yucca cord. The feathers are split down the middle and wrapped in a very tight spiral around the cord. A soft, fluffy, feather rope results; hundred of feet are needed for a

single blanket. When enough of the feather rope has been made it is woven into a blanket that is as soft and warm as a fur robe. The men who make these blankets are busy making new ones and repairing old ones. Each person will need one when cold weather comes.

Other men weave new cotton blankets and some of the boys are sent off to the south for more cotton. Cotton robes are not as warm as those made of feathers but they give added warmth when they are worn next to the skin under the feather blankets. When a feather blanket is old and worn some of the feather ends loosen and a cotton under-blanket is needed to prevent scratching.

The women are busy tanning deer and mountain sheep skins into soft white leather. By using bone awls and needles and yucca fiber or cotton string they sew these into large blankets. A few sleeveless, slip-over, buckskin jackets are made but most of the people prefer the large, loose robes. Buckskin caps are also made and some of the men like buckskin moccasins. Yucca fiber sandals, however, are the more popular foot-gear. Short leggings made of buckskin or woven from human hair are also worn by some of the men.

As winter draws near and the threat of cold weather comes close the people check their clothing needs carefully. Each man, woman and child will need certain things so the weaving and sewing continue until everyone is well supplied. With the bountiful supplies of food, an abundance of fuel, and a good stock of clothing the people are able to face the dreary months of winter with less dread. They hate to see winter come for there will be suffering and sadness. But only winter can lead to spring so they must accept it.

In the late fall, when the rush of harvest is over and the preparations for winter are well under way the men begin to think of the ceremonies. This is the season for the greatest ceremonial activity and the men will be busy for weeks carrying out the rituals that are prescribed by their elaborate ceremonial calendar.

At almost any time of the year a ceremony of some kind is going on in Cliff Palace. It may be only

a simple bit of ritual occupying a single medicine man or it may be an elaborate ceremony that occupies an entire religious society for many days. The priests of each society have a ceremonial calendar and as the seasons roll around they perform their ancient rituals. When, why and how those ceremonies originated they do not know. They learned them from their elders and they will pass them on to the younger men who will succeed them.

Throughout the year many ceremonies are held but the important ceremonial season comes in the late fall and winter. The work of spring, summer and fall is over and the men now have ample time for the involved rituals that keep them in tune with the powers that control the universe. These powers, or gods, are many and varied and, strangely, they are both good and bad. The efforts of the priests, then, is to call upon the good gods to help the people and to influence the bad gods to leave them alone.

Most important of all the powers is the Sun, who is the Father, and closely allied is the Earth Mother. In addition there are gods that control rain, growth of plants, fertility, the flow of springs and countless other things. Added to these are innumerable lesser super-natural beings who can help or harm the people. All nature is full of powers; some mighty, some small, some good, some bad, and it is the business of the medicine men to keep the whole complicated system in tune. It is not so much a worship of the forces of nature as a recognition of these forces. If they work smoothly together life flows evenly and properly for the Cliff Dwellers. If there is discord among the natural forces the Cliff Dwellers suffer. To them it means that some god is not pleased. The result is drouth, pestilence, famine, or any of the other curses that occasionally fall upon them.

In order to explain all of the phenomena of nature that influence the people there is a tremendous mass of legends and myths. The origin of the universe and the origin of all life, including the people themselves, is contained in these myths. For every

condition or act of nature there is an involved mythological explanation. The medicine men must keep this legendary background in order and they must faithfully carry out the yearly program of ceremonies. One of their most important duties is the training of the younger men. Just as they themselves received the myths and rituals from their elders so must they in turn, pass them on to the men who will follow them.

In each generation a certain number of the men are concerned almost entirely with religious matters. They are the medicine men, to whom is entrusted the responsibility of the delicate adjustments between man and the forces of nature. Each religious society has one or more full-fledged medicine men and a number of younger men who are learning the profession. In addition all of the other men of the society know almost as much about the mythological background and the ceremonies as the medicine men. Consequently, some of the men spend almost all of their time, and all of the men spend some of their time, in religious work.

Cliff Palace has twenty-three kivas. This means that there are twenty-three religious societies or fraternities. All have the same general beliefs and background but each society splits off from the main mythological stem and has certain phases of the religious work to carry out. One society has legends and ceremonies that are concerned with rain, another with the springs, another with harvests, another with the hunt, and so on around the cycle. Each society has its own members, kiva, paraphernalia, and program of ceremonies.

When a boy is twelve or fourteen years of age he is initiated into one of the societies. The choice may come in any one of a number of ways but he is most apt to go into the society to which his favorite uncle belongs. This uncle has acted as the boy's adviser so it is natural for the boy to follow him. The uncles on the mother's side are much closer to a boy than is his father. The father belongs to a different social clan and while he lives with his family, in his wife's house, he spends much of the time with his own clan

group where he is adviser to one of his small nephews. Marriage cannot take place between two members of the same clan so the father is, to a certain extent, an outsider who has little to do with the training of his sons. Maternal uncles take the father's place in this matter.

During the fall the initiation ceremonies take place and the training of the boys begins. They must learn the legends, the rituals and the endless chants so they can bear their share of the ceremonial work. The few boys who are selected to be medicine men will do little else but sit at the feet of the older medicine men for a score of years. When their teachers die they will be able to step into their places.

The initiations and the training take place in the kivas. Night after night through the fall and winter the great cave resounds with the chants of the priests as they perform the ceremonies or teach them to the newly initiated members. Much of the legendary material is in the form of endless songs and the men never tire of them. Hour after hour they sit around the kiva fires, eyes closed, chanting softly the musical prayers and legends. Often the chanting continues through the night: now that the season's strenuous work is over the men are able to spend the nights with their ceremonies and sleep in the daytime.

The activities of each society center in the kiva; it is the most prized possession. Not only is it a ceremonial room--it is also a club room, a work shop and a haven of refuge in times of family strife. During most of the year it serves as a club room for the members of the society. When the time for a ceremony arrives it becomes a sacred, religious chamber. After the conclusion of the ceremony it is again a loafing place and work room. Women and children usually enter the kivas only on occasions when they take part in the ceremonies, or are invited in to witness them.

An unmarried boy, after being initiated, often sleeps in the kiva of his society. His mother's house may be crowded with younger children so the warm, underground room is much more pleasant. Married men very

often sleep in the kiva, too, but for different reasons. When a man marries he goes to live with his wife in the midst of her clan relatives. Often he remains, in a sense, an outsider. While he prizes his family and his home he prizes, also, his sanctuary, the kiva. No matter how perfect his home life may be he cherishes its security. When his house becomes too full of words he can retire to the peace and quiet and good fellowship of his club room. Since the women usually do not enter them except on ceremonial occasions the kiva protects him from family troubles.

Twenty of the kivas in Cliff Palace are almost exactly alike. The other three have slight variations due to the whims of their builders. A typical kiva is a circular, subterranean room, twelve to fourteen feet in diameter and seven or eight feet deep. Its walls are faced with stone to hold back the surrounding earth. At a height of about three feet from the floor the walls are stepped back so there is a ledge or shelf, at least a foot wide running entirely around the room. Resting on this ledge are six small masonry pillars, evenly spaced around the room, that support the roof. These pillars divide the space above the ledge into six recesses, the one to the south usually being deeper than the rest. The tops of the pillars are a couple of feet below the ground level and this space is built up with a cribbing of logs. A short log is stretched from the top of one pillar to the next. A second log reaches to the next pillar and so on around the room until the tops of the six pillars are joined by a hexagon of six short logs. A second hexagon of logs is placed on the first but this time the ends of the logs rest on the centers of the ones below. In this way the logs cut the angles. This is continued with shorter and shorter logs. When this cribbing has almost reached ground level the top hexagon of logs is small. Short logs are placed straight across it leaving only a small square opening for a door. The whole cribbed roof is covered over with juniper bark and earth and this roof forms a courtyard in the midst of the closely surrounding houses.

The kiva is entered by means of a ladder that

rests on the floor and extends up through the doorway in the roof. This door is also the chimney for directly below it in the middle of the kiva floor is a firepit. Fresh air is brought into the room through a small, vertical shaft back of the deep recess on the south side of the kiva. The top of the shaft is a small opening in the courtyard while the bottom opens into the kiva just above the floor. As the smoke and hot air rise through the doorway, fresh air is drawn down through the ventilator shaft. Between the ventilator opening and the firepit is a small screen or deflector of masonry that keeps the fresh air from blowing across the fire.

On the other side of the fire pit, opposite the deflector, is a small hole in the kiva floor, three or four inches in diameter and only slightly deeper. This small opening is of extreme importance to the priests. It is the symbolic entrance to the underworld. Many of the Cliff Dweller gods live in the Mother Earth and the prayers of the medicine men reach them through the small opening. The hole is merely a symbol. It represents the opening through which the Cliff Dwellers feel that they themselves emerged from the earth.

These people believe that the Sun is their father and the Earth their mother. After the union of these two the people appeared in another world that was deep in the earth. After living in the underworld for a time they progressed and developed and finally emerged from the Mother Earth. All living things emerged just as they did; all life came from the earth.

The little hole in the floor of each kiva symbolizes the place where they emerged from the Mother. It is a symbolic entrance to the spirit world below. During the ceremonies offerings are placed in the hole or around it and the priests send their prayers through it to the gods who live in the underworld.

When a ceremony is in progress the kiva is sacred to the men of the society. Food is brought to them by the women and they eat and sleep in the kiva, leaving it only to perform ceremonial errands. Day and night they follow the sacred ritual, preparing their paraphernalia, recounting legends, chanting endless

prayers, making offerings to the gods and performing the various ceremonial acts that are prescribed.

In some of the ceremonies the costumed priests emerge from the kiva and perform public dances or rituals. These are always greatly enjoyed by the rest of the people for they are practically the only parts of the religious activities that they are allowed to see. They watch the ceremonies with serious reverence for they know that they are necessary if the delicate adjustment is to be maintained between the people and the mysterious powers that affect them.

At the end of the ceremony the kiva becomes a club room and work shop again. The paraphernalia is stored away on the ledges or in small niches in the kiva walls and normal life resumes. A kiva presents a varied scene for any activity carried on by the men may be performed there. Undisturbed by outsiders they work, loaf, gamble, gossip, trade and sleep in this room that is their most prized possession. Since the women own the homes the kiva is the only bit of real property the men can call their own.

Because of the strange social and religious customs a man's life is divided into three parts. His family life centers about his wife's house for there live the wife and children whom he cherishes and for whom he provides. His social life centers about his mother's home for there lies his clan affiliation. His religious life centers in the kiva that belongs to his religious society or fraternity. These three interests do not conflict. They dovetail perfectly, each taking its proper share of the man's time and attention.

The life of a woman is much less complicated. Her only activities concern her home and her family and her full time is occupied with them.

Some of the most important religious duties of the men are concerned with a great ceremonial building that stands on the mesa top just across the canyon from Cliff Palace. It is the place where they hold their greatest ceremonies. This massive D-shaped building stands on a point between two canyons. Within a mile

of it are fourteen cliff dwellings and the men from all these joined in constructing the building. On days when it is used priests and men from all the villages come trotting up the trails to join in the performance of the elaborate ceremonials. It is a super-ceremonial structure where only the most elaborate and important rites are performed.

When the building was constructed the priests planned it very carefully. The main building is D-shaped with the straight wall to the south. The outside wall is double and in the space between are a number of long narrow rooms, some without doorways. In the court enclosed by the walls are two kivas. This part of the building is symmetrical, the result of the very careful planning of the priests. On the west end of the building is an addition consisting of a kiva and ten rooms, all added in such a way that the entire building is still D-shaped. The building has no roof and all of the walls are over a dozen feet high. Half of the rooms have no doors; they are deep, small rooms entered by ladders.

This building is open to the sun and the elements, in this respect being entirely different from the underground kivas. The thick, high, double walls and the location on the isolated point give the priests the secrecy they desire and in this unique building are held the greatest of all the ceremonies. Long ago the priests of the various villages decided there was a need for this community place of worship. By concerted effort they built it and through the cooperation of the many societies they have carried on the ceremonies. It is the Cliff Dwellers' supreme effort toward a perfect adjustment with the powers that control their destiny.

During the late fall and early winter the ceremonial season is in full swing and there is much festivity in Cliff Palace. It is a time for visiting and feasting and there is a trace of the carnival spirit in the air. The ceremonies are not entirely solemn, long-faced affairs. Some have light, entertaining parts and there may even be clowns who convulse the onlookers with their antics. The underlying motive of a ceremony

Sun Temple, the great ceremonial building of the Cliff Dwellers

is serious and earnest but this does not prevent its being thoroughly enjoyable to the participants as well as the audience.

Visitors are drawn to the ceremonies from far and wide. Their strongest desire may be to see an important ceremony but even more often the strongest motive is the desire to join in the festivities that accompany it. There is always a gay crowd, much talking and visiting and an abundance of good food.

When the date for a ceremony is announced the news spreads and there are always visitors. The men of Cliff Palace often toss their blankets across their shoulders and trot off to the important sings in other villages. When a ceremony is held in Cliff Palace the men of other villages come flocking in. It is a grand excuse for a visit to the big city to feast, gossip, trade, and incidentally, witness a ceremony.

Although the women play only a small part in the religious work they are always busy during the ceremonies. They must feed the participants and the visitors. A sing may last for as many as nine days and large quantities of food must be prepared. The women and girls are busy over the cooking fires day after day.

The basic food article is corn in some form; it is the backbone of every meal. Corn is by far the most abundant foodstuff and through the generations the women have devised many ways of cooking it to prevent its becoming monotonous. The corn is ground by the younger women on the metates, smooth flat stones that are slanted into small bins. Under the lower end of each metate is a clean adobe basin that gathers the meal. The woman kneels at the upper end of the metate, places the corn on it, and grinds it with a smaller flat stone, the mano, that she holds in her hands. Sliding the mano back and forth across the metate she grinds the corn until a fine meal results. This is slow back-breaking work but the women are forced to do it day after day. The mano and metate are made of soft sandstone and they grind away so rapidly that the corn meal is often quite gritty.

After the corn meal is prepared it can be cooked in a number of ways. The simple batter may be baked in small cakes on a hot stone. Juniper ashes may be added to make the cakes blue. The dough may be rolled in corn husks and baked in the ashes or large cakes may be baked in hot pits. The batter is often baked paper-thin on a stone; when the thin gray sheets are rolled up they look like hornets' nests and taste only slightly better.

A real delicacy results when the corn bread is sweetened with saliva. In making this sweet bread a portion of the corn meal is chewed by the women until the saliva changes the starch to sugar. When this chewed meal is mixed with the rest of the meal and baked in corn husks a sweet bread results. It is a delicacy that is offered to honored guests.

Corn meal is often made into thick gruels and porridges that are flavored with roots or berries. In addition to the corn dishes there is a great variety of other foods. Meat of all kinds is roasted, boiled or stewed. Broths, soups and stews are common. Boiled beans and baked squash are always part of a feast and any of these articles may be cooked in combination. In addition there are wild plant dishes; boiled greens, boiled or baked roots, stewed fruits such as the yucca fruit, roasted seeds or ground pinon nuts.

Fall is the time when there is the greatest abundance and variety of foods and the feasts that accompany the ceremonies are sumptuous affairs. The finest dishes are passed down into the kivas to the priests. Guests eat in the open courts around the cooking fires and as they drowsily belch their gratitude the women and children finish the food that is left.

In the evening the people gather around the many small fires that send dancing shadows across the roof of the great cave. From some of the kivas comes the chanting of the priests; from others come the more uncertain voices of the boys as they learn the endless songs. Some of the groups around the fire are also singing but most of them are quietly talking, gambling

and sleeping.

The canyon is lighted up by the bright rays of a golden harvest moon and the cliffs echo the voices of the singers, not only from Cliff Palace but from all the other cliff dwellings up and down the canyons. The great green mesa is filled with happy, thankful people and troubles seem far away. The gods are pleased with the efforts of the Cliff Dwellers.

As autumn fades into winter the people of Cliff Palace face it with confidence. Winter is always an ordeal but they are well-prepared. There is an abundance of food and there is ample clothing. Great piles of wood have been gathered and the houses have been carefully rechinked. There will be suffering and deaths during the cold months that are ahead but spring lies just beyond.

IX

Winter in Cliff Palace, 1266 A. D.

Winter is the least enjoyable of all the seasons for the people of Cliff Palace. It is a long, quiet season; there is sickness and suffering and often the sadness of death hangs over the city. Those who are strong and healthy mind it very little but it is an uncomfortable season for the children and an agonizing season for the older men and women who suffer from rheumatism and arthritis.

During the late fall the weather has grown colder and colder and now in December comes true winter. Cold winds sweep down from the mountains to the north bringing the snow: soon the mesa tops are white. In the vicinity of Cliff Palace it seldom gets deep. When it reaches a depth of a foot it is considered heavy but if it reaches a depth of two feet or more the Cliff Dwellers talk excitedly about it and the old men begin to recall the heavy snows of by-gone days. The snow will not remain on the ground all winter for the mesa tops slope to the south and the rays of the sun beat directly down on them. This first heavy December snow will soon melt and the mesa tops will be dry for a time. Then another snow storm will turn them white again but that too will melt away and so it will continue through the winter. Occasionally there will be warm days when the mesa tops will be muddy and small streams of water will come trickling down the cliffs.

As the cold increases the Cliff Dwellers gradually become accustomed to it. Their houses are never perfectly warm and comfortable so their strong, healthy bodies become hardened to the chill of the shadowy cave. With the sun rising in the east the cave is in shadow until well along in the afternoon. Then for a few sunny hours it warms up even though the temperature outside is low. Snow never comes in upon the houses but the heavy chill of winter shadows cannot be completely thrust aside.

Dozens of small fires burn constantly in the cave and those fires, in addition to the natural warmth of hundreds of closely crowded people, dull the sharpest edge of the cold. Clothing is the final defense and as the severity of winter increases more and more is worn.

Cotton cloth, feather blankets and buckskin robes are worn in every conceivable manner except as actual tailored garments. The nearest approach to tailored clothing is an occasional slip-over buckskin jacket without sleeves. Sometimes a robe is slit in the center and slipped poncho-like over the head. Pieces of feather cloth, cotton cloth or buckskin are tied about the body as close-fitting jackets or draped skirt-like from the waist. Large, soft feather blankets and buckskin robes are draped over the shoulders and drawn in about the body. Short leggins are made of buckskin, or woven of human hair, to add to the comfort of the lower legs.

Some of the people wear buckskin moccasins but most of them continue with the yucca fiber sandals. Strips of buckskin, or even corn husks or juniper bark may be stuffed under the lacings to give added warmth to the feet.

Taken as a whole they are a raggedy-looking crowd but the clothing does give protection against the cold. The people have tanned buckskin in abundance, there is considerable cotton cloth and each person has at least one feather robe. By utilizing these in every possible way the desired effect is achieved, even though neat tailoring is unknown.

Shadowy though the cave may be it is free of wind and snow and while complete comfort may seldom be attained, except in the kivas, most of the people become accustomed to the chill. Only those who are naturally weak and those who are weakened by illness or age suffer greatly from the cold of winter.

There is less activity than during any other season. When the mesas are fairly clear of snow the men often go after firewood. Dead trees are carried to the top of the cliff and thrown down upon the rocks

below. The shattering crash saves much tiresome chopping with stone axes and the women gather the splintered pieces and keep large piles always on hand. Tremendous quantities of wood are fed into the fires and each year the men are forced to go farther across the mesas in search of dead trees.

Winter is a good season for hunting and when the snows are not too deep the young men often go out in search of deer and mountain sheep. Deep snows on the high northern rim of the mesa have forced the animals down to the lower parts and the men do not have far to go for their game.

When they are not busy gathering wood and hunting, the men spend most of their time in the kivas. They have a decided advantage over the women and children in this one respect for the kivas are completely comfortable. Being entirely underground, and with only the one small door in the roof, a kiva is kept perfectly warm by a small fire in the central fire pit. Fresh air comes down the ventilator shaft to drive the smoke out through the door and the lower part of the room is never smoky. The floor is covered with mats and skins and the men loaf, sleep and work in perfect comfort. Unmarried boys who have been initiated into the religious societies live in the kivas most of the time during the winter and the married men often sleep in them. They are far more comfortable than the houses.

Women and children, having no kiva privileges are forced to spend their time in the courts, around the fires, and in the houses. Very few of the houses have fires inside for in the small, unventilated rooms the smoke is almost unbearable. Sometimes an older person prefers the discomfort of smoke to the misery of the cold and a fire is built in a house. A smoky, soot-blackened room results.

At night the women and children snuggle close together for warmth. The floor of the house is covered with skins and blankets and heavy mats woven of reeds, juniper bark or yucca fibers. Sometimes deep, soft layers of corn shucks and tassels are spread on the

floor and the blankets are spread on them. The last person into the room reaches back out through the door, picks up the thin sandstone door slab that is leaning against the wall, and fits it carefully into the opening. With the soft floor coverings and plenty of warm blankets and skins the closely-snuggled women and children spend the cold nights in comparative comfort.

When morning comes the coals in the firepits are blown into flame and the intense cold of the night is driven off. Several small fires burning in a crowded courtyard make it fairly comfortable.

The most important factor of all in the fight against the rigors of winter is the abundance of good food. A full, happy stomach is the best defense against the cold and the women spend much of their time around the cooking fires. Early in the morning and again late in the day there are full meals and in between there are always leftovers and mugs of hot soup and herb teas for the children. In good years, such as this one, there is no lack of food and there is sufficient variety to please even the most particular palate. Fresh meat, corn bread, beans, squash, nuts, roots, dried fruits and berries are prepared in innumerable ways and eating is the happiest activity of the winter. In poor years it is different, for often the people do not have sufficient food to drive off the cold.

There is no water problem during the winter. Ice and snow are easily brought in and melted and springs that have a warm southern exposure continue to flow. Less water is needed than at any other season so the women are forced to spend very little time obtaining the necessary supplies. Most of their time is occupied with corn grinding, cooking, tanning and sewing buckskin and the care of the smaller children. Occasionally a woman weaves a basket but pottery is seldom made during the cold season. Principally the women are occupied with keeping their families warm and well fed.

The men take life easy. Once in a while they leave the cave to go hunting and wood gathering or to

trot off to another village to gamble or witness a ceremony but for the most part they seldom stray far from their warm, comfortable kivas. There they work leisurely at their various crafts, producing the many things they need. Ceremonies continue but during the coldest part of the winter they are minor ceremonies that are conducted almost entirely within the kiva. The priests spend much of their time training the boys. Winter is the great story-telling time and day after day the endless myths and legends are recited as the boys gather the background for their religion.

In the early winter one important ceremony is held when the priests "turn back the sun." Every day since early summer the sun has moved farther and farther south along the western horizon. At last, in late December, he has reached the point beyond which he must not be allowed to go. The priests know the spot well; it is on the horizon directly over a certain mark on the opposite canyon wall. When the sun reaches this spot each year the priests perform the ceremony that causes him to cease his southern journey and start back to the north again. If the priests fail to please the Sun Father, or if he is angry with the people he will continue his journey to the south and perpetual cold and darkness will envelope the earth. Never yet have the priests failed; always the sun has been pleased and after reaching that certain spot he has reversed and started back to the north to bring the long days and the warmth of summer.

When the sun has almost reached the spot on the horizon the priests begin their ceremony. Day after day it continues until they see that the sun has started back to the north. There is great rejoicing in Cliff Palace: the sun has heeded the prayers and is coming back. The happy people marvel at the power of their priests who have never failed in this important duty.

As the winter moves on into January and the cold increases the priests are called upon more and more to perform healing ceremonies over the sick. There is much illness in the city. The children

sniffle and cough with colds; sometimes the colds settle in the sinuses, in the ears or even in the lungs, bringing complications against which the priests are powerless. Often the end is slow in coming. When a cold settles in the middle ear and an abscessed mastoid results the terrible agony may last for weeks before the inevitable result brings an end to the suffering. Sometimes the end comes quickly and a mother hardly realizes that her baby is sick before it is gone.

Many of the older people are suffering from the agony of decayed and abscessed teeth. All their lives they have been eating the gritty corn bread that has come from the soft grinding stones. As a result their teeth are badly ground away; sometimes they are ground down to the gums. With the loss of the tooth enamel decay has come and now aching and abscessed teeth are the result. Here is an old fellow with a great cavity in each molar; half of them are throbbing with pain as the cold air hits the exposed nerves. Here is an old man suffering the agony of three abscessed upper teeth; at night he walks the floor moaning with pain. This old fellow's lower right canine tooth developed a cystoid abscess; it has broken and has caused an ugly running sore on his chin. In this house is an old woman who long ago lost all her teeth; years of chewing on her gums have caused them to recede until now her nose and chin almost touch. Yonder is an old man who for months has had an aching molar. In order to ease the pain he has been chewing on the other side until now those teeth are so badly ground away that they too are aching.

So it is throughout the city; decayed teeth, abscessed teeth, impacted teeth, pyorrhea and other dental ailments are common.

Many of the people, especially the older ones, are suffering from rheumatism and arthritis. Some of it is due to the diet which is often too starchy. Much of it is due to the poisons that are sent through the body by bad teeth and other local infections resulting from disease and injury. Often it is merely the breakdown that comes from a life of exposure and hard work. Age comes early to these people. Throughout the city

there are a few men and women who are very old but the average life expectancy is low. In the late thirties men and women begin to grow old and before long they are unable to bear their share of the work. Limbs are swollen and stiffened with arthritis and rheumatism and spines are stiffened or even partially or completely solidified with arthritis. When these conditions come the bent and crippled oldsters seldom venture far from the cave. They are cared for and honored by their descendants.

In addition to these and other diseases that afflict the people there are often injuries. During the winter snow and ice gather in the toeholds on the cliffs and a climber, becoming momentarily careless, crashes on the rocks below. Fractured skulls, arms and legs result and these are added to the problems the medicine men must face.

Against the diseases and injuries that afflict the people the medicine men wage an endless battle. They know that the afflications are caused by evil spirits that have lodged in the bodies of the patients and it is their duty to drive them out. When a medicine man is called to treat a sick person he first diagnoses the trouble, then decides what ceremony will effect a cure. The ceremony may last for only a few hours or it may continue for many days: it is an endless ritual that has been formulated by countless generations of medicine men. Legends are recounted, chants are intoned, magic tricks are performed, afflicted parts are massaged with sacred objects, and offerings of corn meal, corn pollen, prayer sticks and other sacred things are made to the gods. Steaming, bitter medicines concocted from various plants are poured into the patients, some as purgatives, others as emetics. If an emetic fails to work a long feather is plunged down the patient's throat until the desired effect is produced.

Sweatbaths, given in small, tightly-sealed rooms, are a common form of treatment. Large quantities of stones, heated in the fire until they are red-hot, are piled in one side of the tiny room. The

patient and the medicine men strip and crowd into the room, leaving one man outside to seal the door with blankets. The heat from the stones is so intense that the men are sometimes unable to breath and they are forced to crawl out until the room cools slightly. By breathing the air next to the floor they are able to endure the terrific temperature for as much a ten or fifteen minutes. The walls become so hot they burn the skin so the men are forced to sit very quietly, the red hot stones in front of them and the blistering walls at their backs. After a few minutes, during which they chant continuously, the men tumble out. Perspiration streams from their bodies. For a moment they rest and cool off, then return to the room for another treatment. Time after time they repeat this in their efforts to cleanse the body of the patient and drive out the evil that is causing the disease.

Sweatbaths are greatly enjoyed by the men and they take them often, not only when ill but at any time when they desire the comfortable relaxation they bring. The heat treatments are especially prized for the temporary relief they give to those afflicted with rheumatism and arthritis.

In their ceremonial treatment of disease the medicine men meet with varying success. Against some diseases they seem to be powerless; it merely means that the evil spirits are too strong. In other cases they conquer the evil spirits and the patient recovers. Diseases that are aggravated by a mental attitude are most easily cured. Among the people there is an intense fear of witches; very often they feel that they have been bewitched by another person. This fear of black magic causes them to imagine strange ailments and the priests are called upon to counteract the evil spell. Such ailments are easily treated; the patient's faith in the medicine man and the constant promise of a cure soon drive away the imaginary troubles.

The treatment of broken bones gives the priests some of their most serious problems. Simple fractures of the lower arm or leg are often treated successfully. Thin splints of wood are bound to the limb to hold the

bones in position and after the break has healed full use of the member is often regained. A fracture of the upper arm or leg is seldom treated with success. The powerful muscles pull the bones out of position and a crippled limb usually results. Compound fractures result in fatal infections and the priests can do little in the case of a serious fracture of the skull.

There is the same helplessness in the treatment of aching teeth. The priests have little success in their efforts to sing out the spirits that cause the unbearable pain of an abscessed tooth. In extreme cases the tooth may be knocked or pried out but usually the condition is simply allowed to progress until the tooth sloughs away. Sometimes an aged person loses every tooth in this manner. One after another they abscess and slough out until at last the helpless victim can relax in the blessed state of painless toothlessness.

At any time of the year there may be sickness in Cliff Palace but there is always the greatest amount in the winter. Seldom during the cold season are the people entirely free from it. The medicine men carry out the prescribed ceremonies, sometimes succeeding, sometimes failing. When they effect a cure there is rejoicing but when they fail there is sadness in the city and the near relatives of the unfortunate person are plunged into mourning.

As soon as death comes the body is prepared for burial. The arms are folded across the chest and the wrists are tied together to keep them in position. The legs are folded up against the body. Around this tightly flexed body is wrapped one or more cotton blankets, then a large feather blanket. Last of all the bundle is encased in a piece of matting and is ready for burial.

There is no cemetery; burial may be made anywhere. Quite often the grave is dug in the trash pile in front of the cave for the ashes and trash make easy digging. In other cases the grave is dug along the talus slope or even up on the mesa top. Sometimes

advantage is taken of a crevice in the rocks or of a small cave under a large boulder. After the grave is prepared the tightly-wrapped body is placed in it along with the personal possessions of the deceased. A bowl of food and a mug of water are also placed in the grave. All of this is a part of the regular ritual of burial. The Cliff Dwellers feel that the spirit of the dead person is going to another world very much like this one and in that world it will need the things that have been provided; food, water, jewelry, clothing, tools and weapons. The spirit of the person will take the spirits of these objects and journey off to this happy afterworld.

With the conclusion of the burial ceremony the grave is filled with earth and rocks and all evidence of it is wiped out. The men who have performed the ceremony return to their homes and purify themselves so there will be no bad effects from this contact with the dead.

Occasionally death comes when a severe storm is raging outside the cave. Rather than face the storm and attempt to dig through the deep snow and into the frozen earth the men bury the body in the trash room in the back of the cave. The cave roof is too low for houses to be built in that space so it is used as a trash room and turkey roost. When a body is buried there it is surrounded by perfectly dry materials such as ashes, dust, corn tassels, feathers and turkey droppings. The chill of winter prevents immediate decay and the body begins to dry out. The moisture in the flesh is gradually drawn out by the dry materials that surround it and the body slowly dries and hardens. After all of the moisture is gone nothing is left but the bones and the hard, dried tissues. In that condition it will last indefinitely, a dry, hard, prune-like body. In only two respects has it changed; it has lost its spark of life and its moisture. If it is kept perfectly dry this mummy-like body will remain unchanged for countless centuries.

The winter passes slowly. For those who are strong and active it has no terrors although it may

cause a certain amount of discomfort. For those who are weak and sick it becomes an ordeal. At no time during the winter is Cliff Palace free from sickness and suffering and the spirits of the people are often low. In January the cold becomes more intense. Scores of fires burn brightly in the great cave as the people attempt to drive out the cold. Some nights the temperature falls very close to zero. High overhead hangs a brilliant white moon and the snowy canyon is almost as light as day. From the cliff near the great ceremonial building comes the wail of a coyote; from the mesa top comes the mournful hoot of an owl. The cave is quiet except for the low chanting in some of the kivas and the snoring of old men. Sometimes a baby whimpers or a sick person groans. Now and then a muffled scream echoes through the cave as an aged sufferer cries out from the agony of arthritis or an abscessed tooth.

There is little travel during the coldest periods. Even the men forego their hunting and visiting and everyone stays close to the sheltering cave with the single idea of keeping warm and well. The city is quieter now; there is none of the boisterous gaiety that was so pronounced during the other seasons.

The men spend most of their time in the kivas while the women and children gather around the fires in the courtyards. The turkeys that roost in the back of the cave at night come out in the daytime and wander about the courts and roof-tops, fighting with the dogs for scraps of food that are thrown to them. During the periods when there is deep snow in the canyon the turkeys are fed small amounts of the precious corn but in late winter they grow thin and bedraggled. When they are not roaming about the city searching for food they sit in quiet rows on the housetops, feathers fluffed against the cold. The turkeys are highly prized by the Cliff Dwellers. Their feathers are of great importance in making ceremonial equipment and large quantities are needed for the feather blankets.

As the end of winter draws near the food becomes more monotonous. Many of the tastier foods are gone; the supplies of pinon nuts, dried fruits, roots,

squash and dried berries are completely exhausted. Now each meal consists of meat, corn bread and beans. Sometimes the meat is fresh but usually it is the meat that was dried last fall. This meat is as hard as rawhide and must be pounded with stones and thoroughly cooked before it can be eaten. In order to gain variety the women bake the corn bread in every possible way and corn meal, meat and beans are combined in numerous forms. Still the food is monotonous; everyone longs for something green.

In February the snows become heavy and wet and in the latter part of the month there is rain. Even though the rain does not come into the cave everything becomes damp. The days are getting warmer now and as a result a foul odor hangs over the city.

At any time of the year a strong odor of decaying animal and vegetable matter and human offal permeates the cave. Out in front is a great trash pile and in the back of the cave is the space where trash is thrown. It is also the turkey roost and some of the dead are buried there. In addition to this the people have no idea of personal sanitation. In the warmer seasons they usually step outside the cave but in the winter they often merely step back into the turkey roost or out on the front terraces.

Because of this there is always a heavy odor about the city. In the summer it is not so bad for the women often sweep out the houses and courts and throw the trash out in front of the cave where the hot sun drys out the waste materials. In the winter there is less of this cleaning and the trash and filth accumulate. The dampness in the air causes mould and mustiness and when the warm wet days of late winter come the air is foul with the odor of decaying matter.

The Cliff Dwellers do not notice this odor. Their first breath of life was like that and they merely think that is the way air smells.

As March draws near winter begins to leave the Mesa Verde. There are still occasional snowstorms but they are warm and wet and melt rapidly. The mesas are

soggy with mud and small streams of water trickle over the cliffs as the snow disappears. The air is warm and balmy; during the middle of the day it is often hot. Grass turns green in the sheltered spots and the buds on the shrubs begin to swell. Chipmunks and squirrels; even the lizards come out of hibernation to greet the spring.

The people of Cliff Palace have been noting all of these signs and there is a stir of activity in the city as they throw off the cloak of winter. It was this promise of spring that helped them through. Sometimes they have been cold; there has been sickness and death. At times there has been a heavy pall of sadness over the city. Now all that is over for spring is in the air.

The people are happy and smiling as they bustle about preparing for the work that is ahead. The men think of their farms, the women think of making pottery, repairing and building houses, constructing dams and arranging marriages. The children, turkeys and dogs think of nothing; they merely dash out of the shadowy cave into the warm spring sunshine.

Our year with the people of Cliff Palace has ended. Spring, summer, autumn and winter have passed. Now spring has arrived to start the eternal cycle all over again.

X

Cliff Palace Deserted

The year we have just spent with the people of Cliff Palace was a normal year in the lives of the Cliff Dwellers. There was not a single occurence that made it any different from the countless other normal years they experienced. It did not remain long in their memories for it was just one more year when all of the forces of nature worked in perfect harmony. There was an abundance of snow and rain and food was plentiful. There were no catastrophies or memorable events.

Good years, such as that one, were soon forgotten. The years they remembered were those that brought sadness or disaster. Talkative old men long remembered the years of terrific drouth or the year the crops were destroyed by forest fires. They did not soon forget the evil summer when almost all of the babies in the city died of a strange malady. The year the sun was completely swallowed for a few minutes by a monster was recalled by story tellers for centuries. Those were the unusual years and they served as mile posts. Time was measured from them.

The years of catastrophe did not come often. It was only occasionally that the crops failed and when they did the people were prepared for it. A thousand years of farming in the Mesa Verde had taught them that every few years they must expect a dry year without a harvest. Often they were able to predict such a season in advance. If the heavy snows of December and January failed to come the men began to worry. If February and March failed to provide the essential winter moisture the farmers became quite sure that the harvests would be poor. Months in advance they began to prepare for the lean seasons that faced them.

Food was measured out sparingly; not a grain of corn or a pinch of meal was wasted. The women searched endlessly for wild plant foods and the men went hunting

day after day. By living more on meat and wild plants they were able to conserve the stores of corn and beans. Water supplies were built up and they tried to enter the summer season with every available drop stored in their jars and in the pools in the canyon. New springs were developed and in extreme cases the women even walked four miles down the canyon to the Mancos River for water.

By skillfully adjusting themselves to conditions the Cliff Dwellers were able to survive a year of drouth with little difficulty. A second year of crop failure was very serious but still it could be managed and occasionally during their occupancy of the Mesa Verde they had even survived periods of drouth that lasted several years. Such an ordeal brought suffering and hardship; it meant death for many of the weaker people. But still it could be endured.

So it was that when drouth settled down upon the Mesa Verde in the year 1276 A. D., the people thought nothing of it. They had just enjoyed several good years and they worried little when the crops failed. They took the usual precautions and the priests assured them that the next year would be normal again. But the drouth did not break. The year 1277 was also dry, then 1278 and 1279. The year 1280 was a scorcher; still the drouth did not end.

The rings of trees that grew during the period show that the drouth continued unabated for twenty-four consecutive years. From 1276 through 1299 there was sub-normal rainfall in the Mesa Verde and surrounding regions. The tree rings show that some of the years were unbelieveably dry. Others suffered only moderate drouth but during that entire period there was not a normal year. Winter snows were light and failed to restore the soil moisture. Summer rains were often completely lacking. Each year the soil lost more of its moisture and only the hardiest plants were able to survive. During that entire period there was surely not a harvest worthy of the name.

It was a drouth without precedent in the history of man and the effect upon the Cliff Dwellers was

tragic. Year after year the crops withered in the fields. Wild food plants also died or failed to reproduce. The larger game animals drifted off to the mountains and the smaller animals diminished in numbers. In their search for food the women scoured the mesas until there was not an edible plant left. The men hunted far and wide with less and less luck. Still the drouth continued. Water supplies dwindled. During the winter the pools in the canyon failed to fill and the lack of moisture caused the springs to become mere trickles. It was impossible to wring water from the earth when no water was there.

The people of the Mesa Verde were faced with three terrors; the lack of food, the lack of water, and the wrath of the gods. The first two actually existed; the last existed only in their minds, consequently it was the worst of all. Added to their tragic need of food and water was the horrible fear that their gods had deserted them.

How the priests must have labored! Every ceremony, every trick they knew was repeated time after time as the drouth progressed. Cliff Palace echoed endlessly with the wailing chants of the frenzied priests. Sun Temple, the great ceremonial building across the canyon, must have been the scene of countless super-ceremonials as the priests of the various villages threw their combined strength into the fight.

Still the drouth continued!

Throughout the Mesa Verde there was much death from starvation and disease. Food and water were practically exhausted. The tragic moment came when they were forced to eat the seed corn. This was the last resort; it could be fatal to farmers. Only when death faced them did they sacrifice the precious seed for there could never be another crop unless they were fortunate enough to find other people with surplus supplies. The result was inevitable. Since the drouth would not end the people could only drift away, hoping to find better conditions elsewhere. It was their only chance of survival.

The migration from the Mesa Verde must have taken place gradually; certainly there was no mass movement. As the drouth continued small groups drifted off in search of better conditions. All of the people of a small village may have moved together but the larger ones must have broken up gradually. Cliff Palace was probably deserted a clan at a time. As conditions became more desperate the people quarreled over the dwindling supplies. There must have been many cases of actual violence as frenzied men sought to obtain food and water for their starving families. Dissatisfaction and discontent mounted rapidly and the once happy city was abandoned by its people as clan after clan took to the trail in search of new homes.

Long before the twenty-four year drouth was over the Mesa Verde must have been entirely deserted. There is no evidence that any of the people ever returned. Since that tragic time the cliff dwellings and the mesa-top pueblos have been empty and silent as they have fought against the heavy, leveling hand of time.

When the people left the Mesa Verde their troubles were not over. The drouth was felt all over the Southwest and life was possible only in the most favorable spots. Added to the misfortunes of the drifting people was the increased activity of the nomadic Indians for they too, suffered from the drouth. It is possible that their increased activities hastened the flight from the Mesa Verde for they must have preyed upon the farming peoples during the troubled times.

Although large numbers perished before and during the migration many of the Mesa Verde Indians did survive. They moved to the southeast and south and to the southwest and mingled with other Pueblo Indians who were also struggling against the drouth. As they merged with the others they lost their identity as Mesa Verde people.

During the great drouth the population of the Southwest was diminished and many regions were abandoned forever by the Pueblo Indians. When the drouth

finally ended the survivors were concentrated in the most favorable spots where there were the best supplies of water, the finest farming lands or good natural defenses against the nomadic Indians.

In some regions they prospered for a time but never again did they reach the high level they had attained during the Great Pueblo Period. Perhaps the drouth caused a dry rot to set in and the fortunes of the Pueblo people waned. When Coronade came there were less than seventy pueblos; today there are only two dozen.

The people of these present-day villages are the descendants of the scores of thousands of Pueblo Indians who once lived in the Southwest. In their veins, greatly thinned by the centuries, flows the blood of the people of our ancient city, Cliff Palace.

Section of the Spruce Tree House diorama in the
Mesa Verde Museum

XI

Cliff Palace Today

Today Cliff Palace broods in its great protective cave, a silent deserted city. The heavy hand of time has brought certain changes but for the most part it is much as we saw it in the year 1266 A. D. Roofs have disappeared and a few of the houses are gone. Some of the walls have cracked or partially fallen and ladders no longer lead up over the terraced house tops. In spite of these changes, however, much of the ancient city is just as we saw it. Many of the walls are exactly as they were the day they were built by the Cliff Dwellers.

Since Mesa Verde was made into a National Park in 1906, every effort has been made to arrest the destructive forces that threatened Cliff Palace. It was first cleaned out, then necessary repairs were made. Leaning walls were braced, cracks were again filled with adobe and weak foundations were strengthened. In most cases these repairs were of a minor nature and had little effect on the appearance of the structure. Today it looks much as it did on that memorable day in 1888 when Richard Wetherill and Charles Mason first saw it. The principal difference is that it is now clean and in a good state of repair; not a single stone is in danger of falling from the walls. In its present condition Cliff Palace seems destined to last indefinitely, an eternal monument to a vanished people.

Under the care of the National Park Service this greatest of all cliff dwellings has been made accessible to visitors. Splendid roads lead into the Mesa Verde. Beside the ancient toeholds better trails have been built and each year thousands of people from all parts of the world visit Cliff Palace. Under the guidance of the ranger-naturalist they climb down into the cave and walk through the venerable city.

Skillful word pictures bring the Cliff Dwellers

back to their homes and once more there is life in Cliff Palace. The person who gives his imagination free rein sees it as we saw it during our year with the Cliff Dwellers. Once again this typical New Stone Age city is alive and the visitor glimpses one of the most important chapters in the entire story of the rise of mankind. Our own ancestors passed through this same stage; it was their greatest stride in the long climb from savagery toward civilization.

In the nearby museum are to be seen the things that have been found in Cliff Palace and the other ruins that have been excavated. Displayed in their chronological order they tell the story of the ancient inhabitants of the Mesa Verde.

It is a fascinating story of a vanished people. For over a thousand years they dominated the Mesa Verde, passing through higher and higher stages of culture. When an unendurable calamity finally forced them to leave they left behind abundant evidences of their intelligence and industry. With the care they now receive Cliff Palace, Spruce Tree House, Sun Temple and the innumerable other ruins of the Mesa Verde will stand forever as monuments to the skill of their ancient builders.

Mesa Verde National Park was created to preserve the works of these pre-historic people. Slow, silent centuries have spread a cloak of mystery over it and visitors should come with open minds, prepared to hear an absorbing story of a strange people. Complete enjoyment and understanding come only to the visitor who is able to leave his modern self behind, momentarily, and live and think in terms of the past.