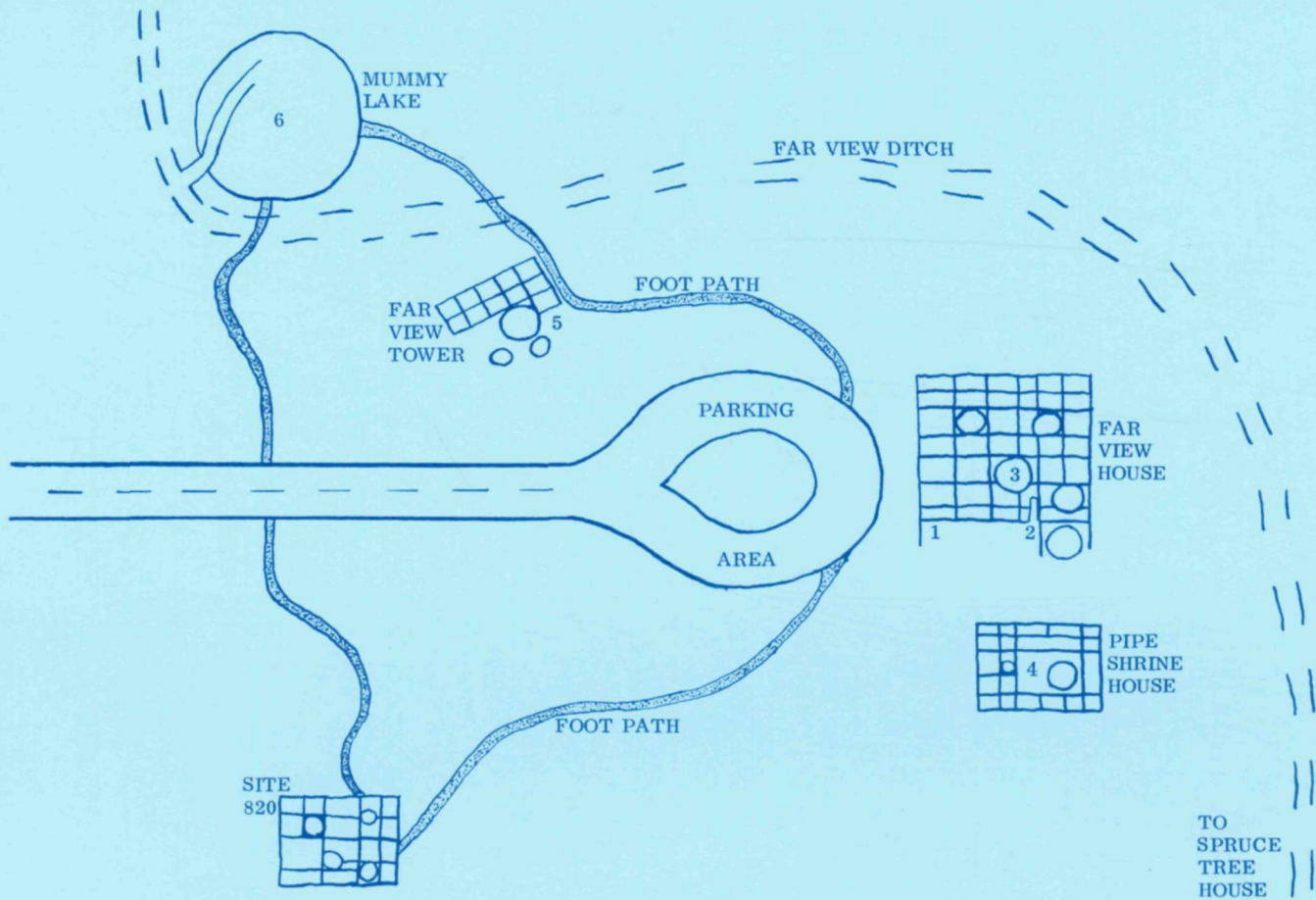


Far View



Donation
25¢
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home.



Archeologists speculate that Far View must have been one of the most densely populated areas in Mesa Verde. Roughly 50 dwellings and a water collection system are all located within a half-mile square area. (.64 sq. Km.) Five of these archeological units are excavated and open to the public. Most of the sites date from A.D. 900 to 1300, although archeologists have also found evidence of earlier occupations.

The concentration of these villages on the upper portion of Chapin Mesa was probably due to the heavier annual rainfall in that area. The average rainfall of 18

inches (46 cm.) at times may have provided enough water for the Mummy Lake water collection system. Such an extensive system would have given the Anasazi--the farming people who once lived here--both an easily accessible water supply as well as water storage in drier times. It also reflects the amount of community effort and cooperation that was necessary between villages in order to build such a project.

Jesse Walter Fewkes, an archeologist from the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, began excavation and stabilization in the Far View group in 1916. He reinforced walls, rebuilt upper por-

tions of many, and capped most of them with cement. Although Fewkes felt that "unless the walls are protected they will fall in a few years into piles of stone," the National Park Service no longer uses the reconstruction technique. The early stabilization was completely redone in 1934 and again in 1948 when exposure to the elements caused many portions to weaken. Stabilization is such an essential part of the preservation of the ruins that wall maintenance and repair of damage caused by rain or snow continue to be done by a crew of specially trained National Park Service employees.

FAR VIEW HOUSE

Far View House itself is a large rectangular pueblo consisting of about 40 ground floor rooms and five kivas, or ceremonial rooms. Four of these kivas are inside the house walls while the remaining one is built outside the walls. Constructed between A.D. 1100 - 1300, the entire pueblo probably once contained some fifty rooms and was apparently two stories high. It was the first mesa top ruin to be excavated.

On the south (downhill) side of Far View House Stop #1 begins your tour of this area.

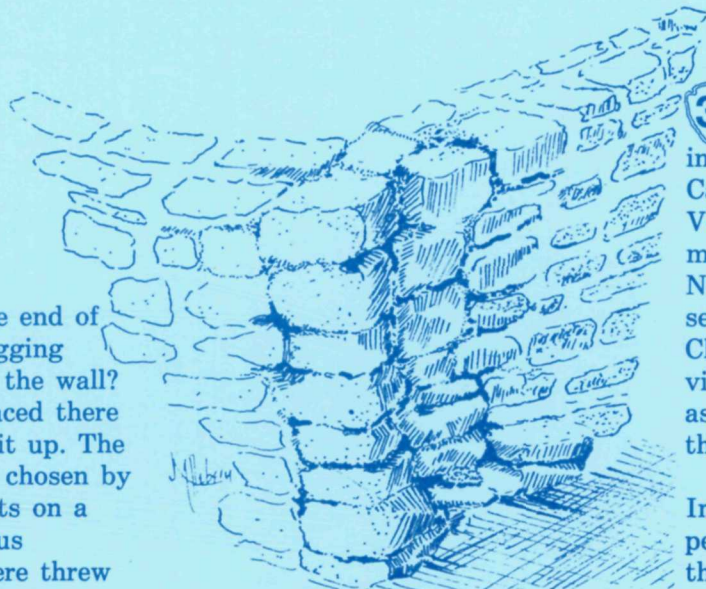


Doorways in alignment at Far View House.

1 A striking feature of Far View House is the regularity of its rooms. Notice the definite pattern of their construction and how evenly spaced they are as opposed to the irregularity of rooms built in cliff dwellings. By looking through the doorway you can get an idea of the room size. Far View rooms are not only well-organized but are also larger and have higher and broader entrances than those found in cliff dwellings.

As you walk along the south wall to Stop #2 (to the right of the ladder), notice the higher walls in the center of the ruin north of the large, central kiva. These are the remains of the second story walls. It is believed that most of the rooms on the upper levels were used as sleeping quarters, while the ground floor rooms were probably used for storage.

2 Can you see how the end of the south wall is sagging compared to the rest of the wall? A reinforcement was placed there by the Anasazi to hold it up. The village construction site chosen by the Far View people rests on a mound of refuse. Previous inhabitants who lived here threw out their trash, and over the course of years it accumulated into a huge mound. These residents moved out of the village, leaving the buildings open to weathering and decay. By the time the people of Far View House built on the same mound there was no way for them to recognize that an earlier



Sagging wall.

village existed. The weight of their new walls soon settled into the soft mound, making repair work such as you see here necessary. From here please climb the short ladder to Stop #3.

3 Many kivas at Far View contain features more comparable in design to those found in Chaco Canyon than elsewhere in Mesa Verde. Chaco Canyon, a national monument located in northwestern New Mexico, represents another segment of Anasazi culture. The Chaco Anasazi lived in their villages at about the same time as the Mesa Verde Anasazi built these dwellings.

In many respects the Mesa Verde people were apparently inferior to the more sophisticated Chaco Canyon Anasazi. Mesa Verde villages like Far View House traded food, pottery, and other goods with their neighbors to the south. The Far View people were so impressed with certain aspects of the Chaco culture that they began building kivas much like the ones at Chaco.

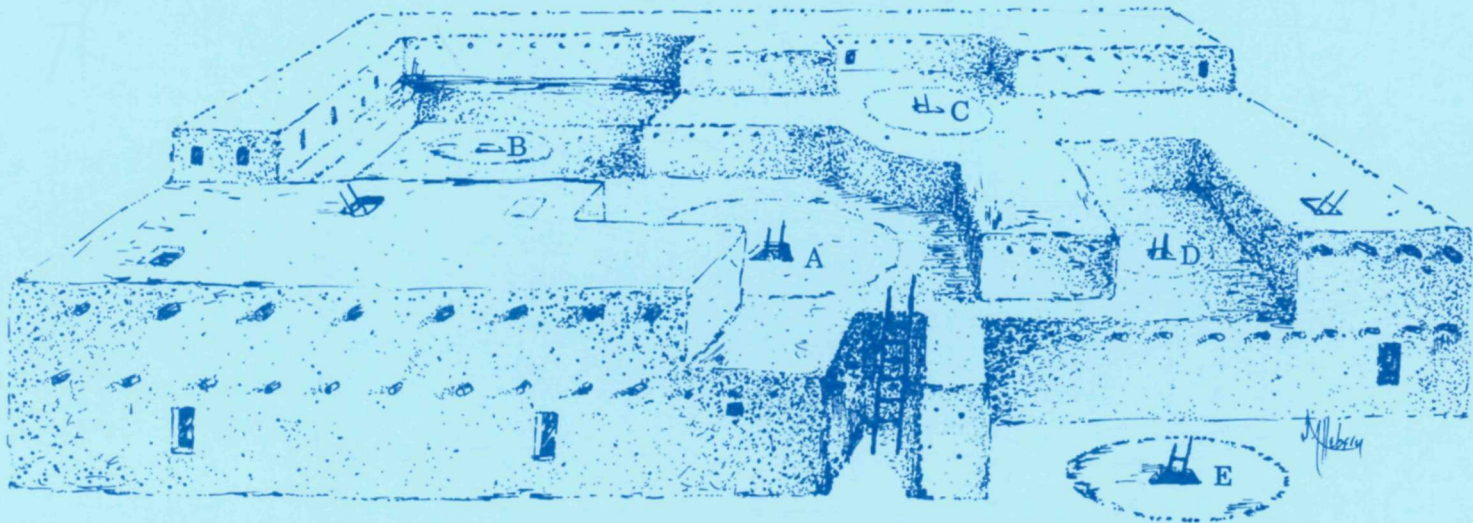
This larger kiva (A) appears to be the oldest of the four kivas within the walls of Far View House and most resembles Chaco in size. The low pilasters (pillars) for roof supports, the very tall walls, and the two vaults on the kiva floor are all "borrowed" features from Chaco Canyon kivas.

As you walk through Far View House, notice the bright red wall surfaces on kiva C. This indicates an exposure to excessive heat. Apparently a substantial fire engulfed each kiva at some time or another. Kiva B showed evidence of about 20 coats of plaster. With replastering done annually, usually in the spring,

Far View House as it appeared in 1100 A.D.

this would indicate many seasons of use. Take a look at the outside kiva (E). It was built in a raised court on the south side, possibly to secure a sunny exposure.

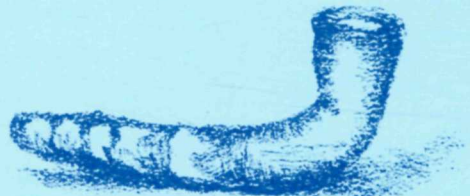
Feel free to wander about the rest of the ruin before you proceed to the next stop. Stop #4, Pipe Shrine House, is located 100 feet (30 meters) south of here.





PIPE SHRINE HOUSE

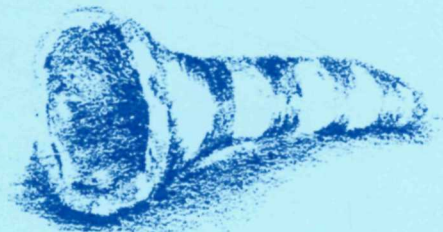
4 While excavating Far View House in 1916, Fewkes became interested in a large mound to the south. Not until the spring of 1922 did he begin to excavate the ruin, which, as he put it, was "pleading" for it. Only one to two stories high, the dwelling contained about 20 rooms. Fewkes named it Pipe Shrine House because in a pit in the round kiva he found a dozen decorated clay pipes. These pipes were used more in ceremonies rather than being smoked for pleasure.



The walls that make up the rooms along the northern end of the ruin are one stone wide and referred to as single coursed masonry. The builders of these rooms constructed their village in an L-shape which is typical of a Pueblo II dwelling (A.D. 900 - 1100). Like at Far View House, these people built their walls over an earlier,



deserted and decayed village. The rest of the ruin is made of walls two stones or more wide, known as double coursed masonry -- a common characteristic of Pueblo III dwellings (A.D. 1100 - 1300).



Perhaps the village was inhabited throughout both periods. As the population increased, the people of the Pueblo II village could have remodeled and added on extra rooms using the double coursed technique. Another idea is that the original villagers left the pueblo, and then a second group moved in who were responsible for the later construction.

The kiva at Pipe Shrine House is larger than most at Far View. The low bench, high walls, and the different style ventilation system again are more typical of Chaco Canyon than of Mesa Verde kivas. The kiva was surrounded by rooms, and its flat roof served as a central courtyard inside the village. The only entrance into this courtyard and to the rooms of Pipe Shrine House was a single doorway in the south wall of the pueblo. For some reason the kiva roof burned after which the room was never used again. Archeologists believe that a tower

Pipe Shrine House shortly after excavation.





Pipe Shrine House today.

stood beside the kiva. Today the remains of this tower look like a circular room.

South of the dwelling the villagers had to construct a retaining wall in order to level off the area before building there. In the middle of the retaining wall is a recess with steps leading to the lower level. Fewkes said the recess contained another shrine.

The trash mound is located on the southeast side of the ruin and is now overgrown with brush. Although cowboys had earlier dug into this area, Fewkes did find a dozen undisturbed burials. The bodies lay buried in fully extended positions with pottery and other grave goods surrounding them.

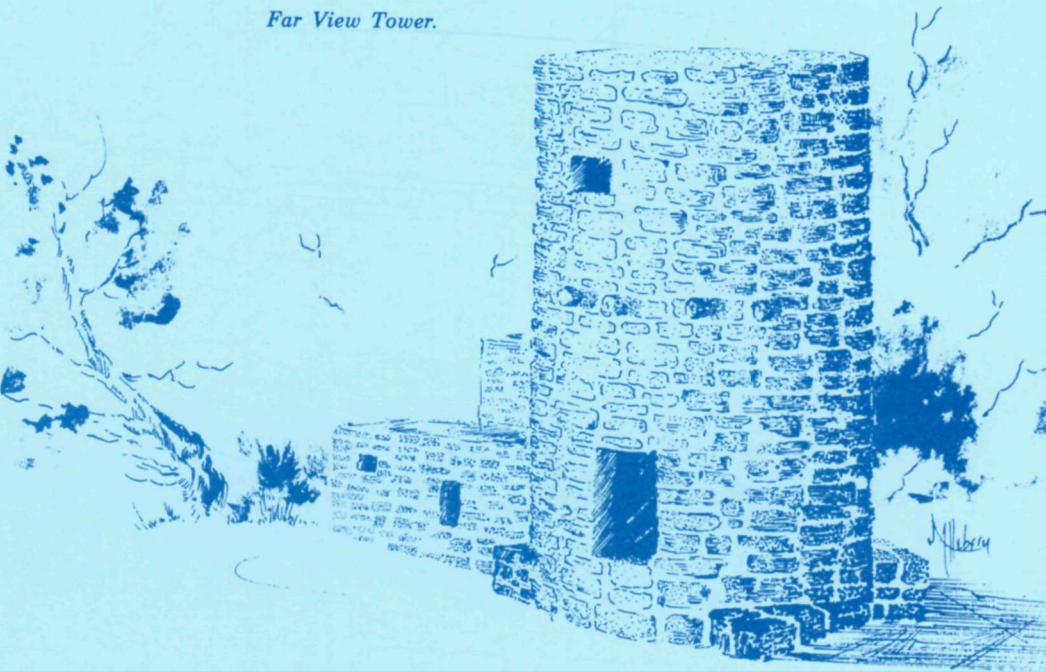
From Pipe Shrine House please proceed back to the parking lot side of Far View House and follow the directional sign to Far View Tower, the next stop.

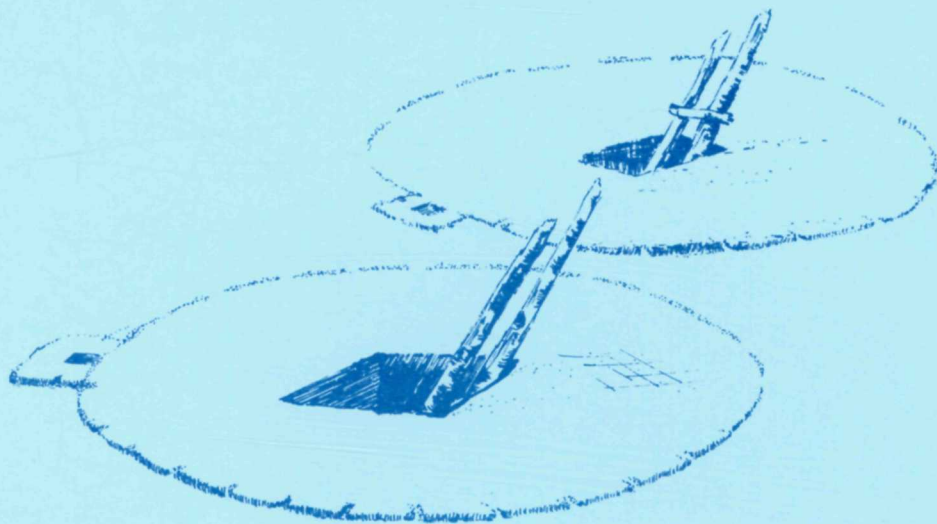
FAR VIEW TOWER

5 One of the last sites Fewkes excavated in Mesa Verde was Far View Tower. It consists of a rectangular row of sixteen small, one-story rooms, three kivas, and a round tower. In his report on the work of 1922, Fewkes wrote the following about Far View Tower:

This building is situated north of Far View House, about midway between it and Mummy Lake, and when work began on it no walls were visible; the site was covered with sage bushes, and fallen stone strewn over the surface had raised a mound a few feet high, which is now a fine circular tower surrounded by low walled basal rooms. Three kivas were revealed on the south side where formerly no evidences of their existence appeared.

Far View Tower.





Far View Kivas.

The remains of Far View Tower indicate that it also was lived in during two separate periods. The sixteen rooms north of the tower have the single coursed masonry construction of the Pueblo II period. Two kivas were built along with these rooms.

While Fewkes found evidence of three kivas, today you see only two. One of the original Pueblo II kivas was used for a time and then filled with trash. A third kiva was built at the same time

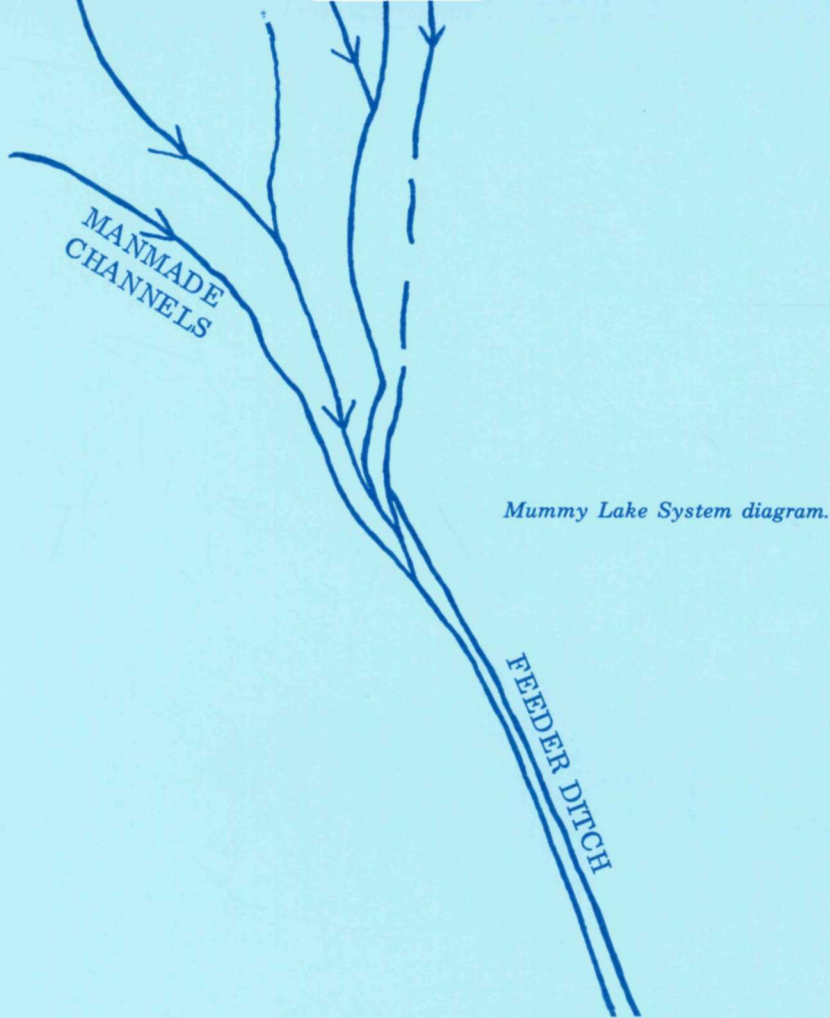
as the Pueblo III tower sometime between A.D. 1100 - 1300. Construction of this last kiva over part of the older, trash filled one accounts for the fact that only two kivas are evident today.

We know the tower is not as old as the single coursed, Pueblo II rooms north of it because its walls are the double coursed Pueblo III masonry style. From the amount of rubble that had fallen around it, Fewkes thought the tower was originally as high as the tops of the nearby juniper and pinyon pine trees. The remains of 57 towers are scattered throughout Mesa Verde, yet it is still a mystery why they were built. Three possible explanations of their use include: 1) to act as signal towers or watchtowers for enemies, 2) to serve some unknown religious function, or 3) to observe the sun's position and keep track of planting and harvesting seasons.

MUMMY LAKE - FAR VIEW DITCH

6 Archeologists know that water was an important part of the Anasazi culture, not only for drinking and cooking purposes but probably also for the irrigation of their farmlands. Water might have played a significant role in their religious ceremonies too. By far the most impressive water system in the Park is that of Mummy Lake. Not a lake but a manmade reservoir, Mummy Lake was named because of a series of burials found adjacent to the area.

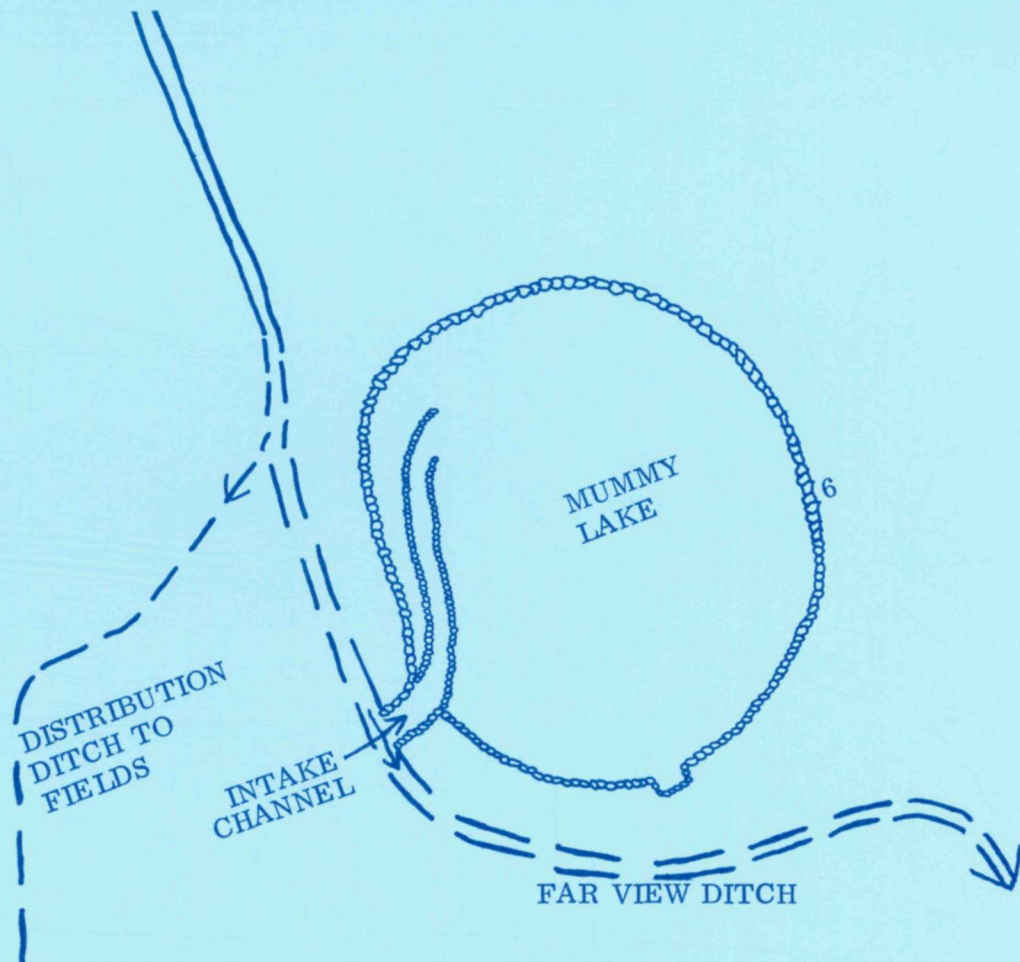
Mummy Lake was constructed to trap and hold the runoff from rain and snow. The reservoir is a circular depression 90 feet (27 meters) in diameter and 12 feet (3.6 meters) deep, surrounded by a circular wall with artificial banks on the south and east (this) sides. The interior of the depression, now a dry basin, is lined with a



stone masonry wall except at the inlet. Masonry shows two construction periods--one extending from A.D. 900 - 1100 and another from A.D. 1100 - 1300.

Uphill to the north of the reservoir a number of manmade channels collected runoff water which flowed into a feeder ditch (see diagram). It then ran past the western (far) side until it met the mouth of the intake channel at the southwest (far left) corner. At this point water was diverted into the inlet around a right angle turn and conducted from there on into the basin. Such a design allowed any silt to settle within the intake channel, where it could be easily removed, rather than in the reservoir itself. Thus, Mummy Lake water remained clean for drinking use.

Mummy Lake never fed water into other ditches. Instead, just before reaching the reservoir the water could be diverted from the



feeder ditch into additional ditches that led to Anasazi fields. These smaller ditches may have provided water for the irrigation of farmlands, while the main feeder ditch and Mummy Lake supplied water for household use. In this way a large population could be supported in the area.

During the second construction period of Mummy Lake, the feeder ditch was extended southward through the Far View area proceeding downmesa four to five miles (6 to 8 km.) to the head of Spruce Tree Canyon. With the addition of this new Far View Ditch the Anasazi could either allow water to flow into Mummy Lake or bypass the basin and continue southward. It is speculated that this ditch ended abruptly at the head of Spruce Tree Canyon and possibly helped feed the spring located there. However, there is no definite evidence that water was ever



Mummy Lake reservoir, looking west.

abundant enough to flow all the way from Far View to Spruce Tree Canyon.

Construction of both Mummy Lake and the Far View Ditch



Mummy Lake intake channel.

most certainly involved community effort, although possibly it was supervised by only a few people. All the evidence indicates that water was treated by the prehistoric pueblos as one of their most valuable resources. In fact, water was so important that these people used both physical labor and religious ceremonies to assure an adequate supply for their needs.

As you leave this section, walk down the exit trail. Once you reach the Far View entrance road, you may either turn left and walk back to the parking area or cross the road and proceed to site 820. Site 820 is an unnamed site 200 feet (60 meters) south of the Far View entrance road. Excavated in 1969, it dates between A.D. 1050 - 1150, with earlier buildings and refuse underneath. It is a pueblo of 34 rooms, 4 kivas, and a tower. A sign at the site explains the different features.

Jesse Walter Fewkes excavating Far View House in 1916.



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