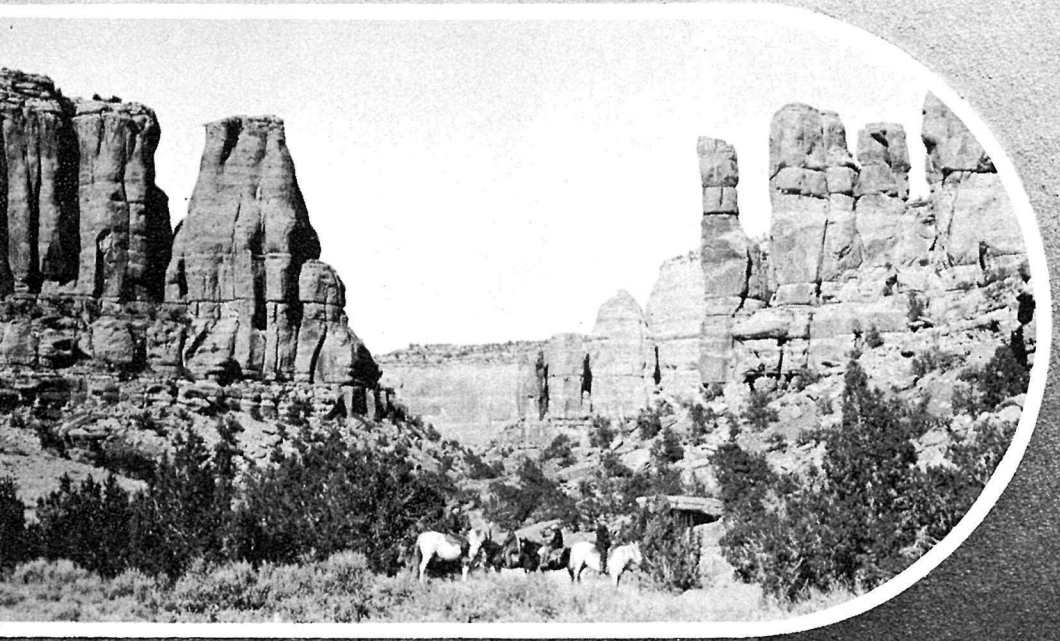


Colorado



National Monument

C O L O R A D O

Colorado

NATIONAL MONUMENT



Colorful and spectacular erosional forms consisting of massive ramparts, sheer-walled canyons, and delicately sculptured spires and columns containing interesting and significant records of the earth's history in this locality.

COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT comprises an area of fantastically eroded and vividly colored highlands. Its sheer-walled canyons, towering monoliths and stratified ramparts, and fluted columns combine to present a spectacle of imposing grandeur. Red is the predominant color, making the name "Colorado"—the Spanish term meaning "red"—especially appropriate.

NATURAL FEATURES

The monument is a portion of the vast upland area flanking the Colorado River on either side of Grand Valley. The deep red sandstone has been carved by action of wind and water through eons. Colossal natural amphitheatres, dwarfing man and his works, have been formed. In the process, giant monoliths have been hewn out of the sandstone. Most prominent among these sandstone shafts is Independence Rock, 500 feet in height. In the great red walls and canyon amphitheatres petrified wood, fragments of dinosaur bones, and limited evidence of early habitation by Indians have been found.

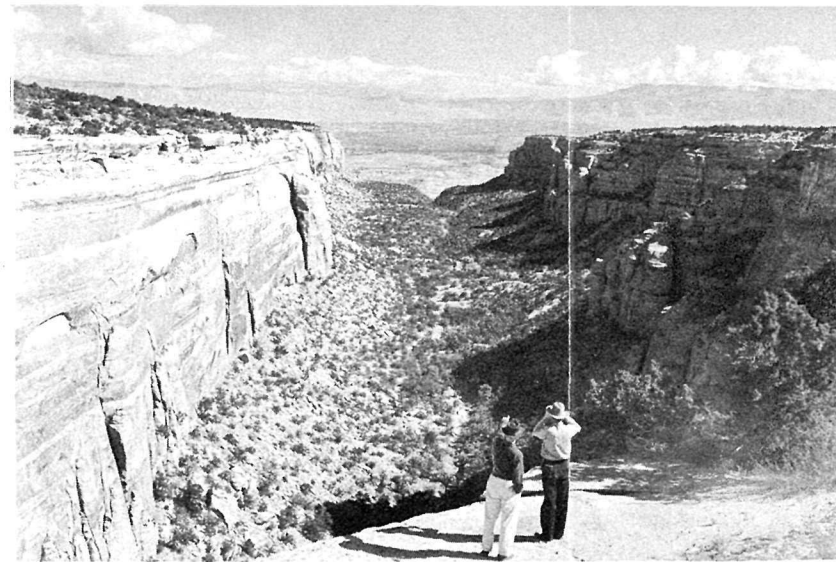


Weird formations come into view at every turn of the road. Devil's Kitchen, Coke Ovens, Monolith Parade, and Window Rock are but a few of the fantastic examples of nature's handiwork visible from the transmonument scenic drive which skirts the cliffs of Red, Ute, and Monument Canyons. To the northward, Book Cliffs form the skyline and mark the opposite side of Grand Valley. Grand Mesa, one of the most famous of flat-topped mountains, looms to the eastward. Grand Valley, nearer at hand, to the northeast, unfolds with its symmetrical pattern of farms and orchards.

GEOLOGY

Colorado National Monument contains interesting geologic exhibits produced in the red sandstone formations. Nature's tools, which have produced these exhibits, include the original deposition of the sediments comprising the formations themselves; faulting and displacement of large blocks of the earth's crust; and the ever-present action of wind, water, temperature changes, and other processes called

"The Monuments" of Monument Canyon as seen from the public campground



View down Red Canyon toward city of Grand Junction

millions of years later when life had developed to such a stage that the huge lizards, called dinosaurs, had come into being. The record of what took place between these two ancient eras is missing in rock formations of the monument. The passage of this tremendous period of time is represented only by a thin line marking the zone of contact between the crest of massive black granite and the overlying layers of red shale and sandstone.

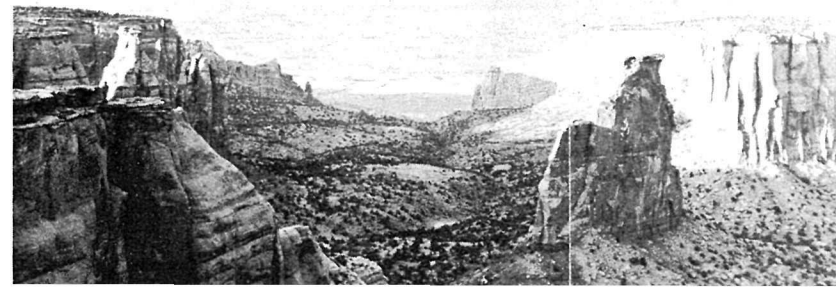
The Fault Escarpment.—In most of the monument the bone-bearing rocks occur high up in the cliffs, but on the northeast side they

are found in the valley floor. This difference of elevation is the result of a break in the earth's crust, called a "fault." The rocks of the Colorado River Valley have subsided several hundred feet with relation to those in the escarpment. The fault is about 10 miles long. At its ends the displacement becomes less and less until finally the fault merges into folds, indicating that the pressure on the rocks was less intense in these areas than in the area in the vicinity of the monument.

Dinosaurs.—The existence of dinosaurs in this area is indicated by their fossil remains in

the sandstone of the Morrison formation (Upper Jurassic system). Five different species have been found in rocks adjoining the monument. They are the *brontosaurus*, the "thunder lizard," so called because of the supposed trembling of the earth from the weight of its tread; the *brachiosaurus*, a giraffe-like wader adapted to take refuge in deeper waters; the *allosaurus*, a meat-eating reptile with short forelegs and long hind legs; the *stegosaurus*, called the armored dinosaur, a small-headed beast with huge flaring plates to protect its back; and the *diplodocus*, the largest landliving animal known.

Looking across the Grand Valley



These weird rock formations in Monument Canyon are called the "coke ovens"

The formations in the canyons sometimes present an eerie spectacle



WILDLIFE, TREES, AND FLOWERS

The monument is a wildlife sanctuary where hunting is prohibited. Deer, foxes, coyotes, and porcupines are plentiful, as well as many species of birds. Elk are occasionally seen. In the mid-1920's, a few bison were transplanted to the monument. The herd, now maintained at a minimum of 20 head, the maximum for which there is forage, may be seen from the monument highway grazing on the canyon floors or along the base of the great valley escarpment.

The forest cover is chiefly juniper and piñon pine, interspersed with several species of brush and shrubs such as sagebrush, serviceberry, and mountain-mahogany. A wide variety of wild flowers is to be seen during the early summer months.

ACCESSIBILITY

The eastern entrance to the monument is 4 miles from Grand Junction and the northern entrance 3½ miles from the town of Fruita. United States Highways Nos. 6, 24, and 50 converge at Grand Junction, and 6 and 50 pass through Fruita, making the monument easily accessible. An excellent highway traverses the monument, following the canyon rims for most of its 22 miles. Along the route are parking overlooks where visitors may advantageously enjoy the spectacular beauty. The two entrances permit visitors en route east or west to detour through the monument, or to take a circle trip through the monument via Grand Junction or Fruita. The monument highway is open and passable all year.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Public camp and picnic grounds, equipped with tables, benches, fireplaces, water, fire wood, and sanitary facilities, are provided at monument headquarters. Camping supplies and equipment are not obtainable in the monument. Hotel and tourist camp accommodations are available in nearby towns.

ENTRANCE FEE

An entrance permit fee of 50 cents a car is collected for each vehicle entering the area. Each permit is good throughout the calendar year in which purchased, regardless of the number of times the vehicle enters the monument.

ADMINISTRATION

Colorado National Monument, containing 18,120 acres of federally owned land, was established by Presidential proclamation of May 24, 1911. It is one of the areas of scenic, historic, prehistoric, or scientific value, with superlative features of national significance, which the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior is obligated by law to preserve, unimpaired, for the benefit and enjoyment of the people. The monument is under the direct supervision of the Superintendent, Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado. He is represented at the monument by a resident superintendent who is assisted by park rangers.

The following observations are made for the protection of the natural beauties of the monument, as well as for the comfort and convenience of visitors:

The monument is a sanctuary for wildlife, and hunting and the use of firearms are not permitted.

Flowers, shrubs, and trees should not be disturbed or wild animals or birds harmed or frightened. Initials must not be carved on signs, or structures and natural features marred or defaced.

Be careful with fires, building them only at designated places in the campground. Extinguish fires completely before leaving them and be sure cigarettes and matches are out before discarding. Use sparingly only the wood prepared and stacked for this purpose in the public campground.

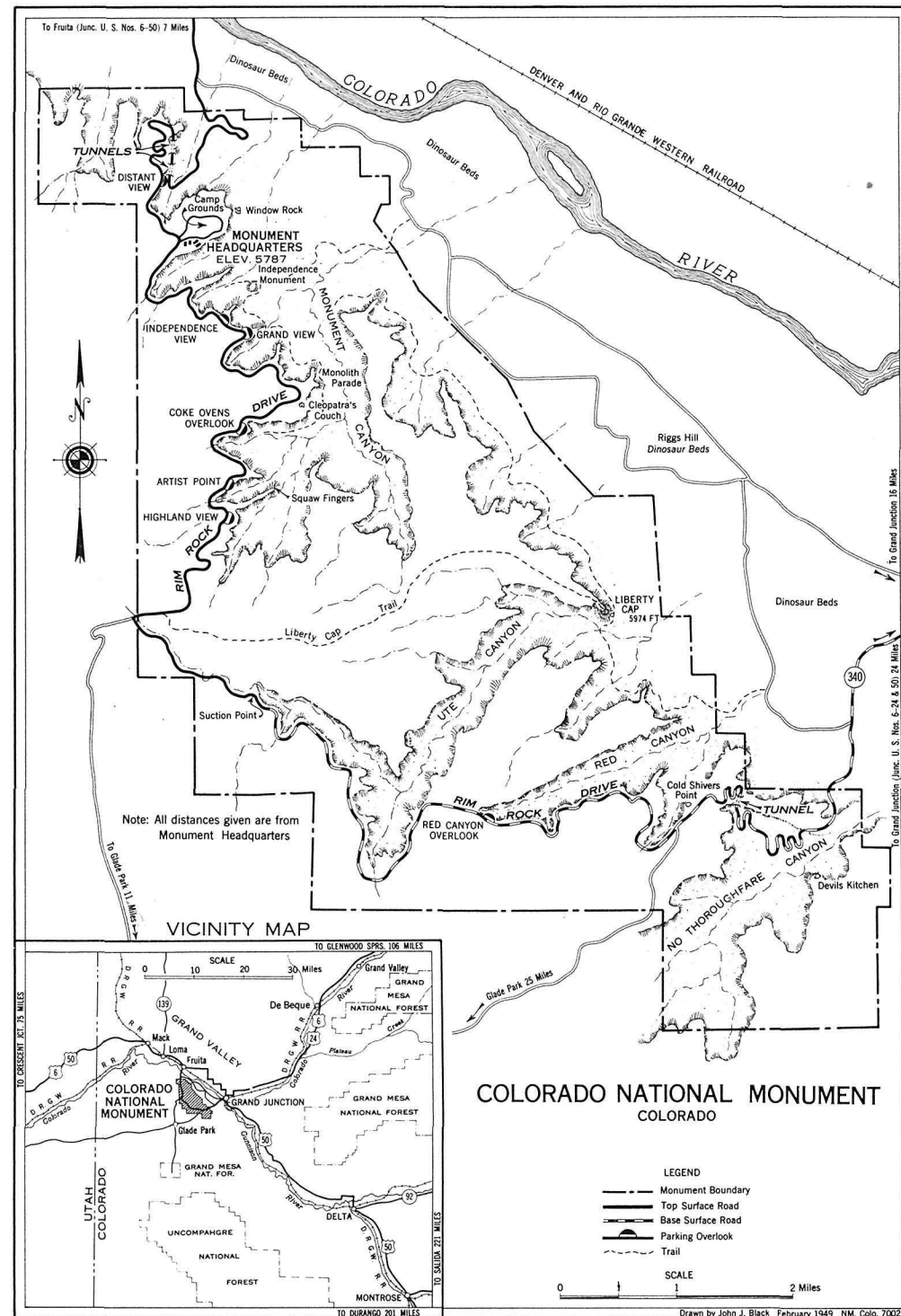
Please help keep the monument premises clean. Deposit all refuse in receptacles provided for that purpose.

Rocks or other objects must not be thrown or rolled into the canyon. This practice is destructive to the monument's natural beauty and is dangerous to persons who may be in the canyon below.

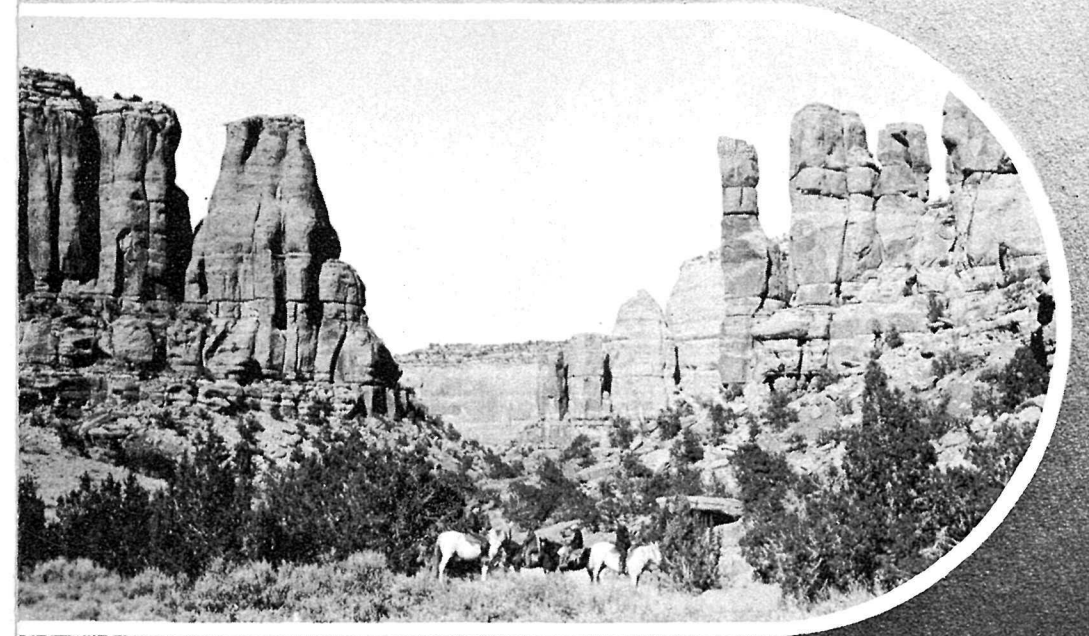
Hiking or climbing alone is dangerous. You should check with the superintendent or a ranger as to destination and trail conditions.

Dogs and cats must be kept on leash or otherwise under physical restrictive control at all times.

Automobile entrance permit is 50 cents a vehicle. The speed limit is 25 miles an hour and speed must be reduced on sharp and blind curves. Avoid accidents by driving carefully.



Colorado



National Monument

C O L O R A D O