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AN INTERVIEW BY FLOYD O'NEIL

Utah Historical
Quarterly
Spring 1971
vol. 139 no. 2.

pp 179-194

We Hopi and
The Mormons.

1858-1873

BY CHARLES S. PETERSON

H: Corn Creek flows through there with the Uintah. And they moved from there over here, so that's when they called them Uintah. And their chief was Wakarum.

O: Wakarum?

H: Yes, the white man couldn't say walk so he says Walker.

O: I see. This is the source of the name the Walker War and so on.

H: Yes.

O: I've heard some pronounce this Wakara. It was Wakarum!

H: Yes, it means yellow, yellow man, Wakarum means yellow man. When they put his name down they spelled it Walker. At the time of the [Walker] War he was in, he was their leader, main chief. Then he had a bunch of Paiutes from over the other way, Death Valley, Carson, Elko, and through there with him. And there were some members of the Shoshoni Tribe.

O: Those that were from up around the Tooele country were Shoshoni?

H: They were Utes.

O: I see. And the Shoshonis and the Utes were at peace then?

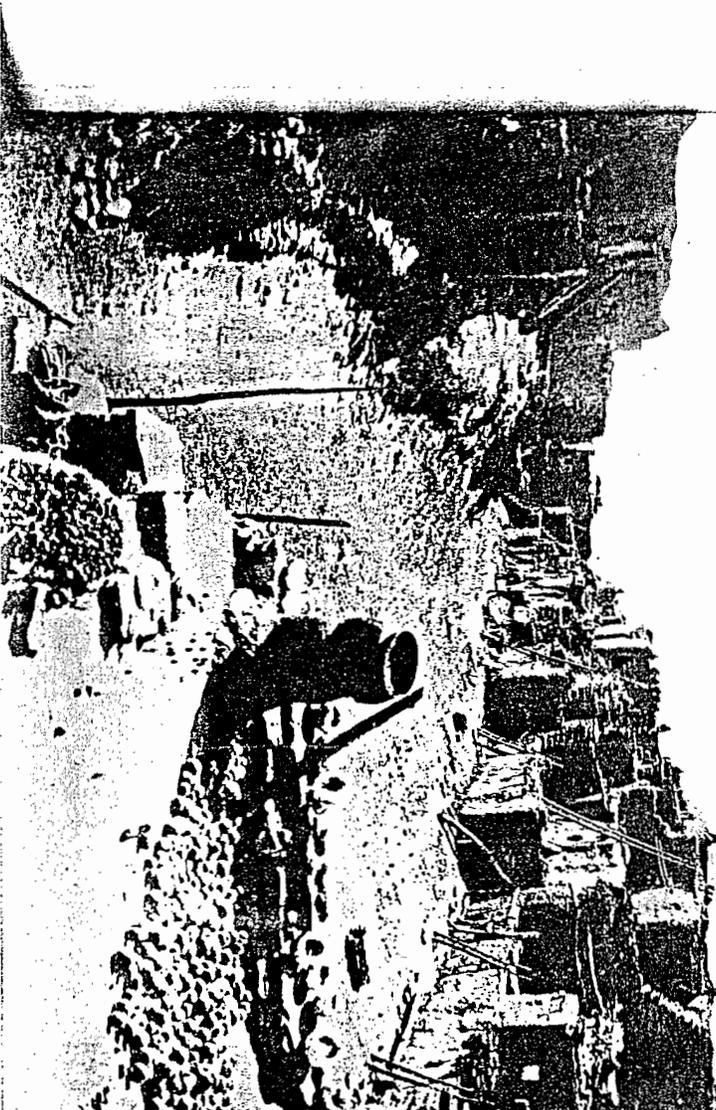
H: Yes, they were at peace. Why, they never did fight that I can remember of, but I do know the Sioux and the Utes used to fight. The Navajos and the Sioux and the Utes used to fight more than any—constantly.

¹ The complete interview with Henry Harris, Jr., of the Uintah-Utey Reservation is in the collection of the Duke Indian Oral History Project at the University of Utah.

THE HOP INDIANS HAVE been the object of widespread official and public interest since about 1880. By contrast they were largely ignored during the two decades prior to that time, with the exception of the

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Eastern court of Oraibi, site of Thales Haskell's mission as it appeared in 1921. Courtesy Department of Library and Archives, Phoenix, Arizona.



Mormons who were intensely interested in them.¹ Beginning in 1858, Mormon parties visited the Hopi mesas regularly until 1873 when Latter-day Saint colonization of northern Arizona was initiated. Although it was neither studiously compiled nor widely reported, the record of the Hopi Mission between 1858 and 1873 is perhaps the most complete and valuable chronicle of the Hopi people during that era.

Mormon interest in the Hopis dates back at least to the spring of 1852, when a trip made by the Ute chieftain Walker to northern Arizona was reported in considerable detail to John D. Lee.² In the months that followed, another Ute trading expedition was reported and Mormon leaders began to make occasional reference to the Hopis in sermons. A group of Mexicans visiting Salt Lake City in the spring of 1853 were eagerly queried about the Arizona mesa dwellers. They replied in such detail as to enable Thomas Bullock to report with considerable accuracy that "the Moquich Indians had seven towns about fifteen miles apart. That they owned sheep and cattle, raised grain, and lived in adobe houses, some of which are three or four stories high."³

This growing consciousness, along with the establishment of an Indian mission in southwestern Utah in 1854, made it merely a matter of time until circumstances provided the impetus necessary to surmount the canyons and river that separate Mormon and Hopi. Flagging interest in the Paiutes as prospective candidates for the gospel's net and the Mountain Meadows Massacre, strange bed fellows though they were, provided this impetus in 1858.

The course of events that year suggests that the Mountain Meadows Massacre provided the immediate incentive. Jacob Forney, Superintendent for Indian Affairs in Utah, had made use of Mormon Indian scout, Jacob Hamblin, in his effort to locate as many of the Massacre's youthful survivors as possible. Writing on August 4, 1858, he commended Hamblin

¹ Other exceptions include Colorado River explorer Lieutenant Joseph C. Ives and Kit Carson, who visited the Hopi villages a few months before the first Mormons did, characterized the Hopis as follows: "They seem to be a harmless, well-meaning people, industrious at times, though always ready for a lounge and gossip. They are honest, so far that they do not steal, but their promises are not to be relied upon. They want force of character and the courageous qualities which the Zunians and some other Pueblo Indians have the credit of possessing." Joseph C. Ives, *Report of the Colorado River of the West* (Washington, D.C., 1861), 17; Carson, who thought the Hopis could be placed "in antagonism to the Navajos" and thus bound to the military, found an irony in the fact that this peaceful people had "never tasted . . . of the bounty so unsparringly bestowed" on the other Indians and suggested that unused Navajo annuities be diverted to this purpose. See U.S. Congress, House, Department of the Interior, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 38th Cong., 2d sess., 1864-65, House Ex. Doc. 1, 302-3.

² *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City), April 17, 1852.

³ "Journal History" (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Historian's Library), November 14, 1853.

for his diligent search and, promising compensation, instructed him to "endeavor to discover the remainder of the unfortunate children still supposed to be among the Indians."⁴ Word soon followed that an effort should be made to look into rumors that some of the children had been seen south of the Colorado River. Almost immediately, Hamblin announced plans to pull missionaries out of the Muddy River area of Nevada because of the unprecedented thievery and defiance manifest among the Paiutes there during the summer. Fifty missionaries were thus freed for new conquests. The elders, he wrote, "now intend to visit the Moquis, Navajo, Crabs, and as many other of the tribes as is necessary to find those unfortunate children."

It is clear, however, that the expedition also represented an opportunity to fulfill a long-standing desire to preach to the Hopis on the part of Jacob Hamblin. Plans were laid to leave "one or two" missionaries "in a place as the way may open, or the spirit may dictate." Schooled by their experience with the Paiutes, Hamblin thought the elders were well prepared for a successful work among "a more noble race." The prospect was nearly overpowering and Hamblin expressed the general spirit when he wrote, "If I ever rejoiced in this work it is now."⁵

Hamblin, along with a dozen companions including Spanish and Welsh interpreters, headed for Arizona on October 28, 1858. Making first contact with Hopi tribesmen at Oraibi, they visited other villages vainly searching for the missing children before turning homeward. The party left four of its members behind with instructions to spend the winter at Oraibi and at one of the villages on Second Mesa.

During the next decade and a half the Mormons sent no fewer than fifteen official missions to the Hopis. On at least three occasions, missionaries were left on the mesas with instructions to stay and preach for periods extending up to a year, but none of them seems to have remained for more than five months. All told, about 85 white men participated in one or more of the fifteen expeditions, with total personnel for the trips approaching 125 men. Jacob Hamblin made every trip. Thales Haskell and Ira Hatch and one or two others also returned many times. Expeditions were usually made in the fall or winter and, as a general rule, lasted no longer than two or three months. In each of the winters of 1860-1861 and 1862-1863, two trips were made. Between 1865 and 1869 preoccupation with Navajo raids in southern Utah and fear of

⁴ Forney to Hamblin, August 4, 1858, Jacob Hamblin File (L.D.S. Church Historian's Library).
⁵ "Journal History," September 10, 1858.

hostile bands along the route apparently kept the missionaries at home. Otherwise, the Mormons sent an expedition to the Hopis nearly every year.⁶

During this period, no Mormon seems to have employed the name Hopi. Rather, the terms Moquis and Moquich were commonly used. The mission itself was usually referred to as the Moquich Mission. The missionaries employed a variety of names for the several Hopi towns. Most of these bore little relationship to modern nomenclature, but some like Hotevilla and Moenkopi were exceptions. However, the name Moenkopi (or Moencopi, and other spellings) was also indiscriminately applied to Moenave, an oasis seven miles west of present Moenkopi where John D. Lee lived briefly in 1873, and to the entire system of springs that seeps from the cliffs adjacent to Moenkopi Wash.

The missionaries of 1858 failed to locate any youthful survivors of the Mountain Meadows Massacre but they did find much that intrigued and excited them. In the first place, they found a sedentary people tending farms and flocks and industriously meeting their own needs for homes, clothing, and utensils. More important, the missionaries found an isolated people unspoiled by contact with other whites. Indeed, the Hopi Indians seemed to provide a unique opportunity for the Mormons. Here, as nowhere else, Mormon preaching and Brigham Young's Indian policy could be tested without interference. Relations with Utah's tribes had been marred by the frictions of close living, by nomadic life patterns and, following the Utah War, by an Indian policy dictated and conducted by non-Mormon agents from Washington, D.C. Consequently, the Hopis, insulated and aloof, stirred deep feelings of affinity in the Mormons and constituted an opportunity for evangelizing that could scarcely be resisted. This more than anything else explains the church's persistent interest in the Hopis.

The missionaries also found a people some of whom, at least, seemed to recognize the Mormons as men of destiny. On the first Hopi mission, the whites were hailed into a white-washed hall at Oraibi and told it had been in constant readiness to receive white and bearded ambassadors from the west.⁷ Hopi tradition, it seems, looked to the time when bearded prophets, usually said to be three in number, would lead the Hopis back

⁶ The best single account for the Hopi missions is still James A. Little, *Jacob Hamblin, A Narrative of His Personal Experience, as a Frontiersman, Missionary to the Indians and Explorer* (Salt Lake City, 1861). Other secondary accounts appear in Pearson H. Corbett, *Jacob Hamblin the Peacemaker* (Salt Lake City, 1952) and Paul Bailey, *Jacob Hamblin Buckskin Apostle* (Los Angeles, 1961).

⁷ Little, *Jacob Hamblin, A Narrative*, 62; Bailey, *Jacob Hamblin Buckskin Apostle*, 205.

across the Colorado River whence they had come as the result of an ancient treaty with the Paiutes. As told to Jacob Hamblin and his associates, this story implied that the Mormons were the long-awaited white leaders. In their dealings with the missionaries the Hopis used the tradition to meet a variety of situations: to explain their scorn for the Paiutes who had broken the treaty, to justify reluctance for crossing the Colorado River prematurely, and most frequently to explain the alleged Hopi rejection of other whites and their affinity for the Mormons. Characteristic of its use in the latter connection was an assurance given Jacob Hamblin in 1863 that the Hopis were confirmed,

in the traditions of their forefathers; that a white and bearded man would come from the East and try to destroy them, therefore, they ought to have as little as possible to do with them; but white and bearded men would come from the West who would have a good spirit and would bless them and try to save them; the tradition teaches that when these from the West should appear they were to be taken into the houses and supplied with the best fare they had to give. This tradition is deeply rooted in the minds of the Moqui. Many of the old men say their fathers told it to them, hence when they meet us they meet us as good men and friends.⁸

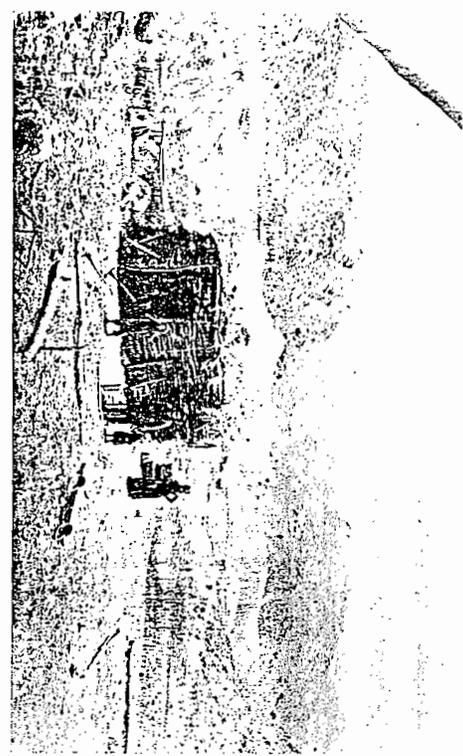
It is difficult to know how sincere the Hopis were when they recounted such stories, but it is certain that the bearded prophet tradition continued to affirm the Mormon's own idea of himself as a messenger of destiny and to buoy his aspiration that the Hopis would one day respond to his preachments.

The Hopis also are reported to have predicted that the Mormons would eventually come and live among them. In fact some of them expressed this sentiment to Jacob Hamblin during his first visit. Returning to southern Utah he related "that some of their chief men felt impressed to state, that some of the Mormons would settle in the country south of them, and that their course of travel would be up the Little Colorado." James G. Bleak who heard Hamblin make this report later noted that, "There was at that time no thought of such a thing among the visitors, or their coreligionists; but since has such been actually the case."⁹

As the foregoing indicates, the Hopis were usually friendly. The Mormons were treated with politeness and were repeatedly fed and housed. The Utahns were also given sanctuary from marauding Navajos. Some of them found true and close Hopi friends. Tubba, who was gen-

⁸ Jacob Hamblin to Brigham Young, May 18, 1863, Hamblin File (L.D.S. Church Historical Library). For another version of the "three prophets" story see James G. Bleak, "Annals of the Southern Utah Mission" (Utah State Historical Society), Book A, 43.

⁹ Bleak, "Annals," Book A, 41.



John D. Lee's cabin at Jacob's Pool, Arizona, ca. 1873. Utah State Historical Society, Charles Kelly Collection, (E. O. Beaman, photographer).

erally amenable to Mormon efforts to alter the Hopi life style, was friendly from an early time, appearing first in the diary of Thales Haskell for 1859-1860.¹⁰ At times, the Hopis displayed a certain willingness to submit to Mormon teaching though few were truly influenced by it. Mormons were also included in the ceremonials of the Hopis and were undoubtedly among the first Anglo-Americans to see the famous Hopi dances. Speaking of the first dance he witnessed, Jacob Hamblin wrote, "I have been to many an Indian dance but this surpassed any I ever witnessed."¹¹ One of the best Mormon accounts of Hopi dances appears in John Steele's report of the 1862 mission. Of this Steele wrote:

Saturday was the Fast [sic] day and into whatever house we entered, we were presented with victuals and dancing time as well as could be expected, it being a fasting and dancing time to bring down snow to water their ground, which was at the new moon. For three days and nights they danced and made preparations for the final religious rites of bringing down snow, which was performed in a large cellar, the only one in town into which we were not permitted to enter. Whether they were ashamed of their works, or thought our faith would operate against them, I do not know. However they sent runners all round town with a prepared corn

¹⁰ *Utah Historical Quarterly*, XII (January-April, 1944), 86.
¹¹ Jacob Hamblin to Brigham Young, December 18, 1858, Hamblin File (L.D.S. Church Historian's Library).

husk, which was handed in great haste to the inhabitants of each house, who breathed on it and handed it to their next neighbor who breathed on it and so on until all the inhabitants had breathed several times on it. They handed it to us, and when we found out what was wanting, we could perform the ceremony as well as any of them. We were next presented with a painted stick with feathers tied on at several places and a handful of consecrated meal which was distributed among us and with brother Haskell at our head we marched through town to a certain place outside, where the stick was stuck in the ground among some hundreds of the same kind, and each one sprinkled his meal on the feathered stick. This was done to incorporate our faith with theirs, in order that snow might come down and water their land. Several of them had hair wet and meal sprinkled on, in imitation of snow.¹²

Steele reported a heavy snowstorm as the missionaries left the village two days later.

In addition to the dances and ceremonials that accompanied them, Mormon accounts sometimes mention a sacred stone kept in an Oraibi kiva. The stone was not shown to many but its presence was later documented in the publications of the Bureau of Ethnology.¹³ Bearing inscriptions which, according to the Hopis, described the advent of prophets from the west, the stone and indeed the entire ritual and tradition of the Hopis, seemed to suggest parallels to Mormon doctrines and ceremonies.

But Hopi friendship had its limits. This was particularly true when food was in short supply. Each of the first two resident missions failed in part because of problems in finding sufficient food. The mission of 1858 left Benjamin Knell, William M. Hamblin, Andrew S. Gibbons, and Thomas Leavitt on Second Mesa. Without food or trade goods, their well-come quickly wore thin. They sought to sustain themselves by trading the few items they had or by working and begging for food. None of these measures succeeded and they were quickly reduced to near starvation. In recording their experiences, Andrew Gibbons wrote:

Myself, Bro. Knell traveled round through village, found difficulty in obtaining food and that we did get was filthy beyond description, calculated in its nature to produce disease. At night we all met in council to see what was best for us to do for we was satisfied in our own minds that we could not sustain ourselves in this place. When we labored hard all day, carrying corn and wood up the rocks they gave us a little meat cooked in the most filthy manner.

¹² "Journal History," January 8, 1863.
¹³ U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ethnology, *Fourth Annual Report of the United States Bureau of Ethnology, 1882-83*, 58; and Andrew Smith Gibbons, "Andrew Smith Gibbons' Diary" (original, Francis Gibbons, Salt Lake City), October 19, 1877.

After similar experiences at Oraibi and an unsuccessful hunting trip, the whites yielded. Trading their guns and ammunition to acquire a scanty back and suffering intensely from cold and hunger, they finally made it back to the Mormon settlements on December 27.¹⁴

Only two men, Thales Haskell and Marion J. Shelton, were left in the Hopi country the following year. Unlike their companions of 1858, they were well outfitted with trade goods. As long as these lasted, the missionaries apparently found their welcome secure, but as their trading stock was reduced attitudes shifted. As early as the end of November, both whites noticed that their Indian friends were acting "rather distant."¹⁵ Such worries notwithstanding, Haskell and Shelton continued on at Oraibi until March before giving up and heading for home.

From the time of Chief Walker's first report in 1852, the Mormons entertained the idea that the Hopis were anxious to trade. The first mission seemed to confirm this belief and even to suggest that an economic bond might be forged between the two peoples by developing trade, particularly in agricultural and textile implements. Experience, however, proved that the Hopis were at best lukewarm in their interest in trade. Stubbornly resisting social change—a trait that has since become clearly apparent—and in possession of the only homegrown food supply in the region, the Hopis occupied a remarkably strong bargaining position. In 1859, Brigham Young sent a good supply of farming and textile tools along with other trade stuffs but, to the disappointment of the missionaries, the Hopis showed little interest in trading as they said that similar implements could be had for the asking from the army at Fort Defiance which lay only a few days march to the east. Later efforts to introduce Mormon industrial techniques met a similar reception.

Although it was never a good market, other trade goods attracted more favorable attention and pack trains of up to fifty animals were taken by the Mormons on some of the Hopi expeditions. Much of this commerce appears to have been conducted under church auspices. However, individual missionaries occasionally did take advantage of their journey to carry on petty private enterprises. Trading continued throughout the entire period, 1858-1873 but, despite one report of "a thousand Indians trading" at Oraibi, the Hopis never became dependent upon the whites. Indeed, Mormon accounts indicated that the Hopis retained essential control of the market, bargaining with shrewdness and caution if not

outright reluctance. Typical was Thales Haskell's report of December 2, 1859:

We have cut up our bed tick and are trying to trade it for beans, meal, dried peaches, etc. They are the hardest customers to trade with I ever saw. They often want a shirt for a quart or so of beans. We sometimes get all out of patience trying to trade with them. Concluded to quit trading for a few days to see if we cannot get better trades.¹⁶

The Hopis also trafficked with other Indians. Walker and his brother Arpene made regular trading trips to Oraibi. In 1859, while Haskell was at Oraibi, Arpene sent his agents throughout Hopiland and among neighboring Navajos announcing that he would establish trading headquarters at the site of present Hotevilla. This notice attracted large numbers of both Hopis and Navajos. Paintes wandered widely in northern Arizona and they, too, probably engaged in trade with the Hopis and other Indian groups.¹⁷

Judging from Mormon accounts, the Hopis were the fixed element in an otherwise fluid frontier. There is evidence that most of them did not travel widely for trade or for any other purpose. Numerous references are made to Indians who had spent their entire lives between their farms and villages—all within a radius of less than ten miles. Characteristic was the following report by Marion J. Shelton in 1869:

The inhabitants travel very little, save it be those who go for salt, which they are constrained to carry on their backs from ninety to one hundred and fifty miles. One may often meet with hoary headed persons amongst them who assert that they have never been to the nearest village, seven miles distant. The farthest they have ever been from home is to the wild potato patch, three miles away.

As Shelton suggests, a major factor in Hopi travel was salt, and passing reference exists of Hopi trails to the Colorado River, the Little Colorado River and to a source of salt beyond the New Mexico border.¹⁸ Furthermore, three Oraibis returning from Utah with Jacob Hamblin in 1863 showed more than casual knowledge of trails along the south side of the

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 82-83. The Mormons were dependent upon the Paintes for much of their information on Arizona and Paine guides accompanied most expeditions. One Paine is said to have done missionary work for the Mormons. Of him Hamblin wrote: "We learn from the Indians that Tusegavit is preaching to a small band of the Apaches, and spreading a good influence among them. They live between this place [a Colorado crossing below the Grand Canyon] and the Cohonoca Country [in the neighborhood of the San Francisco Peaks]. Tuseg was ordained by bro Brigham some years since preach to the Indians, but has preached none for two or three years until the present time." Jacob Hamblin to Erasmus Snow, November 26, 1862, Hamblin File (L.D.S. Church Historian's Library).

¹⁶ *Deseret News*, October 30, 1869.

¹⁷ Gibbons, "Diary," November 21 to December 27, 1858.

¹⁸ *Utah Historical Quarterly*, XII, 94.

Grand Canyon. But on the whole the Hopis stayed close to their traditional homeland.

As always when diverse races meet, communication was a problem. The peculiarities of Mormon attitudes in this respect led to some interesting developments. These had their inception in 1852 when Chief Walker first called Mormon attention to the Hopis. Somehow John D. Lee got the impression that Walker had met Indians speaking a Welsh dialect in northern Arizona. To begin with Lee apparently believed the Welsh Indians to be a tribe apart from the Hopis but later reference indicates that the Hopis themselves, with alleged light-colored skin, brown hair, and occasional white (albino) individuals, were thought to have some mysterious connection with the Welsh — probably part of the Welsh Prince Modoc myth. I have found no evidence of how the Welsh myth found its way into Utah history, but it seems likely that Lee or other whites, by use of leading questions, opened the way for Walker's intriguing account. The development of the myth during the next few years is uncertain, but it lived on and attracted sufficient credence to result in the appointment of James Davis to the mission of 1858 as Welsh interpreter.²⁹ Davis apparently listened in vain for evidence of Gaelic in the Hopi tongue for no word of his success has been found and the missions quickly turned to other expedients for breaking this particular sound barrier.

The Welsh myth was abandoned more slowly by church leaders. In 1863, when a Hopi delegation appeared in Salt Lake City, they were rushed to experts in the Welsh language. This time the verdict was promising. Wise heads agreed the Hopis managed the near impossible sound of certain Gaelic gutturals without difficulty.³⁰ So impressive was this discovery that some months later when the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Arizona passed through Utah he was assured the Hopis "could pronounce any word in the Welsh language with facility, but not the dialect now in use."³¹ After being formally committed to the report of the Indian Commissioner, Utah's Welsh Indians story appears to have come to rest and no more is heard of it.

An even more remarkable experiment in communications involved the Deseret Alphabet which was in great vogue with Mormons of the

²⁹ Typical of the Welsh myth was James G. Black's entry that Welsh words had been reported among the Hopis and that they might prove to be of Welsh descent; for this reason a Welsh interpreter was made one of the company. Black, "Southern Utah Mission," 40.

³⁰ *Deseret News*, February 13, 1863.

³¹ U.S., *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 294-95.

era. A young missionary named Marion J. Shelton, who was caught up in the Deseret Alphabet's potential for lingual reform, was assigned to teach the Hopi missionaries Spanish after the 1858 mission revealed that some Hopis spoke that language. His attention thus directed to the Hopis, Shelton immediately saw in them a unique opportunity to put the Deseret Alphabet to practical use. With Jacob Hamblin supporting the plan, he was soon called as an elder to the Hopis with a special obligation to instruct them in the alphabet.³²

On arriving at Oraibi in the fall of 1859, he commenced at once to give oral lessons. By the time Hamblin left to return to Utah three weeks later, the enthusiastic Shelton could report that "those to whom I have given lessons have taken right hold to the alphabet and several of them know the first six characters, and we can hear them hollowing the sounds throughout the village."³³ This brief application of the alphabet had pointed up the need for an additional character. Suggesting simply an "I," a straight mark,³⁴ Shelton wrote requesting Brigham Young's approval for its incorporation in the alphabet. During the next three months Shelton continued his efforts. His own skills increased, but after its initial popularity the Deseret Alphabet attracted decreasing interest until Shelton finally seems to have been compelled to bribe his one remaining student to keep him working at it. Shortly before Shelton and his companion, Thales Haskell, left Oraibi in March of 1860, the latter, with the lag of his spirits very much in evidence, wrote that he had "tried in vain to learn the Indians the mysteries of the Deseret Alphabet."³⁵ The hope that unlettered natives might be assisted in their course towards civilization by this experiment in language reform was evidently abandoned with the return of Shelton and Haskell and no later attempt was made to revive it.

After 1860, Welsh dialects and language reform forgotten, Mormon elders sent to the Hopis concentrated on Spanish and Hopi. The interest in Spanish was much broader than the Hopi Mission, and all Mormon colonists to Arizona and Mexico were encouraged to learn it. Many of them did so, thus facilitating communication with the Hopis and other Indians of the southwest. Only a handful of missionaries learned Hopi: among them were Marion Shelton, Thales Haskell, Ira Hatch, Jehiel

³² Brigham Young to Jacob Hamblin, September 19, 1859, Hamblin File (L.D.S. Church Historian's Library).

³³ *Utah Historical Quarterly*, XII, 97.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 93.

McConnell, Jacob Hamblin, and, at a somewhat later date, Christian Lingo Christensen.

From the beginning of the Hopi Mission, the Mormons were determined in their effort to entice some of the Indians to return with them to Utah. In part, this was the old ruse of inviting a small group to visit the centers of white society on the sound assumption that the natives would be baffled and awe stricken by what they saw. But it was also more. The Mormon entreaties for a Hopi visit envisioned an outright gathering to Zion. In 1860 Brigham Young actually hoped that substantial numbers of them might choose to escape the constant badgering of the Navajos as well as the uncertainties of life on the mesas and migrate to Utah. Once in the territory, it was planned to locate them in small communities along with an adequate force of missionaries to instruct them in the ways of civilization including modern agriculture and Mormonism.²⁶ But Brigham Young reckoned without the Hopis' obdurate commitment to their own tradition and none came.

During the early years of the Hopi Mission, Jacob Hamblin made repeated requests that a delegation of Hopis return the compliment of his own visits by paying a call on Brigham Young and the Mormon capital. The Hopis were polite enough but stubborn. Their tradition forbade crossing the Colorado River. This was enough and Hamblin's best offers were futile until the winter of 1862-1863.

The expedition of that winter, which had gone south by way of a crossing below the Grand Canyon, was met by a rare show of force. Not expecting the Mormons to approach their village from the south, the Orabhis assembled intending to give them "a warm reception."²⁷ However, on learning the identity of the visitors the Orabhis received them kindly enough, and Jacob Hamblin was able to report a growing friendship between the Hopis and the Mormons.²⁸ On returning to St. George on January 10, 1863, Hamblin related that he had again extended an invitation to "the Mogoqui people to send some of their chief men to visit Utah and have a talk with some of the Mormon chief men."²⁹ Objecting as usual that they could not cross the river until "the re-appearance of the three prophets who had led their fathers to that land, and who had told them to remain on those rocks until they should come again," the Hopis at first declined. However, after further consultation they changed their

²⁶ "Journal History," September 4, 1860.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, January 9, 1863.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, May 18, 1863.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

decision and sent four men. Some doubtful moments ensued when the Orabhis hesitated to cross the Colorado River, but the party arrived safely in the southern Utah towns where one native remained to learn English. The other three were taken on to Salt Lake City by Jacob Hamblin.³⁰ There the delegation was handsomely received. They were house guests to Apostle Wilford Woodruff and made the rounds of the Mormon headquarters including visits to Brigham Young, the Church Historian's office, and photographer Charles Savage, as well as the Welsh interpreters referred to above. As a parting gesture, they were given a variety of hand tools and a cash gift. Aside from perfunctory statements that the Indians responded favorably, there is no account of how the Hopis reacted to the experience. On the other hand, there is ample evidence that the Latter-day Saint leaders were excited by the meeting and plans were laid immediately to send a party of one hundred missionaries to Hopiland. Writing of these plans, George A. Smith summarized the aspiration of the church:

³⁰ In his "Annals of the Southern Utah Mission," James G. Bleak states that only three Indians accompanied Hamblin back to Utah on this 1863 expedition. He reckons accurately that three went on to Salt Lake City but makes no reference to the fourth man. Providing a clue, he refers in an 1869 entry to a "Mogobui Indian name Lal-see" returning with the expedition of that year. Book A, 113 and 135. Other accounts of the 1863 expedition, including the official report by John Steele, indicate that four Indians went as far as St. George. See John Steele, "Report of the Mission of 1862-1863," December 21, 1862, "Journal History."

Hopis from Orabhi visited Brigham Young in 1863 to encourage trade. A fourth Hopi with this group went only as far as St. George. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution.



while the protection of 100 brave generous and high minded missionaries would render their flocks and their herds, as well as their scalps, comparatively safe while that moral and religious training which is necessary to make the descendants to Lehi, Ishmael and Zoram, a white and delightful some people, can successfully be bestowed on their heads. The Lord requires us to do that which is in our power for the redemption of those remnants of Jacob, and the result, after doing our duty we leave in His hands.²⁹

During the winter of 1863, Hamblin accompanied three of the Hopis back to Oraibi. While in Arizona, he explored extensively, looking for a feasible wagon road between the Grand Canyon and the San Francisco Mountains and studied the area south of these mountains for possible colonization sites.

But in 1863 conditions in northern Arizona were changing radically. Escaping federal forces sent against them, Navajo renegades found refuge in the canyonlands of Black Mesa and Navajo Mountain from which they conducted raids on Hopi flocks and on the Mormon settlements west of the Colorado River. These hostilities halted Mormon attempts to colonize northern Arizona for a decade and even the annual trips to the Hopi Mission were interrupted from 1865 to 1869.

But the vision of a permanent Hopi Mission persisted. In 1876, when the Mormon frontier was successfully extended south into Arizona, one of its objectives was to draw the Hopis to it. This policy enjoyed limited success at Tuba City where the Mormons lived as neighbors to the Hopis in Moenkopi for over thirty-five years. Joint occupation was less successful in the Little Colorado River towns. At least sixty-five Hopis lived for a time at Sunset near present Winslow. However, after floods swept their harvest away in August of 1878, these left convinced their predictions had been verified that the Little Colorado valley could not be successfully farmed.³⁰ Ironically, once a substantial number of Mormons had moved to Hopiland, the interest that had sustained the Hopi Mission for fifteen years soon abated. Wilford Woodruff, who lived at

²⁹ G. A. Smith to Erastus Snow, February 15, 1863, "Journal History," February 15, 1863.

³⁰ See Christian Lingo Christensen, "The Hopis," *Times-Independent* (Moab, Utah), March 9, 1922. According to Christensen, whose reminiscing account was written over forty years later, a preaching visit which he along with Lot Smith and others made to the Hopis in February of 1877 "resulted in the fact that 65 Hopi men went . . . down to Sunset where by the help of the Mormons they raised 400 bushels of wheat which they carried home in the fall of 1877. In 1878 many more came but they suffered the same fate we did when we lost all our crops. This ended the Hopi farming as well as our own on the Little Colorado. It was a pitiful sight to see these people wading out of the tremendous flood with their small belongings on their backs. They bade us goodbye sorrowfully, and expressed the hope that none of us would die in this display of the Creator's anger stating that they had left the corn fields and cotton fields of their forefathers inheritance and thus was their reward. Superstition works a hardship on innocent, ignorant people, always."



Present-day view of Indian corn fields at Moenkopi taken from the site of the old Mormon woolen mill, remains in foreground. Photograph by C. Gregory Crampton.

Moenkopi for several months and on the Little Colorado for a full year in 1879-80, probably expressed the opinion of most Mormons when he wrote in 1883 that the "Oribas and Moquies are very dull and superstitious and hard of understanding compared with the Navajos, Zoonies, Lagoonies and Islatos."³²

With a few exceptions, such as Tuba City's Christian Lingo Christensen, the Mormon missionary impulse lay dormant as far as the Hopis were concerned after 1880. After that time the federal government began to take a belated interest in the Hopis and initiated educational efforts among them. About the same time protestant missionaries and Gentile traders began to appear.

In light of the cumulative experience of these various thrusts into Hopiland, we may now ask what the effect of the Mormon mission had been. In terms of the Hopis, it was small enough. No more than a dozen or so natives became members of the church. With the possible exception of Tuba and Tom Polacca, these appear to have had little understand-

³² Letter to Lot Smith, April 17, 1883, Lot Smith Letters, (University of Arizona Library, Tucson).

ing of what their new association implied and continued to live by their native traditions. It is likely that the establishment of Moenkopi was accelerated by the coming of the Mormons, but the development of a permanent village there would probably have occurred in any case when Navajo hostility declined after 1870. Otherwise, one finds little measurable evidence that the Hopi, or Moquich, mission had any influence upon the Indians. There is no evidence that any Hopis made the transition into the white society. No Hopi children were raised in white homes and, though there was some discussion of its possibility, no marriages appear to have been consummated between Hopi women and Mormon men.

The Hopis, on the other hand, wrought a considerable influence upon the Mormons. Their presence in northern Arizona did much to attract the Latter-day Saints in that direction. Routes and roads over which the Mormon migration moved after 1876 were pioneered by the Hopi missionaries. And of greatest consequence the Mormons, who were ever attentive to the dictates of a mission, were doubtlessly influenced in the southward bent of their colonization by the hope that the Hopis would prove pliant in their hands and become "a white and delightful people."

I Am an American

BY GERTRUDE CHAPOOSE WILLIE¹
AN INTERVIEW BY NORMA DENVER

D: Gertrude, a lot of people put your dad [Connor Chapoose] down as one of the most famous of the Ute people in our later days and one of the great leaders. Can you think of anything that your dad ever told you that really spurred you on or helped you to go ahead in this world?

¹ The complete interview with Gertrude Chapoose Willie of the Uimah-Ounay Reservation is in the collection of the Duke Indian Oral History Project at the University of Utah.

W: Well, he's always told us, "Never be ashamed of who you are." And you're never too proud to stoop over and help the person that's in need. You might be better off than most people, but don't forget who you are and where you come from. My dad used to tell me to never take a back seat to anybody. Always be proud of your heritage and who you are. Speak up for yourself 'cause nobody will do it for you. And this is the same thing I have told my kids over and over again. If you get knocked down get back up and defend who you are. If you are labeled as something, say that "I am an American."

The only thing that I can really strongly remember that he hashed over and over with us kids was, some day you're going to lose your identity as Indians. You're going to forget your language. You're going to forget your culture, your tradition, and all of that. And that's just where you're going right now, by not teaching your kids how to speak Ute, he'd tell us. And he told us be sure to teach the kids, your kids, my grandchildren, he says, teach 'em to speak Ute. And don't let them ever forget how we're supposed to live, who we are, where we come from. You know, it was really a big thing; we don't look at it like that.

But when President Lincoln set the slaves free he set the red man free too, he says. And he said, "Some day it's going to be asked who is the Indian, who's an Indian now?" Who's got their right heritage to claim this land? And you know what we're going to do? We're going to say, "I am." And that person is going to say, "Okay prove to me that you're an Indian." And what are we going to say? You are going to stand up and you're going to speak in English, "Well, I'm so and so's daughter, my grandparents are this." And he's gonna say, "No, that's not what I'm looking for." And some day somebody, it's got to be somebody that'll say [Ute]; and that's the one that that man's gonna say to, "Right, you're the Indian, the only Indian that's left." The only Indian that's gonna get all this reward or whatever is going to be at the end of that time.