

VOLUME 9

# Southwest

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*Volume Editor*



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

WASHINGTON

1979

# Hopi History, 1850-1940

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## Isolation

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the Hopi were still among the lesser known and more isolated Indian peoples living within the continental United States. Although there is an almost annual mention of them in various documents, which indicates an awareness of their existence, most of these comments refer to earlier records and are not based upon actual visitation. They usually pertain to a single individual or small group—the ubiquitous fur trapper, explorer, or wandering trader in search of food, water, or directions. As far as is known, no major expedition is recorded as having ventured into the Hopi villages after Juan Bautista de Anza; a few stragglers from the gold rush did pass through (Dockstader 1954:147-158).

As a result, the Hopi were able to overcome the effects of the early Spanish interruption of their lives, and it is probable that few indications of this intrusion were evident in their everyday activities. The events leading up to the Pueblo Revolt had become part of legend, and all the interwoven patterns that made up The Hopi Way were again in force. But it should not be thought that the Spanish invasion did not leave its mark. The exposure to Christianity, Spanish military force, and the opportunity to observe from afar what Spanish domination meant to their Pueblo brethren in the Rio Grande area left an indelible impression; however, Hopi culture did not undergo the amalgam of European and Indian social patterns that is so characteristic of the Rio Grande villages. Of even greater importance was the tendency of the Hopi to assign the credit for this ability to withstand external forces to Hopi cultural qualities, rather than other, perhaps more contributory factors: thus, the attitude became, in essence, the Whites versus the kachinas, and the kachinas had won the day. This resulted in a complacency and self-confidence that overshadowed all Hopi-White relations until the end of the nineteenth century.

This was not an entirely tranquil situation, for the Hopi were increasingly preoccupied with attacks from Mexican, Apache, and Navajo raiders in pursuit of plunder, food, or captives to be sold into slavery in Mexico. In fact, the outbreak of the Mexican War had as its major effect a limitation upon Mexican participation in slave raids and the subsequent freeing of the Navajo to raid at will.

To the Hopi this was certainly of far greater importance than any alteration of outside government. Mexico had never implemented sovereignty over the region following its successful revolution against the Spanish Crown, and it is doubtful that the Hopi were ever truly aware of the political change of fortune that had gone on around them.

## Bureau of Indian Affairs Administration

With the end of the Mexican War in 1848, a new world opened up for the Southwest. An official Indian agent was appointed April 7, 1849, in the person of John S. Calhoun. His duties were to establish headquarters at Santa Fe and to oversee the destinies of the Indian inhabitants of the region. An honorable and sincere individual, Calhoun was devoted to the improvement of Indian conditions. Before he died in mid-1852 he put into operation a variety of excellent plans, particularly with reference to control of the increasing Navajo menace (U.S. Office of Indian Affairs 1915).

In addition to Hopi isolation, which protected them, the lack of rich mineral wealth was also to their initial advantage. Were this the only concern, they might have continued without interference or interruption; but the increasing Navajo attacks combined with curiosity about the new political situation caused a group of seven Hopi leaders to journey to Santa Fe to seek a conference with Calhoun on October 6, 1850. While they went primarily to petition for military protection against the Navajo, they were equally uneasy about the intentions of the new government that controlled their homelands. The Hopi leader at this time was Nakwaiyamtewa, the chief at Oraibi, then the major Hopi village (Titiev 1944). There were earlier Hopi emissaries to Santa Fe directed toward Spanish authority, but this is the first known Hopi-American political conference.

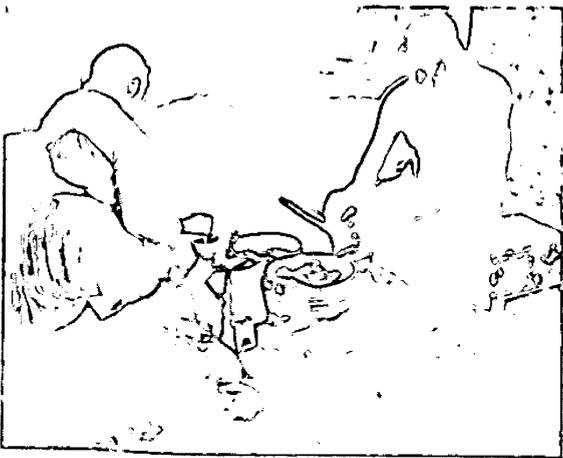
During the next decade, Americans are known to have entered Hopi country in increasing numbers. In 1851, Fort Defiance was established as an outpost to protect the region against the marauding Navajo; from it ventured various military personnel, either on official business or simply as early-day tourists. One such was Dr. P.G.S. TenBroeck, who is known to have made several visits in 1851-1852 (Schoolcraft 1851-1857, 4). He was followed by perhaps a half-dozen expeditions seeking a



John R. Wilson, Tulsa, Okla.: Mora Coll.

Fig. 9. First Hostile camp at Hotevilla (shelters at right and on hill, center) following Hostiles' departure from Oraibi. Photograph by Jo Mora, probably Oct. 1906.

of the Wheeler-Howard bill, commonly known as the Indian Reorganization Act. Under the leadership of Interior Secretary Harold L. Ickes and Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier, this act offered a well-meant and dramatic change of fortune for Indian people; indeed, it was a complete about-face in federal attitude. Oliver La Farge, a long-time friend of Indian causes,



Musée de l'Homme, Paris.

Fig. 10. Tawaquaptewa, village chief, probably at a mid-day meal in his Oraibi home with his wife, Nasingönsi (see Titiev 1972:figs. 8-9). Photograph by unknown photographer, probably in the 1930s.

drafted a constitution for the Hopi in 1936 after consulting widely with Hopi people he knew. The tribal council was established in 1935 after an election in which a minority of Hopis voted to accept the terms of the Reorganization Act. The overwhelming majority of eligible Hopi adults had registered their disapproval by just staying away from the polls. The perpetuation of political factions was reflected in the council then, as it was in the 1970s.

The federal stock reduction plan introduced to the Hopi was just as strongly opposed as it was among the Navajo. Eventually Hopis accepted the stock problem and worked to solve it. Oraibi High School, with about 200 pupils, was established in 1939 and has been a strong educational force ever since.

By 1940, then, the Hopi Indians had seen tremendous changes in their own social organization, problems of outside pressures increase radically, and their whole world view undergo new and irreversible alterations. Their major city, Oraibi, had declined from 600 in 1900 to a town of 112; completely new villages had developed, and the traditional centers of population suffered crippling strains (Titiev 1944). Many Hopi people left the reservation for work in the neighboring cities during World War II, and many registered as conscientious objectors, rendering alternative service. By no means of the least significance is the fact that missionary activities were reduced to a minimum, and the influence of traders became less pronounced.