

Chapter Three

Previous Research

E. Charles Adams

Remarkably, no formal professional excavations have been conducted at Homol'ovi IV until those conducted by the Homol'ovi Research Program in 1989. During his three weeks of excavations in the area in June 1896, Fewkes (1898, 1904) excavated in Chevelon, Homol'ovi I, II, and III, noted the existence of Homol'ovi IV, but did not take time to conduct excavations. From 1897-1900 the Field Museum of Natural History conducted excavations at Homol'ovi I, II and Chevelon under George Dorsey, J.A. Burt, and Charles L. Owen but also ignored Homol'ovi IV (Adams 2001:17; Lyons 2001). Nevertheless, the Field Museum did purchase 3000 artifacts, primarily pottery, from the local sheriff, Frank Watron that had been vandalized from all of the villages in the Homol'ovi cluster, including Homol'ovi IV. These artifacts are clearly primarily from burials.

Leslie Spier (1918:311) described several of the villages, including Homol'ovi IV. His wife Mera made collections from most of the villages in 1931. From the late 1920s through the mid-1930s, Harold S. Colton, Lyndon L. Hargrave, and others from the Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA) visited sites throughout northern Arizona in compiling the first ceramic typology (Colton and Hargrave 1937) that has become the standard for northern Arizona and has been emulated across most of the Colorado Plateau. It was during this period that MNA archaeologists visited the Homol'ovi villages and Colton named Homol'ovi IV, *Tuwiuca*, a Hopi term describing the step-like

fashion of the room blocks on the side of the butte. Colton incorporated this name into his ceramic typology for the area in the form of Tuwiuca Black-on-orange and Tuwiuca Orange, which are the earliest forms of the local decorated ceramic series that came to be known as Winslow Orange Ware (Colton 1956; Hays 1991; Hays-Gilpin, Bubemyre, and Senior 1996; Lyons and Hays-Gilpin 2001). This naming seems appropriate because Tuwiuca Black-on-orange comprises 73 percent of the decorated ceramics excavated from the village (Bubemyre 1993).

During the period following World War II, virtually no attention was paid to Homol'ovi IV, except by local residents of Winslow, who named the village, Pottery Hill, after the ubiquitous pottery found across the village. The land was owned by the Mike O'Haco family, who owned expanses of land north of Winslow and in the vicinity of Chevelon Butte, 20 miles south southeast of Winslow. The physical prominence of Homol'ovi IV and its proximity to the main road leading north out of Winslow toward the Navajo Reservation made it ripe for pothunting. Locals tell the story that it was a favorite place to visit for a Sunday afternoon picnic by the family while they excavated first the cemetery area then the room blocks of the village. By the 1970s it had also become one of the many town dumps outside the city limits. A well-worn road encircled the Homol'ovi IV butte and all along the flanks of the butte there was trash – large appliances, tires, standard household trash, tree and bush branches, and so on.

When Homolovi Ruins State Park was created in 1986, Homol'ovi IV was still owned by the O'Haco family. Almost immediately State Park personnel began discussions with Mike O'Haco to exchange state land near Interstate 40 for the land around Homol'ovi IV. This exchange was consummated in 1988 and the Park enclosed the site with

a fence later that year. With Homol'ovi IV now on state land and protected by a fence, the Homol'ovi Research Program could commence excavations, which it did in 1989. The HRP excavations were conducted during a single field season, but resulted in excavation of parts of 10 structures and several cubic meters of plaza and/or midden space.