

re written

10/22/65

The young Navaho of today face a very different future from that of their parents or grandparents, yet they face it with sureness and confidence. A short time ago, as I was driving from Gallup to Shiprock, I overtook this young couple ^Kwalking along the highway. I picked them up to give them a lift, and we soon dropped into easy conversation. We drove more than thirty miles before the young man asked me to stop. We were in one of those empty desert places which extend for miles along this highway and there was not even one hogan in sight. I watched them walk away finally melting into the landscape. I thought of the tremendous changes that have come to the Navaho as I looked back on the lives of their forebears, wondering what lay ahead for these young people.

The year 1964, marks the one hundredth anniversary of the Navaho long walk into exile. I thought of the return of the Diné to this land after four devastating years, bereft of all possessions, and with the taste of defeat still bitter in their memories as they turned to the task of rebuilding their lives. For a time there was apathy among many who felt frustrated in returning to their old ways and knew not how to adjust to the new, but slowly they did adjust, and now for more than two decades they have marched steadfastly along the road we call modern civilization. Those essential qualities so characteristic of the Navaho, adaptability and realism, are now carrying them forward at a rapid rate, perhaps faster than any other Indian tribe. There are still frustrations, still weaknesses to be overcome, but when one considers how short a time a century is in the progress of a people, Navaho achievement is the more remarkable.

Many who know the Navaho think that the great days of Ceremonialism are past. Possibly this is true, for there are few young men learning the functions and art of the medicine men, yet who can predict whether

there may, or may not be a great revival? There are many thousands of young Navaho wanting to partake fully in our American culture, and who, at present, push away their own traditions. But there are also many Navaho, both young and old who are concerned about this and who are working to preserve the ways of their people: we can but hope that those special qualities that are the birthright of the Dineh, will never be lost. Song and singing are the very essence of Navaho being, and though manifestation of belief may change, as long as the Navaho keep singing they will endure.

bands

Laura G. Ibbot
1st draft

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

Prior to the occupation of the Southwest by the United States, the Navaho existed as groups of people, usually either clans or groups of clans. They were united only by language and by tribal culture, but they had no political entity or sense of responsibility to unrelated groups. There were chiefs, or head men, chosen by each group, but there seemed no need for any further government. Certainly the Spanish Government of the 17th to the early 19th centuries did not realize the independence of these Navaho groups, nor did the Mexican Government during its twenty five year duration. Nor was it fully comprehended by our Government until the time of the exile to Fort Sumner. ^{at that time.} It was during these years that General Carlton tried to establish a simple form of self-government, but the old order of family and clans seemed unchangeable and any other form was incomprehensible to the Navaho. There were many notable characters among the chiefs of the early 1800s, most of them destined to become prisoners of war-- exiles to Fort Sumner. Their names appear on the treaty of 1868, signed by General Sherman for the United States, and ^{The names of} by twenty eight Navaho leaders, including Barboncito, Manuelito, Narbona, Ganado Muchos, and others.

After the return to the reservation in 1868 and the establishment of the Agency at Fort Defiance, the old order continued. The first ^{civil} ~~civil~~ agent to the Navaho, Captain Henry L. Dodge, utilized the Navaho leaders to assist him in maintaining law and order. As time went on and more agents appeared on the scene, they found it necessary to be more autocratic.

By 1901, the Bureau of Indian Affairs divided the Navaho country into six districts (including the Hopi) with an agency in each. This system of smaller areas of jurisdiction greatly facilitated the work of

Possibly because of this close proximity of the two distinctly different Indian groups, many students of Indian culture in the Southwest have believed that the Navaho learned the art of weaving from the Pueblo people. However, recent research is pointing more and more to the probability that the Navaho brought the knowledge of weaving with them when they migrated to the Southwest. During these travels and sojourns they came through country where other Indian tribes were already spinning and weaving, and it is quite possible that the Navaho learned to make and to use the spindle and the loom long before they entered the area where they now live.

Had the Navaho learned from the Pueblo weavers, they would probably have used the same techniques. And there are other differences. Pueblo looms are stationary whereas Navaho looms are portable. The spindle is different, and the use of most distinctively so. Among the Navaho it has always been the women who are the weavers (with rare exceptions) while among the Pueblo, the weavers are always men. Pueblo weaving is dominated by traditional forms and designs with little variation, while Navaho weavers are emphatically creative. While it is true that traders of many areas have influenced types and designs of rugs to some extent, within these bounds there is great creativity. Over the long years of production from Navaho looms, the infinite variety of design, color and weaving patterns, have stamped the Navaho as masters of their art.

Navaho weavers have never changed in their use of the upright loom, nor have they made any change in its construction. The Spanish settlers in the Rio Grande Valley brought with them from Europe the knowledge of the treadle loom which they built of native wood, but the Navaho have steadfastly continued to use the upright aboriginal invention.

While the earliest examples of Navaho weaving have long since disappeared, there are references to this craft

arose for continual legal counsel at Window Rock, and in 1951 the Council acted to employ a resident attorney functioning under Mr. Littell's direction. In order to obtain the maximum benefits for the Navaho People, highly ^{competent} ~~advised~~ advice was necessary to obtain not only mining, ~~and~~ oil and gas leases, but in many agreements in connection with the Glen Canyon Dam, ^{recently} rights of way for power lines, and much other business that has come to the Tribe. In addition to the General Counsel, a department of Tribal Legal Aid has been added, acting in behalf of individuals to protect their interests,

During the period of work on the Land Claims ~~to now completed~~ I joined archaeologist Richard Van ^{VALKENBURG} ~~Volkenberg~~ ^{at} held a meeting in the eastern part of the Checkerboard area, where he was seeking help of older Navaho men in his effort to locate Old Navaholand hogan sites where the Navaho lived nearly four centuries ago. It was a bitter cold day and as the heating plant was not in operation in the building where the meeting was to have taken place, everyone crowded into a hogan to listen ^{to a} ~~to the~~ ^{by the Counselors,} talk. Men, women and children were present, all listening attentively to the problem at hand. Luckily I got permission to record this scene. Two elderly Navaho men finally agreed to help Mr. Van Volkenburg the following summer, and again I joined the party to watch the work. One of these men was ^(p) Georgie Garcia, who at 78 was still surprisingly active. Much information was gained through this archaeological work that summer. The Land Claims work is ~~now~~ finished and now awaits the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court.

The intent to establish proof of Navaho habitation in areas no longer ^{within the} ~~in the~~ reservation bounds in finding old hogan sites dates could be established through the tree ring technology or the carbon 14 tests.

forming a broken in the area.

(Captions for the Sacred Mountain pictures.)

SISNAAJINI--SACRED MOUNTAIN OF THE EAST.

TSOODZIL--SACRED MOUNTAIN OF THE SOUTH.

DOKO'OOSLIID--SACRED MOUNTAIN OF THE WEST.

DIBENTSAA-- SACRED MOUNTAIN OF THE NORTH.

(other captions)

TIMOTHY AND HIS FAMILY

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PART III
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