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Navajo Indians II

NAVAJO ACTIVITIES AFFECTING
THE ACOMA–LAGUNA AREA,
1746–1910

Myra Ellen Jenkins
Ward Alan Minge

THE NAVAJO INDIANS

Frank D. Reeve

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RECORD OF NAVAJO ACTIVITIES AFFECTING THE ACOMA-LAGUNA AREA, 1746-1910

by

Myra Ellen Jenkins

Ward Alan Minge

Docket 229
Claim Ex 530

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January 15, 1841. Antonio Sandoval, Prefecture of the Second District, to the Secretary of State, Don Guadalupe Miranda.

A Navajo Indian appeared at Jemez on the 5th and wanted to know if it were true that Governor Armijo was disposed to discuss peace matters. He also stated that the Chieftain Narbona, commanding more than 30 Navajos and some women, was on the Mesita Azul. That on the 8th he would come to Jemez and proceed from there to the Capital in order to confer with the Governor.

January 27, 1841. Governor Armijo to the Minister of War and Navy, Mexico. From the Governor's Letter Book, 1840.

The Governor writes that he has been approached by many embassies from the Navajos who want peace. Finally, one of their leading chieftains with nine warriors appeared and through an interpreter assured the Governor that the entire Navajo Nation desired peace in good faith. The Governor asked at this time that all the Mexican captives be returned and that the Indians conduct themselves peacefully, not harming the Department or those who travel to el Paso or on any road. The Indians gave their promise to the Governor and that they would return in 25 days from the 25th of the current month to agree to a peace treaty to be held at the Pueblo of Santo Domingo on the bank opposite the River.

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March 8, 1841. Francisco Sandoval, Rural Commander at Jemez, to [Governor Armijo].

The Navajo chieftains with 100 braves appeared at his house to make further arrangements for peace. They were departing from Jemez to go to Santo Domingo because of problems over horses. They left Jemez on the 10th and would arrive on the 11th. The Navajo chieftains were listed as: Narbona, Jose Tapia, Sebolla Sandoval, Tarque Tuna, son of Calletano.

March 10, 1841. Copy of Peace Treaty celebrated at Santo Domingo between the Mexican Government and the Navajo Nation.

1. That peace and commerce will be opened with the entire Tribe of the Navajo with the citizens of this Department and Chihuahua, in celebration of the peace.

2. Entire Navajo Tribe of all parts of the Republic is obliged to turn over all captives. They must remember that they are citizens of the Republic.

3. The principal aim of this treaty is to end the horrible wars and instigate stable and lasting peace and the said Chieftains pledge themselves to guard the preceding articles, both as individuals and in the name of their tribes and in no manner to cause hostilities or injuries to individuals of the Republic.

4. The commerce will be reinstated as it was before the present war.

5. The treaty is to alleviate any resentment the Navajo Chieftains may have had against the Mexicans and to stop the killings of Mexican citizens. All murderers will be punished according to Spanish laws. Neither nation will be allowed to take slaves or captives.

6. Any captives of the Navajos who are among the Mexican citizens and who succeed in escaping their masters, the Government will not take action to reclaim them.

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7. When the peace treaty takes effect, it is hoped that four chieftains will be named among the Navajos, under whom the Nation will deal with the outside world. These will be paid a small gratification by the Department to show the Mexicans' good faith. These will be elected by popular support of the Tribe.

8. In order to corroborate this good faith, both parties will be allowed to pasture their herds and animals with full confidence that they will not be harmed.

9. In order not to break the peace and in accordance with article seven, the Navajo Chieftains, in case their are thieves or murderers, either among the Navajos or the Department of New Mexico, will be made to surrender the killer or killers in order that they may be punished, to return what is stolen, and for the Mexican thieves, the Governor promises to return the goods stolen, and if there be a death committed by a Mexican, and it is verified, the Governor promises to pay 500 sheep.

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March 12, 1841. Juan Andres Archuleta, Inspector of the Rurales of the First District, to the Governor and Comandante General of the Department.

Informs Governor Armijo that he has had the honor to participate and conclude the peace treaties and that the Navajos have now returned to their lands. Four captives were returned by the Navajos. He did not formulate the articles of the treaty because "the Navajos concurred in all things and for this reason he omitted the treaty so that the Governor could arrange and sign things when he was well, if it was his wish to do so."

March 14, 1841. Francisco Sandoval, Commander of the Rurales of Jemez, to the Governor.

Sandoval gives his version of the negotiations for peace and they are somewhat different than as presented in the version above. He says the Navajos went away dissatisfied with the offers of the treaty for the following reasons:

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1. They are not satisfied if settlement is not made of the spoils taken from their nation from the times of the campaign of the Captain Don Jose Salazar.

2. That more than ten times they had relinquished captives and that at no time had the Mexicans returned theirs.

3. That if they plan to return the captives this may be accomplished at the points of Chacoli or Jemez.

4. While waiting decision for what they ask, they request that herds be allowed on the road that goes from Jemez to Laguna, and that they be allowed to watch and guard them from any harm.

5. He has done what he can to dissuade them of their discontent.

6. And for a last resort, that we should offer if the captives are the cause of the discontent, to take pains to approach the Governor about those which have not been returned, but in vain was this proposal when they manifest such interests as theirs.

In conclusion, the Navajos are awaiting an emissary from the Governor as to his decisions, within twelve days from this to bring them the results on which cannot be agreed.

March 26, 1841. Armijo to the Commander of the Frontier at Jemez.

Received his note. Is pleased with the comportment of Cebolla Sandoval, Navajo Chieftain, and the good work he is accomplishing in his Nation in order not to break the peace established; tell him that the Governor is very pleased with this work and that if it is effective he will offer him equal recognition as the Navajo Francisco Baca and will treat him with equal confidence; explain to him the sentiment of this letter and that the Governor will not go back on his word; tell him also to continue to exort the Navajos to continue negotiating the peace and that he should tell them the reasons the Governor has not returned their captives and that he will do so if they wish to make peace. They should be assured the Governor has no fear of them and that he tells them no lies, and if they wish to continue the peace nothing remains except to arrange the treaties.

April 6, 1841. Francisco Sandoval, Commander of the Rurales at Jemez, to the Governor and Comandante General Don Manuel Armijo.

Two Navajos have appeared, invited by Armijo and Narbona, who wanted to know of our peace plans. He answered that the Navajo Nation should place its trust with the Captain Navajo Armijo, who had gone to all their rancherias exhorting them to the acceptable terms offered by the Governor. They had heard all the bad rumors and that the Rancheria of Jose Largo, which is separated and in the land of the Apaches, was inclined to go along with peace. They were desirous of extending their habitations and planting but they could not make peace because they were committed to the Utes. 109

May 8, 1841. From the Governor's Letter Book of the Communications sent by This Government to the Ministry of War and Navy, 1841.

After the treaty, the Navajos seem to have settled down. They have not stolen or molested the sheep herders in fact have dedicated themselves to planting along the margins of the Puerco River, very near the frontiers.

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will be promptly paid in full. Further advises that since the Department awaits invasion from the United States there can be no movement of forces against the Navajos.

July 8, 1846. [Governor Armijo's Letter Book, 1846] to the Prefects of the Central, Northern, and Southeastern Districts.

Notice has been received of the coming war threatened by the Navajos against the frontiers of the Third District. The Governor orders that they divide the District into three military sections:

1st section - Don Julian Perea, commanding the areas of Bernalillo, Corrales, Alameda, Ranchos, and Alburquerque.

2d section - Colonel Don Ramon Luna, commanding the areas of Padillas, Valencia, Tome, and Laguna.

3d section - Colonel Don Jose Chaves, commanding the areas of Belen, Sabinal, and Socorro.

These commanders are to lead the fight against the Navajos in case they attack at any one of these places. They are to be given necessary support by the citizens.

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SUMMARY:

Accompanying the continual movement of the Navajos, 1822-1846, there are found no specific boundaries for them either described in records or recognized by Mexican officials; neither are there boundaries mentioned in treaty negotiations, see, pp. 3-4, 9-10, 17, 26, 33, 41-42. The same may

be said for the "peaceful settlements" of the Navajos, of which there appear to be none acknowledged or described which would be in conflict with Acoma and Laguna claims. During this time, the officials in Santa Fe, Chihuahua, and Mexico City considered themselves at continuous war with the Navajos and if not in actual conflict or conducting expeditions, they expected raids at any moment and on any frontier, east or west of the Rio Grande River, and quite often within the settled limits of the Territory itself. Therefore, the foci of raids and expeditions for both the Mexican troops and the Navajos, along with the places the Navajos were invited to plant and also areas forbidden to them by the Mexican authorities, are an indication in historical records for defining lands of the old Navajo Nation during the Mexican Period. For the purposes of this report, landmarks are limited to those which help to delineate claim areas between the Navajo Nation and the Acoma and Laguna Pueblos.

I. Navajo Country and the Acoma-Laguna Area as Defined in the Mexico Military Expeditions. 127

Retaliatory expeditions from the Rio Grande followed the Navajos generally north and westward, sometimes to the south and west. Records of official expeditions, either led or sanctioned directly by the Governors, often did not mention destinations but rather the numbers of Indians killed or captured and the booty taken. The same often occurs in the militia records. However, the expedition led by Governor Jose Antonio Vizcarra during the summer months of 1823 spent much of the time around the Canyon de Chelly, (pp. 4-5). The expedition of 1829 under Vizcarra proceeded probably to the same area while

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