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Mesa Verde National Park

Colorado National Parks

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Prehistoric Dwellings: Efforts to combat vandals of artifacts at Mesa Verde

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tending from "the four corners" into Colortoric ruins of the state from the depredaade, Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona. Theretions of vandals, and at the same time try fore, the tract of land most valuable for a to add to the world's stock of knowledge park has been a grave question at issue with concerning those remarkable people, the cliff the committee. They have had an accurate dwellers. With these objects in view the and comprehensive map made of the section called Mesa Verde, the green tableland, in Colorado Cliff Dwellings association was ofthe southwestern corner of Colorado. It is ganized the fli .. part of this month. their wish to include in the park that portion association has been regularly incorporated of the mess and adjoining canyons which conunder the laws of Colorado, so that it may legally acquire and hold property. It is now tains the most ruins. It should be understood that Mesa Verde. the intention of the women to acquire title the probable location of the future park, is to the ruins of the cliff dwellers, either by a strikingly singular divide between the purchase or by a grant from the state, which Marcos and the Monteruma valleys. Throughit is believed will be glad to hand these cat its extent it is gashed and seamed by innufamous ruins over to the women for care merable deep canyons and ravines. lands are crowded with forests of pinon trees and preservation. in such close array that one finds it difficult The association is not a bastily formed to pick a passage through them. Ruins of the On the contrary, it is the outcome of ong. houses of the mesa-dwellers are thick upon nearly three years of agitation and education of the women of the state. In October, 1297, the plateau. The canyons, which split the divide into Mrs. Mahlon D. Thatcher, then president of tergues and islands of precipitous rock, are the State Federation of Women's Clubs, aplined with the houses of the cliff dwellers. pointed a committee of women who had for The sides of the canyons are sheer walls of years been personally interested in the protection of the state's prehistoric heritage to yellow sandstone, ranging in height from act with the federation and clubwomen as a 500 to 1,000 feet. As a rule, the dwellings special committe for the spreading of knowlstand fifty or a hundred feet below the rim edge concerning the ruins, the collection of the heights, in a sheltered recess overand preservation of relics, and the ultimate hung by beetling masses of rock. In a great bringing forward into the light of today of many instances it is impossible to climb to. the wonderful old ruins which have been so the houses from the bottom of the canyon. ong shadowed by the cliffs in the Rio Man-Most of them have to be entered from the top cos canyon. Since its appointment the comof the cliffs. There are no definite roads or mittee has had visions of work done by it trails leading to them, and the difficulties to which would present to the world antiquity be overcome, and the dangers to be dared in of far greater interest than any now known visiting the cliff houses are many. The ciffin the old world, and with a setting of deep culties and dangers only show how necessary anyons. rugged mountains, and it is to build roads and trails and a rest house, retches of blue mesa land—a park containso that people with great enthusiasm but ; a museum of unknown antiquity. little strength may visit the ruins. the constitution adopted contemplates an The Cliff Palace and the Spruce Tree house unlimited membership of women. The assoclation is formed on the lines of the Mount. are two of the cliff houses included in the Vernon and Mary Washington associations. tract set aside for the park. The Cliff Palace The directors are called vice regents, and is 450 feet long, eighty feet high, eighty feet there are twenty-one of them. An initiation broad, and contains 127 rooms on the ground tee of \$2 was voted, with an annual due of \$1. floor, and accommodations for probably 1,000 There is also a life membership, costing \$100, people. The Spruce Tree house is only a short entitling the holder to a gold badge. The life distance from the Cliff Palace, and is one of membership may be heriditary in the female the most finished specimens of prehistoric. line, either lineal or collateral. architecture yet found. A visit to one or both The constitution having been adopted, the of these ruins would repay one for almost any efficers were elected as follows: Regent, Mrs. Gilbert McClurg. Colorado Springs; first vice amount of fatigue, and the Colorado Cliff regent, Mrs. W. S. Peabody, Denver; record-Dwellers' association intends to be the pathing secretary, Mrs. J. D. Whitmore, Denger: finder for the delicate enthusiast as well as for the brawny rolle hunter

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Colorado Women Will Try to Prehistoric Dwellings.

Special Correspondence of The Inter Ocean. DENVER, Col., May 31.-Women of Col-

orado are going to try and save the prehistoric ruins of the state from the depredations of vandals, and at the same time try to add to the world's stock of knowledge concerning those remarkable people, the cliff

dwellers. With these objects in view the Colorado Cliff Dwellings association was organized the fix part of this month. association has been regularly incorporated

under the laws of Colorado, so that it may legally acquire and hold property. It is now

to the ruins of the cliff dwellers, either by purchase or by a grant from the state, which it is believed will be glad to hand these

the intention of the women to acquire title

famous ruins over to the women for care and preservation. The association is not a hastily formed On the contrary, it is the outcome of

nearly'three years of agitation and education of the women of the state. In October, 1897, Mrs. Mahlon D. Thatcher, then president of the State Federation of Women's Clubs, appointed a committee of women who had for years been personally interested in the protection of the state's prehistoric heritage to

act with the federation and clubwomen as a special committe for the spreading of knowledge concerning the ruins, the collection and preservation of relics, and the ultimate bringing forward into the light of today of the wonderful old ruins which have been so

long shadowed by the cliffs in the Rio Mancos canyon. Since its appointment the committee has had visions of work done by it which would present to the world antiquity of far greater interest than any now known in the old world, and with a setting of deep

rugged mountains,

anyons,

; a museum of unknown antiquity. The constitution adopted contemplates an unlimited membership of women. The assoclation is formed on the lines of the Mount. Vernon and Mary Washington associations.

retches of blue mesa land—a park contain-

'i'he directors are called vice regents, and there are twenty-one of them. An initiation fee of \$2 was voted, with an annual due of \$1. There is also a life membership, costing \$100,

entitling the holder to a gold badge. The life membership may be heriditary in the female line, either lineal or collateral. The constitution having been adopted, the

officers were elected as follows: Regent, Mrs. Gilbert McClurg, Colorado Springs; first vice regent, Mrs. W. S. Peabody, Denver; record-

and

of the association will be held open for six months. Committees will be appointed, and the association will set to work at once to raise money, secure members, and lay the

Summer. Denver. The charact

Save

foundation for a state park. The area of pre-historic ruins in the Southwest covers a tract of 6,000 square miles, extending from "the four corners" into Colorado. Utah. New Mexico, and Arizona. There-

fore, the tract of land most valuable for a park has been a grave question at issue with the committee. They have had an accurate and comprehensive map made of the section called Mesa Verde, the green tableland, in the southwestern corner of Colorado. It is their wish to include in the park that portion

of the mesa and adjoining canyons which con-

tains the most ruins. It should be understood that Mesa Verde, the probable location of the future park, is a strikingly singular divide between the Mancos and the Montezuma valleys. Through-

out its extent it is gashed and seamed by Innumerable deep canyons and ravines. The uplands are crowded with forests of pinon trees in such close array that one finds it difficult to pick a passage through them. Ruins of the houses of the mesa-diwellers are thick upon the plateau. The canyons, which split the divide into tongues and islands of precipitous rock, are

lined with the houses of the cliff dwellers. The sides of the canyons are sheer walls of yellow sandstone, ranging in height from 500 to 1,000 feet. As a rule, the dwellings stand fifty or a hundred feet below the rim of the heights, in a sheltered recess overhung by beetling masses of rock. In a great many instances it is impossible to climb to.

the houses from the bottom of the canyon. Most of them have to be entered from the top of the cliffs. There are no definite roads or trails leading to them, and the difficulties to be overcome, and the dangers to be dared in visiting the cliff houses are many. The difficulties and dangers only show how necessary it is to build roads and trails and a rest house, so that people with great enthusiasm but little strength may visit the ruins.

The Cliff Palace and the Spruce Tree house are two of the cliff houses included in the tract set aside for the park. The Cliff Palace is 450 feet long, eighty feet high, eighty feet broad, and contains 127 rooms on the ground floor, and accommodations for probably 1,000 people. The Spruce Tree house is only a short distance from the Cliff Palace, and is one of the most finished specimens of prehistoric architecture yet found. A visit to one or both of these ruins would repay one for almost any

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