

# TUZIGOOT

NATIONAL MONUMENT • ARIZONA



## Remnants of a prehistoric town built by Indians who farmed Arizona's colorful Verde Valley between A.D. 1125 and 1400.

This Indian pueblo covered the summit and higher terraces of a long limestone ridge that rises 120 feet above the Verde Valley near Clarkdale, Ariz. In places, the pueblo was 2 stories high, and its 77 ground-floor rooms covered an area about 500 feet long and 100 feet wide. The average size of the rooms was 12 by 18 feet. An open plaza separated an outlying unit from the main body of the pueblo. Inhabitants entered the pueblo by means of ladders to the rooftops, thence by hatchways into the rooms.

The people who lived here left some of their implements and utensils, which tell of their way of life. Many of these artifacts, collected during 1933-34 excavations, are exhibited in the visitor center.

### *Verde Valley Prehistory*

#### The People

The story of Tuzigoot, as pieced together by archeologists, opens 1,000 years ago. Early in the 10th century, Indians of the

Verde Valley were living peacefully in the midst of their cornfields. In nearby patches and between the hillocks of corn they raised beans, pumpkins, and cotton. These pioneer farming Indians lived in pole-and-brush huts. They cremated their dead. They were related to the prehistoric people who lived along irrigated farmlands on the river terraces near present-day Phoenix.

Around 1125, people from the north moved down and joined the local natives. They built masonry houses on mesa tops and in caves. These were Pueblo Indians, and they erected the first small cluster of rooms on the hill at Tuzigoot. For almost 150 years, this small pueblo of 15 or 20 rooms continued to shelter perhaps 50 people.

Modern excavations indicate that these later people buried their dead unburned: adults, in the great refuse piles on the hill-sides below the dwellings; infants, beneath the room floors and in the walls, perhaps in the belief that their souls would be born again in the next children, as Hopi Indians of 50 years ago believed.



#### The Great Drought

During the 13th century, the Southwest experienced a disaster which has never since been equaled. Between 1215 and 1299, rainfall was below normal, causing extended drought. The last 23 years of this period were especially dry, and crops lay stunted and dying in the parched soil. It seems that the main effects of the drought were felt by those people living in and near the four adjoining corners of present-day Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado.

Drought conditions in the Verde Valley made dryfarming impossible in the flats away from the streams. As a result, the people concentrated along the permanent spring-fed streams where irrigation ditches were already in use. Tuzigoot doubled and redoubled its population as refugees moved in from the outlying desert in the last quarter of the 1200's. By the drought's end, there were 92 rooms on the hilltop.

Within sight of Tuzigoot, at the beginning of the 14th century, were a half dozen other pueblos. These had either undergone a similar increase in size or had been newly constructed during this period. As the drought

gradually abated, the Indians became content and remained for another 100 years at Tuzigoot and at many other large pueblos along the middle and lower Verde River.

#### Abandonment

Archeologists do not know the reason for the abandonment of Tuzigoot and her sister towns in the valley. This probably occurred during the 1400's. Epidemics might have depleted the population, but tangible evidence is lacking. Another theory is that by 1300 too many people had moved off the flats of the desert and concentrated along the streams. Thus population pressure on the small amounts of arable land could have caused an imbalance. This, in turn, could have led to strife between neighboring villages and a gradual exodus from the valley. Survivors were probably absorbed into other pueblos outside the valley.

The modern Hopi and Zuni hold traditions that some of their clans came from the Verde Valley and other parts of central Arizona.

Whatever the cause and exact time of abandonment, when Spanish soldiers com-

manded by Antonio Espejo entered the Verde Valley in 1583, they found Yavapai Indians living in thatch huts and the pueblos in ruins.

#### *Rediscovery*

For four centuries, Tuzigoot pueblo lay forgotten and undisturbed, its rooms obscured under fallen material from the ruined upper floors and roofs. In 1933 and 1934, complete excavation of the site was carried out by the University of Arizona. Federal relief funds and the cooperation of the Phelps Dodge Corporation, which donated the land, helped to make this project possible.

Through the interest of public-spirited local citizens, the entire hill of Tuzigoot, with museum and complete collection, was donated to the Federal Government, and on July 25, 1939, Tuzigoot National Monument, a tract of 43 acres, was established by Presidential proclamation.

#### *About Your Visit*

The ruins and visitor center are open between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., when a park ranger is on duty to assist you. The museum exhibits include rare turquoise mosaics, delicate beads and bracelets made of shells traded from Indians who lived near the Gulf

of California, and painted pottery that accompanied the dead as offerings.

The nominal entrance fee is waived for children under 12 years of age and groups of elementary and high school children, regardless of age, and accompanying adults responsible for their safety and conduct.

#### *Related Points of Interest*

Montezuma Castle National Monument, one of the best preserved cliff dwellings in the United States, is 27 miles from Tuzigoot. You can reach it by a good road branching from U.S. 89A. The Castle, which was a community dwelling, offers many interesting comparisons with Tuzigoot, for it was inhabited at the same time and by people of the same general culture.

If you plan to continue north on U.S. 89A to Flagstaff, you can easily reach other National Monuments: Walnut Canyon, a natural area of great beauty featuring cliff dwellings on rock ledges of canyon walls; Wupatki, a series of remarkable pueblo dwellings; and Sunset Crater, site of the last active volcano in the Southwest. Sunset Crater erupted cinders over many early pithouse dwellings about A.D. 1064.

*Top part of pueblo before excavation.*



*Top part of pueblo after excavation and partial rebuilding.*





*A well-preserved burial.*

### Administration

TUZIGOOT NATIONAL MONUMENT is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and inspiration of its people.

The development of this area is part of MISSION 66, a 10-year program to develop and staff the areas of the National Park System so that they can be used and enjoyed by both present and future generations.

A superintendent, whose address is Box 36, Clarkdale, Ariz., 86324, is in immediate charge of the monument.

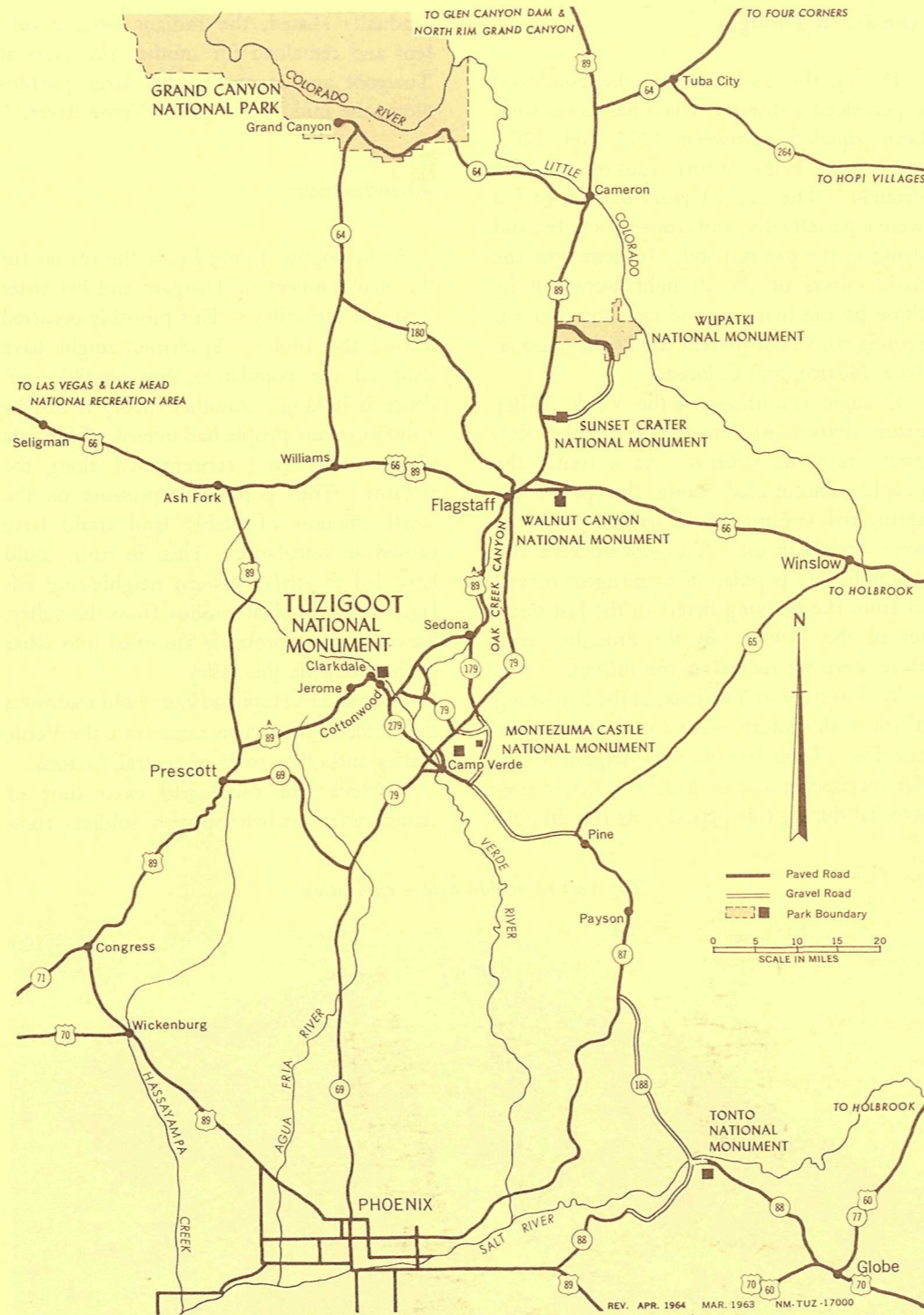
### America's Natural Resources

Created in 1849, the Department of the Interior—America's Department of Natural Resources—is concerned with the management, conservation, and development of the Nation's water, wildlife, mineral, forest, and park and recreational resources. It also has major responsibilities for Indian and territorial affairs.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department works to assure that nonrenewable resources are developed and used wisely, that park and recreational resources are conserved for the future, and that renewable resources make their full contribution to the progress, prosperity, and security of the United States—now and in the future.

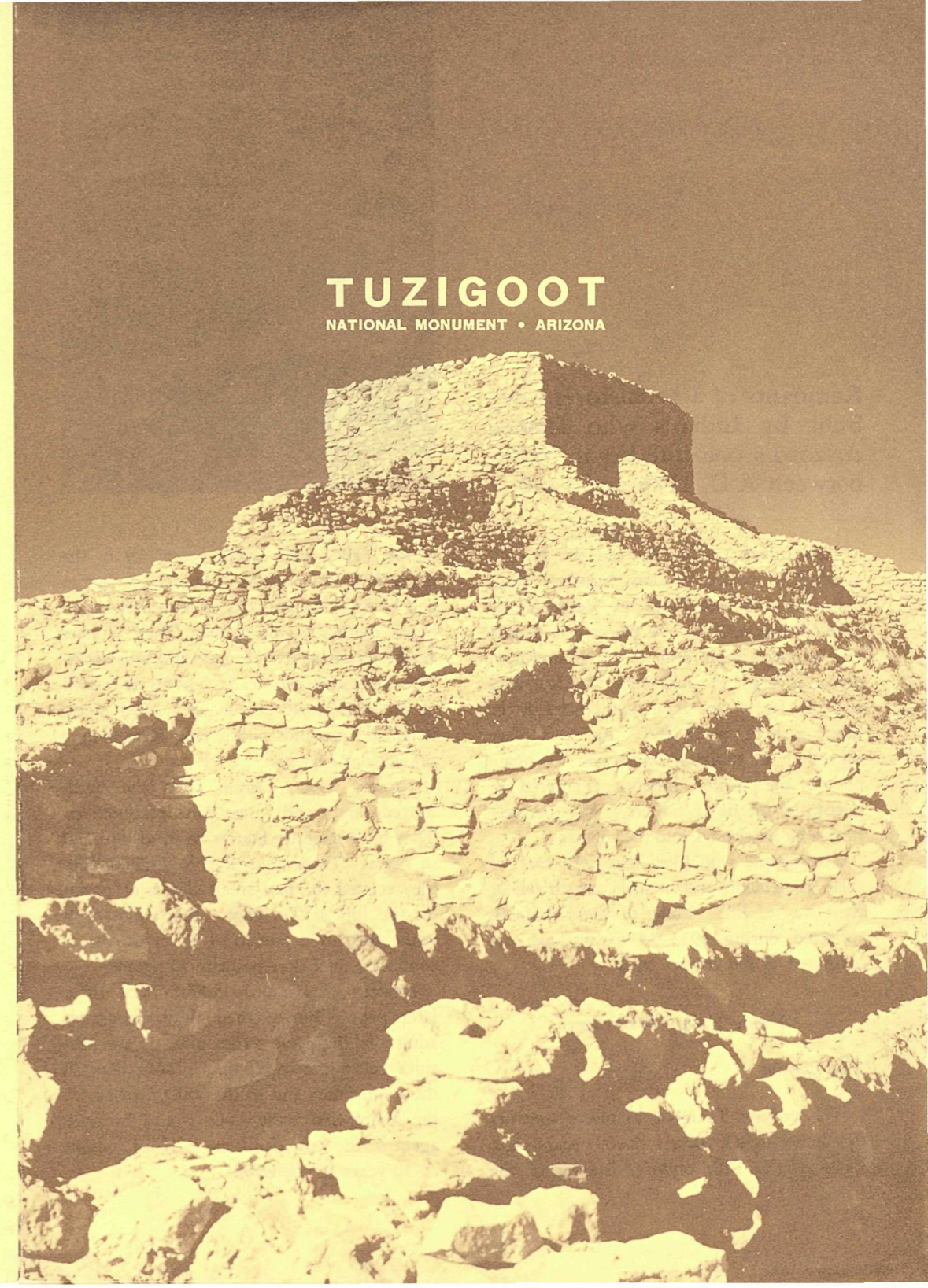


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