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PART II
THE WAY
OF THE
PEOPLE

HABITATION

NAVAHO HOMES, OR HOGANS, are scattered far and wide over the reservation, in order to obtain adequate pasturage for the sheep. Each family has grazing rights, and though there is no individual ownership of land as we know it, the individual's rights are usually respected. Seldom does one encroach on another's pasture; boundaries are indicated only by a small pile of stones, and boundary lines follow the contour of the land, for there are no stock fences. The same rights prevail for summer pasture in mountain areas where sheep are moved to higher elevations for fresh grass.

The hogan is a most practical building for life in this desert country. It heats with a minimum amount of fuel, it is cool in summer, and, having no windows, it is a retreat from the strong winds of early spring. There is a quiet peace within the hogan, for the only light is from above, through the smoke hole in the

roof. The form of the hogan stems from the Creation Story, for it was the Holy People who built the first one, thus setting the pattern and the customs. Round, or nearly round in shape, and with a dome-like roof, the hogan always faces East, to the rising sun and the new day. When a new hogan is built, pieces of turquoise or shell are placed beneath the doorposts. When it is completed, the hogan is blessed by a medicine man if one is near, or by the head of the family. Corn pollen, symbol of fertility, is sprinkled on the logs or stone while the chanter invokes peace and a happy life.

Depending on the environment, hogans are built of a variety of materials. Where logs are available, there are two or three general types: the old forked-stick hogan (nearly extinct); hogans built of upright logs topped with cribbed horizontal logs to build dome-shaped roofs; and hogans with logs laid horizontally

A hexagonal hogan near Red Rock.

An upright log and mud plaster hogan in the Checkerboard Area.

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in hexagonal or octagonal form, all being chinked with adobe mud or clay. In areas where timber is scarce, hogans are built of stone, again, either round or hexagonal with always the domed roof. A special form of roof construction is used, as may be seen in the interior pictures. In recent times, one finds occasionally that windows have been cut into walls.

In a barren area I found a round stone hogan. The woman was bringing the sheep home to a nearby corral for the night. The building seems small in the broad, majestic landscape, yet the interior of the same hogan gives a suggestion of its height and roominess, though the picture contains less than a quarter of the whole.

On entering a hogan, one must move from left to right, clockwise, circling the fire in the center of the room. On formal occasions the women sit on the north side of the hogan, the cooking side, and the men on the south, while the head of the family and any guests sit on the west, facing the entrance. In early times a shallow fire pit was dug in the earth floor. The pits still are dug, though in recent times many Navaho are using tin or iron stoves, sometimes small metal barrels, with stove pipes extending out of the roof holes. To the right of the entrance, which may have a wooden door or the old-time blanket covering, simple shelves made from empty orange crates or boxes obtained from nearby trading posts will hold dishes and food staples. On the west side of the hogan sheepskins, which serve as beds at night, will have been rolled up and stacked away. Hanging from pegs or nails along the sides will be extra clothing, blankets, and other items of daily use. In other places along the sides of the hogan are boxes, suitcases, or even small trunks, in which other possessions are stored. There is a place for everything and there is usually order. Following the ancient pattern to which all individuals subscribe, this true sense of order permeates Navaho life.

Where Navaho people have moved to nearby towns and are living in regular houses, I have seen disorder and a slovenly way of living. The reason seems twofold, poverty and the example of white people of low caliber, for few Navaho have had much contact with cultured Anglo homes. I recall an episode in 1932, when Betsy and I took Mrs. Francis Nakai and Timothy to Santa Fe to see the wonderful collection of Navaho blankets in the Indian Arts Fund Collection.

Following this experience we stopped to say "hello" to friends of ours who lived in one of the loveliest of Southwestern homes. We were all invited to return that evening for dinner, when there was to be a birthday party for the son of the house. Mrs. Francis' acceptance of that evening was something I shall always remember. She had never been away from Red Rock, and her only contact with any white man's home had been the very simple apartment Betsy had in the old hospital building, where for the first time Mrs. Francis sat at a table to eat. At our friends' house that evening, we sat down to a formal dinner for twelve people at a table exquisitely set with shining silver, sparkling glass, lighted candles, and all the trimmings for a birthday party. Mrs. Francis quietly watched what others did, and, with the utmost dignity, followed suit as though she were accustomed to such elaborateness. During the evening Timothy repeated to me over and over, "Oh, I never saw such a beautiful house!" His eyes were shining. As we took our departure he spoke to our hostess, saying, "My relative thanks you very much for everything and she wishes that she understood English so she could have known all that has been talked about." As we returned to our motel, I wondered if I could have conducted myself with such perfect poise and dignity if I had found myself in completely foreign surroundings with such different customs, and listening to a language I did not understand. At the present time, however, during this transition period from the old life to the new, Navaho people are buying second-hand beds, tables, and chairs, and the old sense of order is disappearing.

Near the winter hogan there is always a summer shelter; for the Navaho live chiefly out-of-doors during the summer months. Built of upright poles, the shelter has a roof of fresh green boughs from cottonwood trees, or cedar or juniper. In areas where sheep are taken to the mountains for summer pasture, the winter hogan will be closed. As the Navaho live with a minimum of possessions, they have little to move for life during the summer months. Cooking utensils, some extra clothing, wool for weaving, a few basic food supplies, such as salt, sugar, coffee, and flour, are all that are needed. The women set up their looms under the shelter, the children watch the flocks, and the men haul water and wood and tend the small farms.

Water in most areas must be brought from wells or

from the few rare springs which may be miles away. Barrels filled with water are hauled in wagons, sometimes for a distance of twenty miles. Today, the wagons are rapidly being replaced by pickup trucks, and, where, long ago, the horse changed Navaho life, now the automobile is bringing another great change. Water is still scarce, but both the tribal government and the Indian Service are developing new wells, bringing some relief from the long hauls that have been necessary for too many years. Water is still conserved to the utmost. Once, when we were visiting

under a summer shelter, our friend Paulina was making ready to wash a few dishes. I asked her if I might make a picture showing how the Navaho can wash dishes in a tea cup full of water. She took me quite literally and, measuring out a cup, proceeded to wash the few dishes. And they were clean. It is surprising how cool it can be under one of these shelters on a hot summer day, for there is always a breeze—all one needs is shade.

In the summer of 1954 we made a trip to the Navaho Mountain area in southeastern Utah. This is still a

(OPPOSITE) *Interior of horizontal log hogan in the Cove Area.*

Washing dishes under a brush shelter.

remote region, one containing much old Navaho life. We spent a memorable day with the family of Old Lady Long Salt at her summer hogan. Through our interpreter, who was her great granddaughter-in-law, she told us something of her long life. She was eight years old when the Navaho People returned from the Long Walk, and she told us of hardships they had endured, the effort of starting life again on their old homesites, and the fight for survival.

The shelter of Old Lady Long Salt was a natural one, for here low cedar and juniper trees grew in a

circle. There was the same pattern of entrance and placement of objects as in a winter hogan. Over the loom area and where the family slept, canvasses had been hung for protection from summer rain storms. [See pp. 70-71.] We were soon to learn, to our astonishment, that we were in the presence of five generations of daughters. The Old Lady (94, we figured, and still vigorous) sits at the extreme left of this picture; directly behind her, our interpreter; making kneel-down bread near the fire is the Old Lady's daughter; beyond the Old Lady, looking at my book of pictures,

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are her granddaughter and great-granddaughter. The little girl in the center is the great great-granddaughter.

The sons and grandsons were away at work, and sons-in-law would never be there, for the old rule still is imposed in most areas, that a man must never speak to his mother-in-law. We spent several hours visiting this family. They were interested in us and in the things we observed. They looked at every picture in my book with the greatest of interest, pointing out differences in costume, ornaments, or possessions. We watched the making of kneel-down bread—green corn cut from the cob, put through a meat grinder, salted, packed into the green husks, and baked in an outdoor oven. It was very good. We have found when visiting families such as this, that a time comes when their courtesy to us has been fulfilled, their curiosity is satisfied, and their normal work must be resumed. It is well to be sensitive to this approaching moment and to take one's leave before wearing out a welcome.

At Navaho Mountain we found a distinct difference in costume from that of other parts of the reservation, such as a broader collar on the women's blouses, different stitching, different use of silver buttons. Later, we were to learn that many areas have distinctive identifying stitching on the sleeves of the women's blouses. Before the days of American Occupation, the old apparel consisted (for the women) of two hand-woven mantas (rectangular pieces of cloth) secured at each shoulder and tied about the waist with a woven belt. When the women saw the pioneer white women's long cotton dresses of the 1870-1880 period, such as those worn by the Army officers' wives at Bosque Redondo, they copied them, though they quickly made adaptations to suit their own needs, eliminating the tight bodices and substituting loose, comfortable blouses. At present there is a change from the cotton skirt, worn for so long a time, to one of rayon and similar material, and shorter in length. When C. N. Cotton introduced Pendleton blankets around the 1890's, their use as wearing apparel was quickly adopted, the men wearing the full blankets, the women the large fringed shawls.

Many of the Navaho People who come closest in contact with us, and who now speak English fluently, are wearing clothes like ours. However, velveteen blouses are still widely worn, with a great variety of bright colors, still decorated with silver buttons and

A Navaho costume of the 1880's.

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Tying a "chongo."

with belts of silver *conchas*¹ strung on leather. For a long time dimes and quarters to which silver loops had been soldered were also used as buttons, but these are fast disappearing. Some men and women still wear moccasins. All but gone is the old-type man's costume, which consisted of white cotton pants, velveteen blouse, and much silver ornamentation. Strings of turquoise, shell, coral, and silver beads are still worn by both men and women, no matter what the costume. Silk scarf headbands and Stetson hats are worn by the

¹ *Concha* ("shell" in Spanish) is used by the Navaho to denote a shell-like medallion.

men and boys, while the women wear scarfs or fringed Pendleton shawls.

The family is very important to all Navaho People. They are proud of having many relations. There are today more than sixty clans, groups of related people. Lineage is traced through the mother, and a son or daughter must marry outside his or her clan. Marriages are usually arranged by family or relatives. When a boy or a girl reaches the proper age. A dowry of sheep or horses, or other items is presented by the family of the boy. Navaho relationships are hard for us to understand, for the Navaho have other words, or groups of words, for aunts, uncles, cousins, and

other relatives. I have heard Navaho people speak of "my uncle," only to find quite a different relationship from our knowledge of the word. A true uncle is spoken of as "my mother's brother," for instance.

Of the approximately twelve hundred Indian languages of the Americas, certain linguistic interrelationships have been described and established by scholars. In addition, many dialects still exist within the languages spoken by closely related tribes.

Navaho origins lie in a hypothetical group—the Nadene people—who are believed to have migrated to Alaska from Asia centuries ago, and who branched into four major language families, one of which is Athabascan. These Athabascan-speaking people gradually migrated over a wide expanse of territory

stretching from Alaska to Mexico, some following along the Pacific Coast, others following along the Rocky Mountains. There are many sub-groups and offshoots even of the Athabascan, one such subgroup being the Apache from whom the Navaho are an offshoot.

The Navaho language is not a "primitive" form of expression but is a highly complex form of communication. Differing greatly from English and other European tongues, it is a language full of movement, of subtle meaning, of verbs whose action may be modified by a wide variety of prefixes.

Some scholars believe that there is a relationship between the ancient language of the Nadene and the Chinese-Tibetan languages, and, though the rela-

Washburn Begay's hogan on the mountain.

tionship is probable, much more research is needed to establish it as a fact. Like the Chinese languages, Navaho is a "tone language," and the meaning of the words is distinguished by the pitch of the voice, whether it be raised or lowered.

Navaho is a difficult language for English-speaking people to learn, and many of the sounds are very hard for us to produce, yet there are many who have accomplished this feat. Mr. Robert Young, area tribal operations officer of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Gallup, is one of those who has gained exceptional proficiency in the language. He has traveled in West-

ern Canada, including British Columbia, where there are other Athabascan-speaking people, with whom he had no difficulty in establishing a working relationship. Though the Athabascan languages have become too divergent over the centuries to be mutually intelligible, there are enough similarities in vocabulary, structure, and other features to demonstrate their close relationship. The people with whom he worked in the north were as interested in the Navaho language as he was in theirs.

In addition to a dictionary and grammar, Mr. Young has written an extensive article in the *Navajo*

Yearbook (1961),² focused especially on the problems of teaching English to Navaho beginners. It has sufficient detail to give insight into the grammatical structure and sound system of the language for those who seek some knowledge of the Navaho tongue.

One summer while I was working in the Red Rock area, Betsy and I heard about a road over the top of the Lukachukai Mountains which led to the trading post of Toadlena on the eastern slope of the moun-

tains. Deciding to explore this, we started on the o'd road that crossed the mountains to the post of Lukachukai on the western slope. As we reached the top we found the branch road leading south. At first it was almost impassable, and at one extremely rough and steep point I remarked, as we started a third attempt, "If we don't make it this time, we'll go back." Fortunately we did make it and soon we were driving through a beautiful pine and spruce forest with occasional groves of aspen.

As we rounded a bend, before us on a rise a little above the road level was a beautiful log hogan, built

² "A Sketch of the Navajo Language," *The Navajo Yearbook*, pp. 430-510.

in a small clearing, the pines and spruces towering beyond. Sitting outside busy at their work were two women and a small child, the elder woman carding wool, the younger grinding corn on an old-type

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metate.³ They seemed surprised that a car had come from the northerly direction, but greeted us as we approached. We found that neither of the women spoke English, so in a little while I produced my book of pictures and soon they were engrossed in looking at them. Then I heard an exclamation of "Mamma, Mamma!"—it seemed that I had photographed the older woman's mother at some distant point. I took the print out of the book and gave it to her, to her delight. After a while I asked if I might make some more pictures (sign language) and, receiving a nod of acquiescence, I set to work. We spent the rest of the morning with these people and, as noon approached, we packed up and were ready to continue our journey.

Suddenly we heard it—a Navaho song—soaring from the woods in the clear, silent mountain air. It was a song of utter joy, of complete freedom of spirit, such as I had never heard. We stood spellbound. Soon there was added the tinkle of sheep bells as out of the forest they all came, the sheep, the man, his little son, and a dog. The shepherd stopped abruptly when he saw strangers and a veil came down like the dropping of a curtain at the theatre. He approached slowly, greeting us with usual Navaho courtesy. But in those first few unguarded moments we had glimpsed the Navaho soul. Soon we were on our way, enriched beyond measure by this experience.

We never did find the road to Toadlena; we came out at Sanostee instead. But what matter?

The Navaho have songs of many kinds. There are sacred songs, the chants from the many ceremonies, hundreds of them. There are songs for an individual, songs for chorus. A medicine man must know all the chants in every ceremony he conducts. There are songs related to all forms of living creatures, songs of protection, songs to ward off evil. There are songs for daily activities, there are songs about sacred mountains and places. There are songs of sorrow, songs of gladness, songs of supplication. There are songs for games, songs for pleasure. A Navaho feels rich according to how many songs he knows. There are songs for smaller ceremonies, songs for the blessing of a new hogan, a song for the building of a baby's cradleboard.

Fastened to the bow of the cradleboard there is always a charm to ward off evil—a piece of turquoise or shell. In some localities there are "lucky" cradle-

*I make a baby-board for you, my son.
May you grow to a great old age.
Of the rays of the earth I make the back,
The blanket, I make of the black clouds,
The bow, I make of the rainbow,
The side-loops, I make of the sun beams,
The foot board, I make of the sun-dogs,
The covering, I make of the dawn,
The bed, I make of the black fog.*

[This prayer is sung when a baby is placed on the cradleboard.]

³ A stone slab with a concave upper surface.

boards. When a mother has raised a particularly strong and healthy baby, other expectant mothers want to borrow the cradleboard, so that their children, too, may be strong and healthy. The Navaho themselves believe that the use of the cradleboard produces strong and straight backs in their children, and that the security of being bound onto the board tends to produce a calm and poised personality.

The Navaho have a different attitude toward children from ours. Children, even small ones, are treated as little people and learn to make their own decisions at an early age.

Trading Posts

When the Navaho returned from Fort Sumner to that portion of their old land allotted them by the treaty of 1868, trading posts were soon to play a vital role in their lives. By the early 1870's Mormon traders were coming down from Utah establishing contacts for trade at the San Juan and Colorado rivers. John D. Lee, in 1874, initiated a ferry which crossed the Colorado not many miles above the Grand Canyon. Here also he established a post, one of the first to deal directly with the Navaho, where he traded horses for the fine hand-woven blankets made by the Navaho women. These lovely blankets were rapidly coming into great demand among the Mormons of Utah. Long in use, Lee's Ferry was not abandoned until 1926 when the Navaho Bridge, built at this site, linked the Navaho country with north central Arizona and southern Utah.

Licensed by the government agent at Fort Defiance, traders began to appear as the Navaho produced wool and blankets. Few in number at the beginning, the traders increased in proportion to the volume of Navaho production. Strict rules of trade were imposed by the government when licenses were issued, and, with but few exceptions, the traders never owned the land upon which their posts were built.

The pioneer trader was a rugged individual, able to survive in remote areas under the most primitive conditions. He had to build what he needed, had to be able to fix anything and everything, and through the years has taught necessary construction and mechanical techniques to many Navaho. Built of stone, adobe bricks, or, occasionally, logs, the old trading posts consisted of one or more buildings, with sheep and horse

corrals nearby. In addition to the store, there was usually a barn, a storehouse, and a visitors' hogan for the use of Indians who lived far away. Around three walls of the post were shelves reaching to the ceiling, stocked with goods of all descriptions. In front of the shelves, and separated from them by a passageway, were high, wide counters, built so for protection as well as use. Beneath the counters were shelves for an assortment of articles, tools, and, in early days, a weapon or two in case of need. In the center of the room, or to one side, a large old-fashioned iron stove gave warmth in winter, and along the remaining wall were benches to accommodate the customers. Hanging from the ceiling were coils of rope, lanterns, buckets, bridles, harnesses, and other items of trade. For sixty years many trading posts were in isolated spots, far removed from worldly contact. The few roads, usually bad ones, were often impossible to travel at certain times of year. Horse- or mule-drawn wagons were the only means of carrying supplies or delivering goods for sale.

Many legendary personalities were among those early traders on the reservation: Keam, the Hubbells, the Wetherills, the Hyde brothers (who were the first to send hides to the eastern market), C. N. Cotton, who saw a potential market for rugs in the east, Sam Day, "Cozy" McSparron, B. I. Staples, both Charles and Arthur Newcomb, Bruce Bernard, and others whose names were synonymous with the posts they held. Off the reservation there were the Kirks, the Fred Harvey Company, and a few others.

The traders' abilities were legion. They had to speak a most difficult language, they had to be shrewd business men in order to exist, and they had to be pioneers in every sense of the word. As the Navaho of these early times seldom had cash with which to make their purchases, a credit barter system was devised whereby a Navaho could place certain items of his possession, chiefly his jewelry, in pawn until that time of year when wool or sheep were sold.

Each trading post was, and still is, a center, like the hub of a wheel, the outer circumference being perhaps twenty or more miles away. To these posts the Navaho have been coming to trade for nearly a hundred years, bringing their produce to exchange for goods they desire or need. They bring wool at shearing time, sheep and some cattle at fall roundup time,

In 1932 the Red Rock trading post still had its original dirt floor.

and hides, piñon nuts, handmade jewelry, woven blankets, and rugs throughout the year. The trading post has become a place of meeting, as well as the place to obtain water, for all posts had to be built where there were natural springs or good wells. The trader has been the connecting link between the United States government and the Navaho People. The trading post is where government officials come to set dates for spring branding and dipping of sheep, to announce farm demonstrations, and to post notices. It is the trader who interprets government regulations and who makes contacts between the government officials and the individual Navaho of his region. And it has been the trader who has established outside

markets for rugs and jewelry. By and large, the trader has been the best friend the Navaho have had over a long period of time. It has been to the trader that the Navaho have gone for help in time of need, for many a trader has driven miles in good weather or bad, by day or night, to take sick Navaho People to the nearest hospital. There have been a few exceptions where exploitation or unfairness in trade have taken place, but such traders soon disappeared, for the shrewd Navaho quickly detect these practices and simply go elsewhere for their business.

During the past thirty years road improvement has progressed with increasing rapidity, until today new paved roads link the major sections of the reservation.

Distances seem to have shrunk, as trucks now travel one hundred miles in two hours, where not long ago the same trip took two days.

The trader's influence has been great, depending on the way he has conducted his business, his attitude to his customers, and his interest in them and their mode of life. In all activities, both in the store and out, the trader's actions are observed and noted. He must be ever on the alert for values, for the Navaho loves the game of trading and trying to get the best of any bargain. Spending time in a trading post, watching the comings and goings of the many people who appear daily, is a fascinating experience. Navaho People come into the post, quietly greet those they know by a gentle touching of hands, then sit on the benches for a long time considering what to buy. One will finally go up to the counter, and, pointing to an article, put down the money for that one item, or if the Navaho is pawning jewelry, the trader lists each purchase. Following another long interlude of consideration, this procedure will be repeated. Sometimes individuals will stay at the post all day before the final lot of merchandise has been acquired. Always there is the purchase of tobacco (in early times there was a box of loose tobacco on the counter for free samples), and the purchase of candy or pop for children, as the day proceeds. The Navaho observe everything, listen to all conversations, deliberate. When they go home they will remember everything that has transpired.

In every post there is a special place, sometimes a vault, often a small room, where pawned jewelry is kept. Items are ticketed with the owner's name, the date, and the amount owed. Most traders keep jewelry in pawn longer than the legal time of three years for the owner to redeem it (though this has recently been changed). Then it may be placed in a case as "dead pawn" for sale to any who will buy. The traders are more than fair about this transaction. I recall an instance when I had been requested to buy some dead pawn for a shop. One piece was a particularly fine *concha* belt. It had been dead pawn for over three years. Six weeks after I had bought it, the original owner rode more than fifty miles to redeem his belt. He was crestfallen to find it gone. The trader took the time and trouble to write requesting its return. Fortunately, it had not been sold and the Navaho redeemed his prized possession.

Probably the least changed of the famous trading posts is the Hubbell Post at Ganado, Arizona.⁴ This is one of the exceptions where the land was homesteaded by Don Lorenzo Hubbell, for at that time, 1876, this land was not part of the reservation. Don Lorenzo, the son of a Connecticut Yankee and a Spanish mother, purchased a store built six years previously at this site, in all probability the oldest post following the first at Fort Defiance. When Don Lorenzo bought the post, he also homesteaded a 160-acre tract of land. He erected a number of fine substantial buildings during the course of his life. His post became a mecca for anthropologists, archaeologists, writers, and a host of visitors, as did the posts of other famous traders.

Here, in Don Lorenzo's treasure room, is his late son Roman Hubbell, discussing the merits of a rug just brought in to be sold. On the walls are hung relics of the past—Kit Carson's gun scabbard, a fine old gun collection, water containers of many different types, a superb collection of Indian baskets from various tribes, archaeological specimens from nearby early Pueblo ruins. Piled high along another wall of the room are stacks of Navaho rugs, all of top quality, for which the Hubbell Post has always been famous. "Cozy" McSparron, Hubbell, and later the Lippincotts at Wide Ruins, did much to restore the use of natural dyes in rug making. This is one of many instances when the traders' influence has counted most, and today certain areas of the reservation are noted for rugs of widely different types.

Other traders whose interests lay beyond the trading counter were John Wetherill at Kayenta, Sam Day, B. I. Staples at Coolidge, J. B. Moore at Crystal, and the Newcombs, to name but a few. Harry Goulding at Monument Valley has done much to promote the scenic beauty of his area. At Shiprock, Bruce Bernard has one of the finest pawn rooms, with an excellent system for recording the pawn. His room is a spectacle of turquoise, coral, and silver. The wives of these traders also have played an important role in their respective areas, teaching many useful household arts, aiding families, and learning much of the Navaho ways. The heyday of these posts is gone now, and modernization is rapidly taking over, though

⁴ Now to be a national monument.

there are still a few smaller posts in remote areas retaining some of the flavor of the early years. It will not be long before these, too, are changed, and with their passing will go one of the most colorful phases of Western history, one so closely bound to the Navaho that it became a part of the Way of the People.

Away from the well-traveled highways, old methods of locomotion still are used. For three hundred years the horse has been a dearly loved possession. When

a Navaho dies, his horse is shot and the saddle is buried with the man. A Navaho thinks nothing of walking many miles if he has no means of transportation. We have come upon this many times. Once, as we were traveling to Tuba City from the Hopi country, we came to a slight crest in the undulating desert; beyond we saw a family—a woman with a baby in a cradleboard and a small child riding a burro, while two older boys were on foot. When we reached them we produced some candy for the children and tried to chat a little, though no one seemed to understand

English. They were curious about us, surprised by our offer, and thoroughly friendly. They seemed miles from any habitation, yet in the gentle rise and fall of the desert, it is remarkable how a hogan can be hidden from view.

Another time, as we drove along in the Red Rock region, we came across a boy with a small flock of sheep. It was a wonderful day with great masses of clouds gathering for a possible storm. We pulled off the road to stop a while to enjoy the beauty of the scene. Soon the sheep came closer to us, the boy

watching from a distance. We were so absorbed with this scene in one direction that we did not see a young man approaching on foot from another. Then up out of a wash appeared a lone horseman who stopped to talk with the young man on foot. After a while each went his separate way as we watched them all disappear into the landscape. The sheep moved slowly on, the little boy with them. We spoke to no one, they paid no attention to us whatsoever, yet I doubt not that later in the day they knew who we were and a surprising lot about us.

Flocks of sheep are gathered prior to shipping to market.

Sheep Raising

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Ever since the Navaho obtained their first sheep and horses from the Spaniards sometime in the seventeenth century, sheep and wool has become an ever increasing resource for the People. Between that time and the year 1846, when the United States took possession of the Southwest following the Mexican War, Navaho sheep had increased to 500,000 head. Later, when Kit Carson defeated the Navaho through his scorched-earth policy, much of this livestock was captured or killed. Only some 5,000 head were moved to Fort Sumner with the Navaho People; many of these died along the way, for they had not sufficient time to graze, and more died later.

When at last the Navaho were freed to return to their old land in 1868, they had nothing but the hope of the promised new start that the government would send them—seed, tools, and three sheep per family. It was more than a year, a time of near starvation, before this promise was fulfilled. Before the exile there had been some small groups who, with their flocks, had hidden in the remote wild canyons of northern Arizona, while Colonel Carson was rounding up the Tribe. There is a legend that one leader of the hidden groups urged the People to conserve their sheep so that they might help their fellow tribesmen when the day of liberation came. Doubtless some of the re-

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turning Navaho found their way to these remote regions, joining their relatives or friends. The rest struggled through that first year until the promised sheep and seed were finally delivered late in the fall of 1869.

By the year 1870 there could not have been many sheep on the reservation, yet between 1870 and 1894 sheep and other stock had increased to an estimated number of more than 1,500,000. During these first years following the exile, government agents were sent to certain areas on the reservation to maintain contact with the Navaho People. The first agent to realize the necessity for stock reduction was D. M. Riordan, agent at Fort Defiance, who sent a report to Washington requesting that the stock on the reservation be reduced, and also urging the introduction of better stock to improve the breed. This was in 1883. Again, in 1894, another agent, Edwin Plummer, realizing the great increase in stock, particularly of sheep, sent an urgent plea to Washington for more grazing land for the Navaho, but this plea also was turned aside. The next important effort to intercede in behalf of the Navaho was in 1914 by Father Anselm Weber from Saint Michael's Mission. Father Anselm became aroused when a group of non-Indian stockmen, with eyes on certain grazing areas, tried to bring political pressure to bear on the Indian Service to declare this large section of land, then beyond the western boundary of the reservation, as "surplus land," and, therefore, part of the public domain and subject to homesteads.

Father Anselm attacked this measure, sending reports to Washington showing the need for increased areas for the Navaho. Riordan, Plummer, and Father Anselm were the first who realized how the pasturage was being destroyed by over-grazing, who recognized the danger of the destruction of the natural grama grass so necessary for stock of all kinds. Father Anselm saw, too, how certain areas of land were being eroded where the sheep, who crop closely and often pull up the grass by the roots, were actually destroying the range. He urged Congress not only to preserve the Navaho range lands, but also to increase range areas. Father Anselm was successful in his mission, and new areas of land were added to the western section of the reservation. However, nothing was done about the overstocked range.

Following World War I, there was much discussion

about the land and the sheep, but no one seemed to have any plan. Finally, in 1930, an Indian Bureau forester, William H. Zeh, was appointed to make a general survey of range conditions on the whole reservation. Mr. Zeh's report showed that due to shortage of stock water the distribution of stock was very uneven. Consequently, there were great inroads of soil erosion in some areas, and stock of all kinds—sheep, horses, cattle, mules, burros, and goats—were far in excess of the available range. He urged a stock reduction program. Once more there were delays and the detailed grazing surveys were not commenced until 1933, to be completed in 1935. It was then apparent that the reservation range could support only about 500,000 head, and that the range at that time was overstocked by more than 200 percent. These were the depression years and the price of wool and lambs was at a low point. The Navaho were just not selling their lambs, thereby adding still more stock to the overgrazed land.

With the advent of the new administration in 1932, new agencies were created, the Soil Conservation Service, the Public Works Program, the Relief Administration, to name a few. These services, together with the reports from the Indian Service, brought to focus the necessity for the Navaho stock reduction program of the 1932-1942 decade. This program produced an economic and social revolution, for the Navaho at that time did not have the education or the understanding to comprehend the necessity for this long-range plan. To a people who had been shepherds for more than two centuries, to be told that they must reduce their flocks came as a shock.

Until this time the Navaho had had no centralized government of their own. In the early days before the exile they had been loosely governed by chiefs in various areas of the Navaho country. After the exile the Indian Service had divided the reservation into districts of administration. Now, in 1932, the tribal government was just being formulated, and still did not represent the people from all the areas of the reservation. The first steps taken by the new commissioner of Indian Affairs were in the field of land conservation, to be carried out by the Public Works Program, giving work to many Navaho men. Steps also were taken to develop greater water supply by drilling new wells and building small drainage reservoirs.

Then came the time when the whole land and sheep

The ever increasing use of trucks and cars is fast diminishing the use of the long-loved horse.

program was clearly stated and explained to the Tribal Council, showing them how too many sheep were destroying the grass and causing great areas of extreme erosion. To compensate for the reduction in sheep, a new educational program would be put into effect which would include the building of some fifty new day schools. The construction of these buildings would be done by Navaho labor. The Council understood the program and approved it. Work was commenced. The Relief Administration was to purchase

100,000 head of sheep immediately in the fall of 1933, this number to be divided among the several jurisdictions of the reservation.

But many of the large sheep owners refused to comply. A compromise was finally reached on a percentage basis, but this worked hardships on the small flock owners. Suspicion and resentment reached a high pitch, for the Navaho think of wealth in terms of livestock, not money, and they seemed unable to understand that money earned by wages would in any

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way compensate for loss of sheep. While the Council supported the program, enforcing it was something else, and the Council was placed in a difficult position with their fellow Navaho who disapproved the plan. There were several years of turmoil, climaxed when the Relief Administration purchased 150,000 head of goats, half of them females. At this point the Navaho women became very agitated and hostile to the entire program. These goats were to be delivered to small packing plants between September and December of 1934, with a purchase price of \$1.00 per head. Unusual weather conditions and long distances for hauling slowed the program, and a suggestion was made that the Navaho slaughter all the goats they could use for food, even though they had already been sold to the government.

Frustrated in getting some 3,500 of these goats to the railroad from one far distant point, and because the cost of hauling greatly exceeded the value of the animals, someone ordered that the goats be shot and left to rot. This action may have been a practical solution, but its effect on the Navaho was catastrophic and sent a shudder of apprehension throughout the Tribe, for, to the Navaho, animals are killed only for food. This was a tragedy which has left scars of mistrust, and even though the program was continued and the stock reduced to a better level, sheep control is still a matter of concern. In continuing the program, range management districts have been established, while the Bureau of Indian Affairs still issues the grazing permits.

The coming of World War II alleviated the tension to a considerable extent, for many Navaho men went into the army, many more, and women also, into war work of various kinds. Some went to California to work in defense plants. They all did a superlative job. These war experiences also taught the Navaho a great deal about the ways of other people, for they are quick to learn through observation, and to many this was a new experience, for they had never been away from the reservation. Following the war many more things have happened to help relieve the livestock situation. The discovery of extensive uranium deposits brought money into the Tribal Fund, as well as work for many young men. This discovery was followed by the development of new oil fields. The Tribal Council is doing much to produce new water

supplies, build new roads, and carry out other projects, all of which are helping to solve Navaho economic life. While there are still many sheep on the reservation, they are no longer the only means of livelihood.

Farming

The Navaho have been farmers since the beginning of their known history. Evidence of their produce was found in archaeological excavations in old Navaholand where corn, squash, and beans were found—seeds more than four hundred years old. As the Navaho moved westward down the San Juan Valley, they planted fields wherever they settled, but these were subsistence farms of small acreage. During the past seventy-five years, this picture has been changing, until today there are some Navaho who do practice commercial farming, and there are more who wish to do so.

As about 65 percent of land under irrigation on the reservation at the moment is concentrated in the San Juan Valley, a farm training program was established in this area by the government about ten or more years ago, to meet the need for new occupations to take the place of raising sheep. As this has developed, the Navaho have found that small subsistence acreage would not meet their needs, and as this need has increased, a consolidation of small areas has been developed, making productive farming as a livelihood more possible.

The new irrigation project, planned long ago but not put into effect until 1962, will bring water from the San Juan River, stored in the new Navajo Reservoir, to irrigate 110,000 acres of land. This area, now nearly destitute of growth, will extend along the south side of the river from near Farmington, south and west all the way to Newcomb. The first water will be turned into the new canals in a few years, creating about one thousand 120-acre farms for young Navaho People. This project is based on the premise that the land belongs to the Tribe and will be leased to individuals with a period of rent-free occupancy in which to become established. Farming on a commercial basis is a comparatively new occupation for the Navaho, and benefits from the farm training program will be needed as this development gets under way.

Although Indians in this part of the Southwest have

Drying freshly cut alfalfa.

practiced irrigation since the twelfth century or before, the modern refinements in head gates, and water storage have so increased production that they have brought about a decided change in Navaho life. The change from subsistence to commercial productivity is great, but here, once more, the native adaptability of the Navaho will serve him in good stead.

The Landscape

Navaholand abounds in interesting sites, as well as scenic beauty. Adjacent to the reservation are three national parks and seven national monuments. The

Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, and Mesa Verde National Parks are all in close proximity, as are the national monuments of Walnut Canyon, Sunset Crater, and Wupatki to the west, El Morro (Inscription Rock) to the south, and Hovenweep and Aztec Ruins to the north. Within the reservation are four more—Rainbow Bridge, Canyon de Chelly, Chaco Canyon, and Navajo National Monuments—with the recent addition of the Navaho tribal park at Monument Valley, developed and operated by the Tribe with uniformed personnel, who are graduates of the National Park Service Ranger Training School. Plans are

The first appointed Navaho to the National Park Service staff, serving as a ranger at Navajo National Monument, was Hubert Laughter. Today he is a member of the Tribal Council.

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under way for several more additions to the tribal park system.

Chaco Canyon Monument and Navajo National Monument contain great prehistoric ruins indicating the extensive population that existed here between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, and there are other sites antedating these. The ruins of the great terraced structures of Pueblo Bonito and Chetro Ketl at Chaco Canyon reveal some of the finest prehistoric masonry. Here one sees the remains of two walled cities where perhaps a thousand people lived nine hundred years ago, and there are ruins of many other pueblos within this area. Navajo National Monument contains the cliff dwelling called Beta-ta-kin, perhaps the most beautiful in the Southwest, as well as other ruins. Canyon de Chelly and its tributary, Canyon del Muerto, comprise the most spectacular monument for scenic beauty. Here is an area of long-continued occupation, seventeen centuries, from A.D. 200 to the present. Not only do these Canyons contain evidences of ancient habitation, but through all these centuries the canyon floors have been farmed by successive tribes of Indians.

First came the so-called Basket Makers of A.D. 200 to approximately 700, followed by the Pueblos, who built the famous White House in Canyon de Chelly, the cliff dwellings in Mummy and Massacre Caves, and others in Canyon del Muerto. Then, according to some archaeologists, came some Hopi, who left behind quantities of pottery in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Lastly came the Navaho in the early part of the eighteenth century. This is still an inhabited region, for some three hundred Navaho live and raise their crops within the Canyons, sheltered by their high protective walls. As visitors travel up the Canyons today, they are conscious of small farms of corn and alfalfa, but it is only from the air that the full extent of the farming may be seen.

Throughout the summer, irrigating ditches bring water from higher regions as it flows down the Canyons following heavy thunderstorms. There are small peach orchards in Canyon del Muerto whose origins stem from trees brought to the Hopi villages by seventeenth-century Spanish padres. In September the Navaho dry large quantities of peaches to be stored for winter use.

There has long been misunderstanding regarding the names of these canyons, De Chelly, and its largest tributary, Del Muerto. *De Chelly* is a Spanish corruption of the Navaho word *Tsegghi*, meaning "between the rocks," hence, canyon. Many have thought that the name *Del Muerto* came from the Spanish attack on Massacre Cave in 1804, but there is no evidence whatever that this branch canyon had any name until 1882 when Colonel James Stevenson entered the canyon on an archaeological expedition. Members of two earlier expeditions made no mention of any name other than De Chelly. In a cave, later called Mummy Cave, Colonel Stevenson found two mummies, and in recognition of this find, he called the canyon "Cañon de los Muertos," later condensed to Canyon del Muerto.⁵

The Canyons can be treacherous as well as beautiful. Few visitors realize how quickly water can accumulate following the great thunderstorms of this Western region. Sometimes a storm will be miles away, not even visible from the lower part of the Canyons; yet with incredible speed the runoff accumulates, rushing down the Canyon floors, sweeping everything in its path. There are areas of quicksand, too, where many an automobile has become bogged down and even submerged, to the dismay of unsuspecting travelers. The Canyons twist and wind, creating one beautiful vista after another when the lowering light of afternoon mystifies and enhances, and giant shafts of rock, sunlit against a shadowed wall, are silhouetted in majestic beauty.

There is a delightful legend of how the Canyons were made:

Coyote went to the People begging them to give him some fire. At first they refused, for he was well known as the mischief maker. After repeated entreaties, some one said, "Oh, give him some." So they gave him some flint stones. He tried and tried but could not make a spark. Finally he became angry and threw the stones on the ground, whereupon a great spark was lighted which quickly set fire to the dry brush. It burned and burned into a rushing fire and Coyote ran away. The earth split open from the great heat beneath the fire and finally Water Pourer came to put it out. This started the washing

⁵ David L. DeHarport, "Origin of the Name, Cañon del Muerto," *El Palacio*, 67, No. 3 (June, 1960), 95.

was hire the Jeep and its driver from the Thunderbird Ranch for a trip up Canyon del Muerto. As this was not possible for the following day, we made arrangements for the day after. We then rearranged our plans, driving up to Many Farms, some forty miles to the north, where Cornell University conducts a clinic. We spent a busy morning watching the school children as they came in for tests, making numerous pictures, and learning about the interesting work that is being carried out by this university.

At noon we started on our way back to camp. As we were passing a small trading post called the Valley Store, I realized suddenly that this was the old Frazier Trading Post, the end of my long walk in 1930 when Betsy and I ran out of gasoline. We stopped to buy something for lunch and to pass the time of day with the trader. As we started back to the car, a wagon drove up with a man and his wife coming to fill their water barrels. As this was an activity I had not yet photographed, I got out my hand camera, and, with Maria as interpreter, asked if I might make the picture I wanted. The man was willing, so I proceeded to make a number of exposures from different angles. After returning to the car, which was on the opposite side of the water tank, we drove for a short distance until we found a nice spot to stop for our lunch.

Then we returned to the Canyon and drove up on the rim to watch the sunset before going to our camp. After supper I got out my changing bag to reload my exposed film holders, and suddenly I could not find the case that contained all my small camera holders, as well as extra equipment. We hunted and hunted, ending by taking everything out of the car. It just wasn't there, so I assumed that I must have left it at the Many Farms Clinic. The next morning, having to postpone our trip up the Canyon, we drove all the way back to Many Farms. But the case wasn't there; we returned to the Valley Store, where I now knew I must have left it. Entering the store, we found only one man sitting there talking to the trader, who was busy behind his counter. I asked him if such a case had been found, thinking that I must have put it down somewhere and left it. He said he had not seen it or heard of it. Then the lone customer spoke in Navaho to Maria, telling her that he thought a certain young Navaho boy knew something about it. I realized then that it had been stolen, something that

down of the Canyon walls, making them deeper and deeper. Today, when you stand on the rim you can see how the Canyons would all fit back together.⁶

In September of 1957 I made a special trip to Canyon de Chelly, taking with me Maria Teba, a young Navaho woman who was then working in Santa Fe, and whom Betsy and I knew very well. She had never been to the Canyons and was most eager to go, and I thought it delightful to have a Navaho companion. On the way we stopped at Window Rock, where I found the Tribal Council in session. I obtained permission to make some interior photographs of the Council room with the members present. I also made a portrait of Paul Jones, who was chairman at that time.

Proceeding on to Chinle, we put up our tent in the National Monument camp grounds and settled down for a stay of several days. One thing I wanted to do

⁶ Adapted from Richard VanValkenburgh, *Diné Bekéya*, p. 22.

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had happened to me only once before over the years. I posted a notice saying that it was lost and offering a reward. We returned to our camp to prepare for the trip up the Canyon the following day.

I was unhappy over the handicap I would have without the use of my hand camera, as all the extra film I had for it was in that case, including other accessories and a new exposure meter. But, of course, I had my large camera. We set forth early the following morning with the Jeep to ourselves and a nice Navaho driver. The floors of the Canyons are very treacherous with both dry sand and quicksand, and one must be accompanied by someone who knows the safe routes. Our driver, Art, lived up in Canyon del Muerto, and, as this was the Canyon we wanted to see, we proceeded on our way, stopping at Art's hogan, where he introduced us to his family and showed us a fine rug his mother was weaving.

It was a beautiful fall day and we took our time, stopping frequently to work or to look at whatever interested us. We passed numerous hogans, for this is the Canyon where many Navaho People live. We went all the way up to Mummy Cave, a cliff dwelling miles from the mouth of the Canyon. But just before we arrived at this spot we came to a group of hogans and, seeing several children running to meet us, Art stopped the car to give them candy we had brought along. In a few minutes two women appeared, one of them approaching Maria, saying to her in English, "Did you girls find the case you lost yesterday?" I was astonished at this, for we must have been about forty miles from the Valley Store. How could this news have reached these people in less than twenty-four hours, and how were we recognized? I did not have a camera visible and we were not in my own car. This was a striking instance of how news travels on the reservation and how carefully all strangers are observed.

We had our lunch in the shade of some beautiful pine trees across the Canyon from Mummy Cave, resting a while before starting on our return trip. About half way down the Canyon is a group of hogans, almost a community, called Standing Cow, so named for an early pictograph carved on the face of the Canyon wall above one of the hogans. Here we found a busy scene. When we had passed this point on our way up the Canyon in the morning, no one was

visible. Now we found a group of Navaho women and children busily spreading out the season's crop of peaches to dry. They had swept an area clean of loose earth and were placing the halved peaches open side up to dry in the sun. We watched this activity for some time, Maria in continual conversation with the women and thoroughly enjoying herself. Finally we left, driving down the rest of the way as the late afternoon sun threw long shadows across the Canyon floor.

The next morning was Friday, the opening of the Window Rock Fair, so we broke camp and prepared to leave. We stopped at the trading post, as I wanted to tell Mr. Nelson about the loss of my case, in the event that any of the items showed up at his post. I bought some food for lunch and when I joined Maria at the car she was talking to two older Navaho People. She told me that these people wanted to know if we would take them to Window Rock. I said that we would be glad to, but that I wanted to go back to the Valley Store first to see if my case had been found. We all got in the car, the man riding on our camp beds in the back of the station wagon, the woman in front with Maria and me. Maria was engrossed in conversation and I soon realized that she was telling the woman about my missing case and also about my book, for she got it out to show the pictures. As neither of these people spoke any English, I had to guess what all the talk was about. There was no one around the Valley Store when we got there. I went inside to speak to the trader, but no sign of the case.

Getting back into the car, I started to turn around to head for the fair, inwardly bemoaning the loss of much valuable equipment, as well as the exposed negatives of Chairman Paul Jones and the Tribal Council. The woman spoke to Maria, asking me "to go around that hill where it would be quiet." I couldn't imagine what she wanted, but I have never failed to follow such a lead. We drove three or four miles to a place out of view of the highway, with not even a hogan in sight. Then she asked me to stop. She got out of the car, asking us to join her. She told Maria to put a rug down on the ground and asked me to get out a case like the one I had lost. I still couldn't imagine what this was all about, but I said nothing and followed directions. Maria told me to kneel down beside the woman. Then, to my complete surprise, she began a

hand-trembling ceremony over me. Hand tremblers are diviners—diagnosticians—and they are sought out by the Navaho People to find lost articles.⁷ I could see Maria in wide-eyed wonder as the woman proceeded with the ritual. I watched the shadow of the trembling hand and arm in front of me and listened to the incantation. This lasted about fifteen minutes. Then the woman spoke to Maria, telling her that three boys had taken the case from my car. I was not to worry, as nothing would be hurt. I was to come back to the store in four days—two boys would bring the case back. I thanked the hand trembler for her services and made a small donation. Then we all decided that it was lunch time, made some sandwiches, and had our lunch right there.

We drove on to Window Rock and, as we approached, Maria told me that our new friends wanted to go on in to Gallup. Since there was something about the car that needed fixing, I decided that we might

⁷ Hand trembling, one of the lesser rituals, is used to recover lost or stolen property, or to diagnose illness. For the latter, the ceremony is more elaborate, involving the sprinkling of pollen on the patient, the singing of special songs (always four in number), and the presentation of gifts to Gila Monster, to whom the ceremony belongs. It is believed that Gila Monster sees everything that occurs, and keeps track of the actions of all people. In the case of lost or stolen property the trembler's hand leads to the location of the property, or else the trembler hears the far-away voice of Gila Monster.

The Navaho name for this ritual is "To Search for Something without Looking." (See W. W. Hill, "The Hand Tremblers," *El Palacio*, 38 [March-April, 1935], 65.)

just as well go into town and spend the night there. In Gallup we parted with these two, some 125 miles from the Valley Store. We never saw them again.

Saturday morning we returned to Window Rock and the fair, where we spent an interesting and busy day. Sunday, I took Maria back to Gallup to put her on the bus, for she had to return to her job the next morning. There was other work I had intended to do in the Shiprock area, but instead of taking the direct road north, I decided to go the long way around. I returned alone to Chinle, spending the night there. Monday morning, the fourth day, I went to the Valley Store. The trader said he did not have the case, but that two boys had just been there asking if the case had been found. I thought that they were probably seeing if the coast was clear, so I left the reward money and postage with the trader, and, knowing that they would recognize my car, I thought the best thing to do was to go on my way. A few days after I reached home, the case was returned, its contents complete and unharmed.

This was a most interesting experience, leaving many unanswered questions. I know that the hand trembler and her husband had spoken to no one but Maria and me from the time they got into the car at Chinle, until we left them in Gallup. There are many accounts of lost articles being found by hand tremblers. That there are Navaho People who have extra-sensory perception has been noted many times by a number of people. Was my experience one of these? I wish I knew the answer.

THE CRAFTS

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The Weavers

THE RAISING OF SHEEP, the spinning of wool, and the weaving of textiles are age-old activities in most parts of the world where fabrics of great variety and use have been produced during many centuries. When the Spanish Conquistadores first came to the American Southwest in 1540, they brought with them the first sheep ever seen by the Indian inhabitants. To the surprise of the invaders they found cotton garments woven by Pueblo Indians, made on well-perfected looms of Indian origin. In later years archaeologists were to find scraps of woven cotton fabrics buried in prehistoric ruins whose dates go back to the fifth century A.D.

These first sheep brought by Coronado were used chiefly as food for his marching army, so that eventually they were all consumed. Later, when Don Juan de Oñate came up the Rio Grande Valley to colonize

New Mexico, he also brought sheep for domestic use. These animals were the common Spanish breed known as the *churro*. The Pueblo Indians soon learned the use of wool, and, as production of sheep spread, the western Pueblo Indians of the Zuñi and Hopi villages soon were weaving woolen garments.

At the time of the Great Rebellion of 1680, when all the Pueblo People united to drive the Spanish from their land, some groups, fearing the return of the Spanish soldiers, took refuge in Old Navaholand. In this region archaeologists, those intrepid investigators of ancient human habitation, have found remains of Pueblo dwellings in close proximity to those of Navaho origin, indicating an early association of the two Indian cultures. As the Navaho moved westward in the early 1700's, they encountered the Hopi in Canyon de Chelly and at the villages farther west. Possibly