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(Pages 167-168-169-170)

Excerpt from Letter of C. E. Vandever, U.S. Indian Agent

REPORT OF MOQUI PUEBLO INDIANS, NAVAJO AGENCY.

NAVAJO AGENCY, N. MEX., *August* 22, 1890.

SIR: Herewith I submit my second annual report for the Moquis Pueblo Indians for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1890. When I made my last annual report I had acted as agent but a few months and was but little acquainted with their habits and customs. Since then, however, I have studied them as carefully as circumstances would permit, and now give the result of my investigations.

The Moqui differ in many ways from their neighbors, the Navajo, these two tribes presenting many contrasts in habits and character. The saucy, arrogant Navajo leads a kind of Bedouin life, while the timid, unresisting Moqui cling closely to their old villages perched on the cliffs. The Navajo cherish an inherent scorn for manual labor, planting only in an amateur sort of way, and consume much of their field products before the harvest season has well ended. The Moqui are of a stock long inured to toil, and delight in field labor, persistently cultivating their sandy valleys; they are prudent as the Navajo are improvident, and few of their houses but contain sufficient provisions to last between harvests.

With the Navajo the women are the weavers, but only the men weave and spin among the Moqui. The Navajo make ornaments of iron and silver; the Moqui only of stone and shell.

The religions of the two tribes are entirely different in theory and practice, and while the Navajo observances occur upon occasions of convenience, with *ex tempore* accessories, and always after night, those of the Moqui are celebrated by day, at prescribed times and places, and in a strict order of sequence.

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Polygamy is common among the former but unknown among the latter, and their bridal presents, if less in value, are of higher ideal token and free from the sordid taint of bargain and sale which attaches to the Navajo marriage.

The Moqui goes afoot defenseless, and will trot a long distance out of his way to greet the American with a conciliatory hand-shake.

The Moqui were among the first people within our present borders of whom the early Spanish explorers have left us historic mention. The first village Indians met by Coronado in 1541 were the Zuni, and from them the Spaniards learned of this people, called by the Zuni the A-mo-kwi, and they have ever since borne that name, under its Spanish form of Moquis, or Mo-ki, but they call themselves Ho-pi-tuh, the peaceable people. Their country was later named by the Spaniard the province of Tusayan, from an appropriate Navajo term, "ta-sa-an," meaning the place of isolated buttes. Thus the Moqui and his country have always borne foreign names; and it is a curious fact that all of the North American Indians are similarly nicknamed, none of them being known to us under their own aboriginal title.

To fit their traditions to our chronology is almost impossible, but, to make a hazard, it would appear that fierce intestine wars raged among the village Indians throughout the table lands early in the fourteenth century. About a century later the first intrusions of more savage stock occurred, "enemies from the north," as they are spoken of, and were probably the Ute and Comanche. We know that in 1541 the Spaniards found the Moqui occupying villages which were old then, but how long they had been ageing there is no means of determining. Not long after this the Navajo began to encroach from the eastward, and roamed between Tusayan and the Rio Grande.

A permanent occupation of New Mexico was made by the Spaniards in 1591, and it was probably about 1630 when some missionary priests came to Tusayan. They were escorted by troops to assert Spanish authority and to show the benign nature of their mission. They also brought sheep, oxen, and horses as gifts to the Moqui, but of the sheep and horses the Navajo helped themselves to the greater share. The memory of the mission period is held in great odium by the Moqui, for although they admit that the Spaniards taught them to plant peach orchards and brought them other benefits, yet they suffered many severities at the hands of the priests, who also held many of the Moqui as peons at the mission stations. In 1680 there was a general revolt of all the village Indians, in which the Moqui participated by slaying all the Spaniards who were then among them. Fearing lest a Spanish force might be sent against them, shortly after the massacre they evacuated their villages, and rebuilt them higher up, on the mesa points they now occupy.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century the Ute and the Apache made fatal inroads upon them until, as they tell, no man's life was safe beyond the base of their mesas. Deterred from cultivating their fields, they resorted to carrying up earth in their blankets and made little heaps on the cliff ledges, in which they planted corn and managed to grow sufficient to eke out a bare existence. In this evil strait they sent to the Teh-wa, their distant kinsmen on the Rio Grande, begging them to come to their assistance. These Teh-wa speak a different tongue from the Moqui, but are very similar to them otherwise, and they came to relieve the Moqui from the attacks of the raiding bands. This military colony was afterwards re-enforced by other of their families from the Rio Grande and built the village of Teh-wa, on the east mesa, which they still occupy.

About 1780 an epidemic of small-pox devastated all the Moqui villages, and again in 1840 the same disease raged among them for several months, and many ghastly stories are still told of its ravages. Many houses were then abandoned and their ruinous walls still form ragged fringes around every village, and the old men point to these memorials as they tell of the pestilence which diminished their people to insignificance.

Three of the villages are built upon the bare, flat summit of the east mesa, 600 feet above the level of the valley; upon the middle mesa three other villages are built upon points of equal height; but the western point, upon which Oraibi is situated, is considerably lower. These mesas all point to the southward, projecting from the main tableland, with intervals of about 7 miles between each of them. I have visited them frequently, and estimate their population as follows—sexes about equal:

East mesa:	
Teh-wa	200
Si-tchom-ovi	100
Walpi	300
Middle mesa:	
Mi-shong-in-ovi	350
Shi-powl-ovi	175
Shung-op-ovi	250
Oraibi	825
Total population	2,200

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The villages have all the same general appearance—rows of houses more or less dilapidated, of irregular heights, but all flat-roofed and built together, with here and there a dingy court. Viewed from the valleys it is difficult to distinguish between cliff-wall and house-wall, and in Walpi some of the houses rest upon rude buttresses projecting over the edge of the precipice. The older house groups are three and four stories high, with rambling rooms in confusing directions, and oddly occurring alcove-like recesses, some of them 2 or 3 feet above the general level of the floor, some a step or two below it. Most of the rooms are very small and all of the ceilings are low, many of them with only narrow open slits in the wall to admit light, but in some these are fitted with sheets of transparent gypsum. The typical houses are built in terraced form, that is, the ground story is the widest, and each succeeding story recedes 7 or 8 feet from the front. Narrow, foul alleys wind through the villages in a straggling way, and noisome passages through the ground story of the inclosing houses lead to the courts.

The courts contain the most peculiar feature of their rude system, namely, the kiva, or underground chamber, two or more of which are in every village. The kiva is an oblong excavation, about 25 feet in length, with half that width, and about 9 feet deep. The roof is formed of earth covering willows and twigs which rest upon strong beams laid across at intervals; and, being firmly trodden, the roof is in most instances just level with the surface. Access is gained through a slightly elevated hatchway near the center by a long ladder the ends of which project 15 or 20 feet in the air. In cold weather a small fire is made on the floor just under the hatchway which serves as door, window, and chimney. Formerly the kiva was strictly preserved for the observance of religious ceremonies, but now, aside from this purpose, these places are also used as weaving and work-shops, and are favorite loitering places for the men.

Their thronged mythology has given rise to a very complex system of worship which rests upon this theory. In early days certain superhuman beings, called Katcheena, appeared at certain seasons, bringing blessings or reproofs from the gods, and as indicated by their name, they listened to the people's prayers and carried back their desires to the gods. A long while ago they revealed certain mystic rites to a few good men of every clan, by means of which mortals could communicate directly with the gods, after which their visits ceased, and this, the Moqui say, was the origin of their numerous religious or Katcheena societies. To a limited extent certain women were also similarly endowed; hence the membership of some of these societies consists entirely of men, others of women only, and in many both sexes bear a part.

The public ceremonies of these societies are participated in by all the members fancifully dressed in cotton tunics, kilts, and girdles, and wearing large masks decorated with the emblems pertaining to the Katcheena whose feast they celebrate. Emerging from the Kiva, the maskers form in procession and march to the village court where they stand in line, rattle in hand, and as they stamp their feet with measured cadence they sing their traditional hymns of petition. The surrounding house-terraces are crowded with spectators, and some of these celebrations partake much of the nature of dramas. Feats of war are mimicked, or the actions of wild animals and hunters, and many mythic incidents are commemorated, while interludes afford an opportunity for a few grotesquely arrayed buffoons to crack coarse jests for the amusement of the rude audience. Every moon witnesses some celebration, and this would not be so remarkable were they begun and ended on the same day, but as each of them occupies several days, and two or three villages devote themselves to the same holiday, it will be seen that to keep this cumbrous worship in motion engrosses about as much time as their secular occupations.

The nearest flowing stream is more than 40 miles away from the villages, but several springs at the base of the cliffs afford them ample water. They do not practice irrigation, but the sandy valleys retain enough moisture to germinate the planted seeds, and barring an exceptionally dry season they generally secure abundant crops of corn and other Indian vegetables, squash, beans, and melons. In a limited way they make small terrace gardens on a slope near a convenient spring and irrigate them with small streams, but 20 acres would probably cover all the ground they now cultivate in this way. In a limited way they also cultivate cotton and wheat, although according to tradition their cotton fields were formerly very extensive. But their most inviting product is that of their numerous peach orchards, which are set out everywhere around their villages, except in the valleys. On the high mesa summits, and in the almost vertical sand dunes which cling to the mesa sides, thick clusters of peach trees grow luxuriantly with but the scantiest care, and yield delicious fruit in abundance.

I estimate their field products as follows:

Planted in corn:	Acres.
East mesa	900
Middle mesa	700
Oraibi	1,000
Total	2,6[illegible]

which at 15 bushels per acre equals 2,184,000 pounds.

Disposed of in this manner:	Pounds.
Consumed	800, 000
Bartered to Navajo for say 300,000 pounds mutton and other objects	700, 000
Sold to traders	100, 000
Fed to animals and wasted	50, 000
Surplus stored	534, 000
Total	2, 184, 000

There are about 1,200 acres planted in melons, squashes, and beans, and their scattered orchard groups must comprise an area of perhaps 1,000 acres, and especially within the last few years the custom of setting out new seedling orchards has become very common. From a very ancient time the practice of allowing some of the arable stretches to lie fallow for several years has also been customary. Probably three-fourths of the peaches are consumed while fresh, the remainder being split open and dried upon the rocks and housetops for future use, and this dried fruit is of most excellent flavor. They begin eating their melons from the time they first come in blossom, but the yield is generally so abundant that they hold melons stored in their cellars until well into January and even February.

They graze their flocks in the valleys, not far from the villages, and nightly drive them home, shutting them up in walled pens along the ledges of the mesa cliffs. They number about as follows, the largest herds being at Oraibi:

	Sheep.	Goats.
Rams	500	160
Wethers	3,300	340
Ewes	10,000	2,800
Yearling increase	1,200	200
Lambs	3,000	800
Total	18,000	4,300

They consume about 1,800 of their own sheep, and 650 goats, and something over 300,000 pounds of mutton and goat flesh bartered from the Navajo.

A constant source of bickering between them and the Navajo are the encroachments of the latter. I have given this matter a great deal of careful attention, and have time and again restrained the Navajo from these intrusions, warning them not to approach with their herds within certain specified limits, which would give the Moqui ample room for grazing, if they were not too timid to use it. Since I made this last adjustment complaints have not been so numerous, but it is a slow task to set up back-bone in these Moqui who are too spiritless to assert their own rights. But friction between them gradually decreases, and more cordial relations are slowly growing among them.

The Moqui resources and income may thus be tabulated:

	Value.	Sold during year.	
		No.	Amount received.
Horses, 1,200 at $10	$12,000	50	$500
Burros, 3,000 at $4	12,000	125	500
Sheep, 18,000 at $2	36,000		
Goats, 4,300 at $1.50	6,450		
Cattle, 800 at $18	14,400	50	900
Wool, 24,000 pounds at 9 cents			2,160
Wool manufactured, 13,500 pounds			3,500
Cotton fabrics, basketry, etc	1,500		
On hand:			
Silver ornaments	4,000		
Coral and turquoise	2,000		
Corn, etc	5,340		1,000
Total	93,690		8,560

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