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Santa Fe N.M.
March 7. 1851

Notes on the Navajo
Country by Lieut Parke
Topgy Engineers

John G. Parke
Lt. Topl. Engr.

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Santa Fe, March 7th 1851.

Sir,

I have the honor to submit to your Consideration the Accompanying map of, and following notes, relative to the Navajoe Country, obtained from the old Guide Rafael Carrovajal. They have been made with a view of facilitating operations against the Indians of that Country, and Consequently particular Attention has been bestowed upon the routes, whether or not practicable for wagons, trails and the best positions for Camps. Also the planting grounds of the Indians.

All this information is based upon the say so of Carrovajal; but as he has given such entire satisfaction with regard to his honesty and extensive knowledge to Col. Washington during the expedition to Chelly in 1849, I feel no hesitancy in saying that we should place great Confidence in his statements.

I. Road from Santa Fe, to the Rio San Juan, via Jemez.

Follow the main road by way of Delagados to Santo Domingo – 30 miles. Here Cross the River and Continue to Jemez – 26 miles.

Then follow Col. Washingtons trail to a point about mid-way between the Canada de Piedra de Lumbre and the Cañon de Torrejon – about 40 miles. Here the road leaves the Chelly trail, and bears to the right, assuming the General direction N. N. W. At the Canada de Piedra de Lumbre – Wood, grass and Water.

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From this point to the Ojo del Pino - about 13 miles - road good - At this Spring grass abundant; pines and Cedars, - water sufficient for Command, but the Animals must be watered one at a time.

To the Cañada de los Ojos - about 12 miles - road level - Mountains on the right - Wood and grass abundant - water in holes, but by digging a few feet, always plenty of water.

To the Ojo Amarillo - about 12 miles - road good - Wood grass and water very abundant. - From this Spring our road bears more to the west.

To the Rio San Juan - about 30 miles. Road - Good, and follows the bed of the Cañada del Ojo Amarillo - Grass abundant, wood scarce, & water occasionally, but Can be obtained any time in the Cañada by digging.

II. From the Ojo Amarillo, a trail leads to the right, bearing a little west of North to the Mesa or Cerro Huerfano about 30 miles. - Carrovajal says the road is good for wagons, being over plains - grass wood and water.

To the east about 6 miles are the Ojos de Carrovajal - Probably a good road - Here is an abundance of wood and grass - also Cornfields.

From the Mesa or Cerro Huerfano to the Rio San Juan - about 6 miles - Deep arroyas, but not rocky and possibly a wagon road can be made with a little labor.

III From the Ojo de Pino to the Ojos de Carrovajal A trail leading up the Canon de torrejon impracticable

for wagons. On this trail the first water about 9 miles (Gilas Chuates) wood and grass. The next water at the foot of Mesa Lafato (Laguna) about 15 miles - wood and grass - Mesa Lafato rises above the Mesa on the banks of the Cañon.

The next water - Ojo Escarito - On the Mesa - 18 miles grass, water and wood.

To Ojo Carrovajal - about 6 miles.

IV. From the Ojo Amarillo to the Peaks of the Ojos Calientes. A Navajo trail bearing west, over a plain without water - About 70 miles

V. From Abiquiu to the San Juan, a trail known as the Spanish trail. - It is said that light wagons have gone over this trail; but it is most generally believed to be impracticable.

To Plaza de Barranca by the river - about 18 miles - Wood water and grass -

To the same point a shot cut of about 10 miles.

To Ojo de Perdinal. About 10 miles - wood, grass and Water.

To the Capulin, a tributary of the Puerco, about 12 miles wood grass and water.

To the head of Cañon Largo - 26 miles.

To the Rio San Juan down the Cañon about 20 miles Grass and Water - wood scarce.

The road then follows the River crossing and re-crossing, and in places diverging from it to avoid Cañons & Arroyos, as far as the mouth of Chelly Creek - below this point it is impracticable for wagons.

From the mouth of Cañon Largo to the mouth of

Chelly Creek, about 135 miles.

From the mouth of the Canada del Ojo Amarillo, Cornfields are scattered at intervals of one or two miles, and the banks of the River well timbered. There are also Cornfields on the rivers emptying into the San Juan from the north.

From Santa Fe' to the Ojo del Orso, a large Spring lying between the points of the Tunicha & Zuni Mts., and South of the Centre of the Navajoe Country there are two roads, One via Jemez. The other by Alburquerque & Laguna.

VI. Follow Col. Washington's trail via Santo Domingo and Jemez as far as the Canada de torrejon, through the Rio Puerco passes. At this point the trail turns to the left, assuming the General direction south of west. To ascend the Mesa the road passes over a field of lava two miles in extent, and consequently very doubtful whether practicable for wagons. But when on the Mesa the road is very good, there being a Continuous plain to the Ojo del Orso - The first water Ojo del Leon - 22 Miles In dry season, water scarce, but by digging a few feet a sufficiency can be obtained - wood & grass plenty.

The next water about 23 miles. the Siete Lagunas. water Cannot be depended upon at this point. wood & Grass.

To the Ojo del orso - about 20 Miles.

VII. From Santa Fe to the Ojo del Orso via Alburquerque.

Follow the main road from Santa Fe,' to Alburquerque. Cross the river and follow the Cibolletta road as far as the Pueblo de la Laguna - the first Camp being on the Puerco if there is water - wood and Grass - about 15 miles.

To the Rio San Jose about 13 miles - Grass Abundant. Here the road for Cibolletta turns to the north.

To the Ojo del Gallo 29 miles - road good being

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still the main road to Zuni. Wood grass and water abundant along the road, and consequently an intermediate Camp can be made. Cornfields (Mexican & Pueblo Indians) are also scattered at intervals.

At this spring there is a great abundance of wood grass and water.

Here we leave the Zuni road, turning to north west, and follow a broad Cañada.

The first water about 17 miles called Agua Azul — wood grass and Water. Good wagon road.

To the Laguna del Fuerte. 13 Miles. wood grass and Water. road still good.

To the Ojo del Orso. 16 miles. over a farm road. This spring is Constant and situated in a broad Valley between the Northern point of Zuni and the southern of the Tchuska or Zuni Cha Mts. wood grass & water abundant.

From Santa Fe to the Ojo del Orso via Zemen. 172.5 miles.

From Santa Fe to the Ojo del Orso via Albuquerque 190 miles.

Of the first road all is known except 66 miles and of the latter all except 46 miles.

From the Ojo del Orso two wagon roads can be made to the Rio San Juan. One on each side of the Zuni cha Mts.

VIII. That on the eastern side about 100 miles in length and follows a valley, the general direction of which is parallel to that of the mountain range. In this valley there is no difficulty in obtaining wood, water and grass at any time.

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Cornfields are stretched along at intervals being more numerous as we approach the San Juan. It is said that Archaletta, Miguelito, Rayatano, Jose Largo and other rich Navajoes plant in the vicinity and north of the Cerros de los Ojos Calientes.

There are three passes in the Tuni-cha Mts. One to the north, and another to the South of the one through which Col. Washington passed. The latter is the only one at all practicable for wagons, and it is most likely they will have to be unloaded.

IX. On the Western side of the Mountains.

To the Ojo de la Trenchara - about 16 miles - The first part of the road bad, but with a little digging can be much improved - wood grass and water.

To the Agua de Tchuska. 23 miles. road good skirting the mountain - abundance of wood, grass & water.

To the Canonita Bonita, a little north of west about 15 miles - an excellent camping place. - Then follow Col. Washingtons trail to the mouth of the Cañon de Chelly - good wagon road - 48 miles. - About [illegible] way water can be obtained by decending into one of the branches of Cañon.

Then follow the Rio de Chelly to the Rio San Juan - about 45 miles. Along this Valley there is an abundance of grass and wood. water can always be obtained by digging a few feet. - Cornfields are also scattered along this valley.

The entire distance from the Ojo del Orso to the mouth of the Chelly Creek about 145 miles.

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There is a small stream emptying into the Chelly from the last called Carrizo. Its Cañada is also wet and planted with Corn. There is a Mule path indoring this Canada from the last Crossing the Mountains.

While making these Notes and plotting the map, I have called in several persons who are well acquainted with the Navajoe Country and they all agree with Carrovajal in the General direction of streams and routes, the localities of Springs, and also the most cultivated portion of that Country.

As to the time of sowing and planting I have been informed that they sow Wheat in the beginning of March and plant Corn during the latter part of the month, and the first of April.

The Grass has sufficient growth to warrant an expedition starting about the last of April.

Mr. Richard H. Kern from his experience and knowledge of the Country acquired during Col. Washingtons expedition has rendered great assistance in collecting the above information.

The basis of the map has been taken from that of Lt. Simpsons who accompanied Col. Washington in the expedition.

Very respectfully submitted
Your Obt. Servt.
(Sd) Jno G. Parke
Lt: Top Engr.

Col. John Munroe
U.S.A.
Commdg Qr. Mil. Dept.