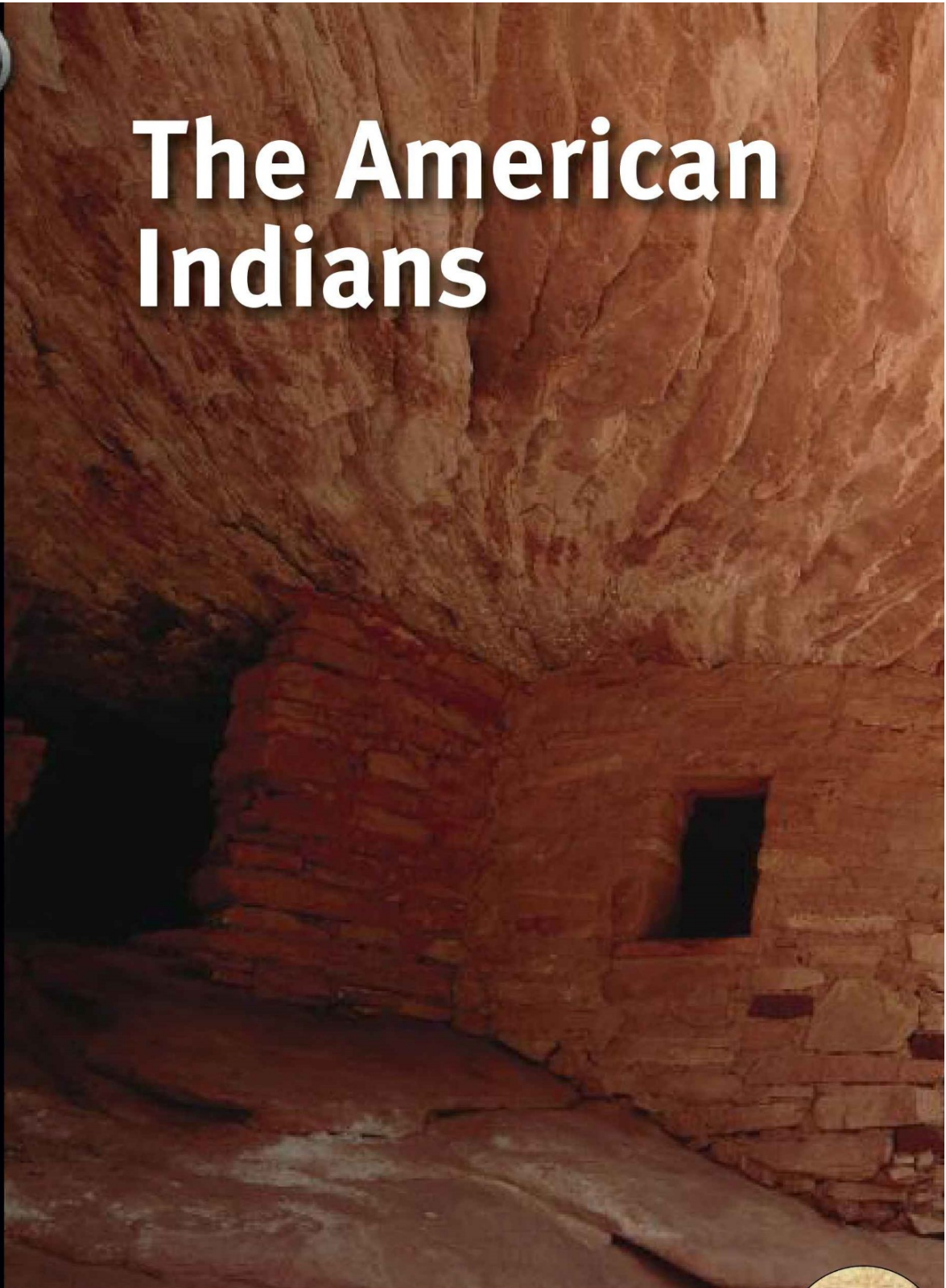


WORDS TO UNDERSTAND

- adaptation
- archaeologist
- artifact
- culture
- descendant
- disdain
- infer
- migration
- prehistoric
- sparse
- tradition

The American Indians



Members of the Anasazi culture built this remote cliff dwelling about A.D. 1200. The dwellings are part of the Mule Canyon Ruins on Cedar Mesa near Blanding. Can you see why the site is now called "House of Fire?" What local building materials were used?



12,000 B.C.

The Ice Age ends, and the climate warms up. Mammoths, saber-toothed cats, giant camels, and bison live in today's Utah. Paleo-Indians spread out over the American continents.

5000 B.C.

Archaic Indians live in the Great Basin and plateau regions.



12,000 B.C.

6000 B.C.

300 B.C.

9000 B.C.

People first live in the Four Corners Region. People also live in Danger Cave.



6000 B.C.

The climate gets even warmer and drier, and most of the large mammals have disappeared.

300 B.C.

The Anasazi culture spreads into the canyons and mesas along the San Juan River.

Timeline of Events



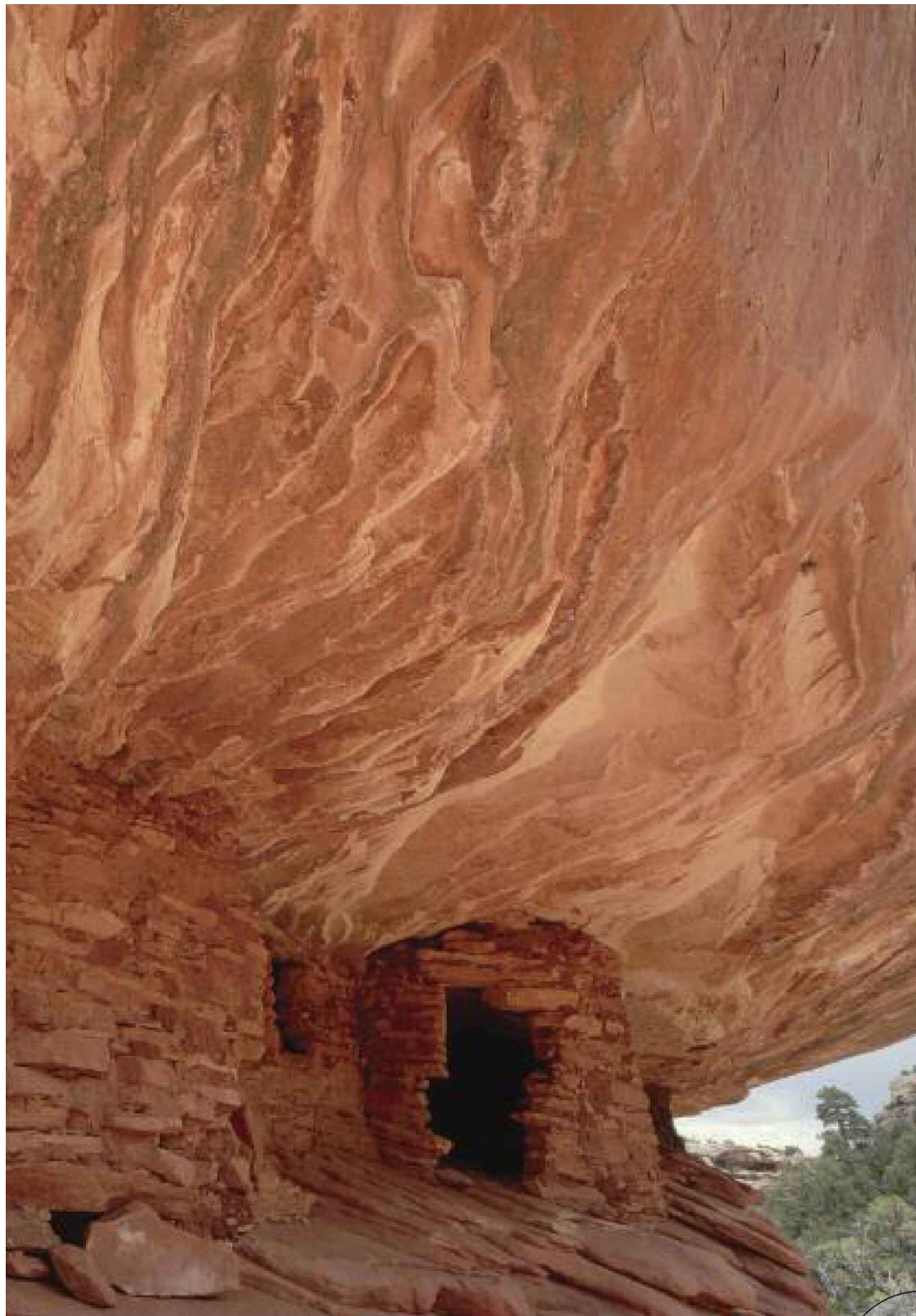
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Chapter

SETTING THE STAGE

The Ice Age was over, but the weather was cooler and wetter than it is today. Prehistoric animals roamed the land. Many became food for humans. For thousands of years different groups of people moved in and out of the place we now call Utah. They developed more and more skills. They traveled from place to place, searching for food. Then some started building more permanent communities and growing some of their own food.

Thousands of years later, when the Spanish Catholic priests and then the Mormon pioneers came to the Great Basin, there were about 20,000 native people living in the region.



A.D. 400

The Fremont culture develops throughout the Great Basin.



A.D. 1620

The Navajo move into the San Juan River region.



A.D. 1949

Danger Cave is first explored.

A.D. 500

A.D. 1000

A.D. 1500

A.D. 1600

A.D. 1960s



A.D. 1100
Shoshone, Goshute, Ute, and Paiute people live in Utah.

A.D. 1300

The Fremont and Anasazi are gone from Utah.



A.D. 1960s
Hogup Cave is explored.



The Colorado River still cuts away at red rock cliffs as it winds past Moab. What people lived near the river long ago?

Discover the Past

A tall man wearing a straw hat, his tiny yellow dog leading the way, led a group of hikers on a red rock trail high above the small Utah town of Moab. As they turned a corner they saw, to their surprise, Indian drawings carved into the side of a dark cliff. Animals that looked like mountain goats seemed to leap across the rock. The hikers knew they were looking into the past. As they wandered among the rock cliffs and stepped over boulders, they stared with awe at the winding, greenish Colorado River far below. They wondered about the lives of the native artists who had walked in the same place long ago.

Adaptation and Migration

The history of Utah's people started a long time ago. However, there is more we don't know about the earliest inhabitants than we do know. We know the story of the early people is one of *adaptation* and *migration*.

In prehistoric times, the climate was different than it is now. The ice that covered the northern parts of the globe during the Ice Age ended, and the climate in today's Utah region got warmer. This change was hard on plants and animals. Some adapted, but others were unable to

adapt and became extinct. These changes did not occur rapidly. It took many, many years for the climate to change to what it is today.

This chain of events might have also been stressful for humans. They depended on plants and animals for food, just like we do today. What would it be like if some of your food sources were no longer available? The people adapted to new ways of getting food. They figured out how to make more efficient weapons to kill the smaller, faster animals that replaced the huge mammoths and other prehistoric animals as they died out. People hunted animals that were similar to those we know today, including buffalo, elk, and deer, ducks, rabbits, fish, and



other smaller animals. The people probably adapted their clothing and shelters as well. We can assume people adapted because they stayed.

We know many different groups of people, large and small, moved into the Great Basin, mountain valleys, and high plateaus. Some groups lived next to rivers and streams, where wildlife was plentiful, and others lived in the desert regions, where it was harder to get food. The people also moved with the seasons, to escape drought, or perhaps to escape from their enemies. Some large groups and their *descendents* stayed for thousands of years. Others moved out of today's Utah after a shorter time.

What do you think?

People today know the climate is changing again. Some think this is a natural process. Others think human beings are not taking care of the environment and are causing global warming. What do you think? If the climate changed dramatically, do you think humans and animals could adapt?



There are no photographs of Utah's prehistoric peoples, but we can still learn about the peoples in other ways and imagine what their lives were like. As you read this chapter, think about the native people who lived where you live now. What is their history? What were their successes? What were their problems? How do native people still influence Utah today?



This display at Anasazi Indian Village State Park shows the kinds of artifacts archaeologists have found at burial sites.

Archaeologists

Scientists who study early people are called *archaeologists*. Archaeologists have learned much about the early people who lived in Utah. For example, we know that American Indians ate animals because charred animal bones have been found at their campsites. We know from burial sites how the groups buried their dead.

Artifacts are tools, weapons, baskets, clay pots, or other items made by humans. Utah's earliest people left artifacts, parts of buildings, and rock art.

However, there are many aspects of Indian life of which we have no evidence, or we don't know what the artifacts mean, so we have to *infer*, or try to figure out,

how they were used. A clay figurine or small twig deer, for example, could be a child's toy, a craft item the people made just for fun, or something more important. Archaeologists believe the earliest people did not have written languages because no writing has been found. They did leave symbols in rock art, but we do not know how to interpret them.

Linking the Past to the Present



It is against the law to take any artifacts from a site where ancient people once lived. It is also against the law to harm rock art or ruins.

Archaeology's greatest challenge is to stop looting [and vandalism] of archaeological sites around the state. Without better protection of our [artifacts], much information and understanding about the history of the native peoples will be lost.

—Joel C. Janetski,
Utah archaeologist

Artifacts at Utah Lake

In 1991, University of Utah Professor M. McCullough telephoned Professor Joel Janetski of Brigham Young University and invited him to meet on the southwest shore of Utah Lake. Human remains had just been discovered by fishermen.

The professors examined the site and had many photographs taken to record the project. Several bone and antler tools, baskets, animal remains, and a large spear point were discovered. The site also included a man lying on his back. The professors figured the man was middle-aged, of medium height, and probably left-handed. A dog, about as large as a coyote, was found at the edge of the pit.

Back at the lab, each piece taken from the site was cleaned and numbered. From their careful work, the researchers determined that the burial site dated to about 3,000 B.C.

