

In re:
Schools
Lands
Flagstaff
Loupp

Loupp
copy in "Education"

Special Commissioner to
Negotiate with Indians

Winslow, Arizona
April 8, 1932

Honorable Chas. J. Rhoads,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Commissioner:

In obedience to your instructions that the school site five miles east of Flagstaff be definitely designated, surveyed and mapped, I have the honor to advise you that Mr. Radcliffe, assisted by Mr. Storer of Mr. Womack's staff, is now engaged in the necessary survey and we should have the needed data and the map in a short time. I recently spent two days in Flagstaff, further studying the situation. The local people - keenly interested in the prospect of a school there - again took the matter up with me when they found out why I was there, and asked me to attend a Chamber of Commerce meeting, when it was discovered. Dr. Harold S. Colton, who is deeply interested in having near Flagstaff the right kind of an Indian school - and with whom I have frequently discussed the matter, presented at the meeting his ideas as to what such a school should be - ideas which correspond very fully with my own and, as I understand them, with those of the Office and Dr. Ryan. I do not know, however, whether Dr. Ryan is favorable to any school at Flagstaff. The last time I saw him in Washington he was not definitely so. He is now in this country and has seen the site. I have not been able to get into such contact with him as would enable me to discuss the matter intelligently. However, from a careful reading of his exceedingly interesting article in the February number of "Progressive Education", such a school at Flagstaff as Dr. Colton - and I - have in mind, would, it seems to me, be in harmony with his ideas and aims.

The site itself is beautiful. We went over it again Tuesday with Dr. Colton, Mr. Miller, Forest Supervisor for the District, Superintendent Walker of Western

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CJR 2

Navajo, Mr. Hornack, and others. He will have a map showing contour lines, and from it designate the exact area which we believe should be set aside. It appears that the school should be placed as closely as possible to the mountains for protection.

Some local newspaper accounts of the meeting at the Chamber of Commerce are enclosed.

Some doubt has been expressed, I believe, by Dr. Ryan as to the sufficiency of the water supply. That was fully discussed in my earlier correspondence, but since then Flagstaff appears to have had a seasonal shortage of water, and so that question has again arisen. The Flagstaff authorities assure me that the conditions occasioning such shortage as did occur last year were very unusual - caused first by a very dry year, but mainly because one of the two city reservoirs was out of commission. It is now repaired and relined and both reservoirs full to the brim. Photographs of them are enclosed.

The city guarantees to deliver to the school as much - if necessary - as 25,000 gallons a day at the regular rate of 20¢ per thousand, - also to furnish the Office with further details as to the sufficiency of the supply and the adequacy of the water system, including a graf showing the run-off during a series of years. The present reservoirs have a capacity of fifty million gallons each; the run-off from the source of supply in the San Francisco peaks has varied from 450,000 to 1,200,000 gallons daily over a series of years, the amount used - in summer - from 500,000 to 1,100,000 including around 200,000 gallons a day delivered to the Santa Fe Railroad, most of which has been handled in tank cars to the El Tovar Hotel at the Grand Canyon. The railroad is now, however, putting in its own water plant there whereby it will lift the water some 2,000 feet out of the canyon.

There is also some eight miles from Flagstaff on the water line a site called Schultz Canyon, where another reservoir can - and will if necessary - be installed to hold 150,000,000 gallons.

There is no doubt but that the city's guarantee to the school can and will be carried out if the school is built.

CJR 5

There is some local rivalry - as so often happens - between the neighboring towns of Flagstaff and Winslow - and because of this friendly rivalry, I came here to Winslow before the meeting in Flagstaff and suggested they send some one to the meeting. They did so. The Winslow people see, I think, that the establishment of such a school at Flagstaff as that we have in mind, is just as much desired by Winslow as by Flagstaff. Such a school would not be mainly for the purpose of replacing Leupp, but is an entirely different proposition.

I again respectfully recommend that the Leupp Indian school as at present located be permanently abandoned and as much as possible of the buildings, equipment, and personal property be salvaged before the next flood.

Since last making the same recommendation there occurred, on February 10th, 11th and 12th last, another bad flood, about which the Office is fully informed and which caused the Commissioner to order the evacuation of the school. This was effected without mishap, thanks to the energy, presence of mind and good work of Superintendent Balner, Mr. Baber, his chief clerk, and the members of their staff, whose work and devotion in this trying ordeal cannot be too highly commended. I was in Washington at the time, attending hearings of the subcommittee on Indian Affairs, which committee also held hearings at Leupp on April 27, 1931, questioning many things but making no suggestions as to what, if anything, should be done to meet the emergency which, it must be evident to every one, exists there.

Within the last year a causeway and viaduct connecting the school with the higher ground to the south has been constructed. This embankment and bridge luckily held up during the recent flood, in spite of the fact that water rose on its east side to within a few inches of the roadway, and over it the school children were taken to safety. As it turned out, the flood receded before it actually took possession of the buildings themselves, but, at its highest, the water actually surrounded the school grounds on all sides and had broken through the last protecting dike when it began to recede. As it turns out, the children would not have been drowned had they been kept there, but the margin of safety was very thin, at best.

CJR 4

It gets thinner and thinner each year, and after every flood. This is evident to all of us who have watched the situation during the past ten years. New Men come in and, under instructions of the Commissioner to see if there is not some way to save the costly plant, make new surveys, new suggestions to check, to direct this inconstant and wildly changing stream. Then some new dikes are built, new jetties installed, new thousands spent and, there comes a new flood - the erratic and devilish river jumps into a new channel, attacks the embankments at a new place, dissolves them as if they were brown sugar, suffocates the Kellner and other jetties in mud and silt, and comes ever nearer a real inundation and final destruction of the whole establishment. Of course, what is actually happening is this: the buildings are on the same level they were when they were first erected; the whole surrounding area is growing higher and higher from annual depositings of silt, - the Leupp school is in a hole. No kind of diking could really do more than keep it in a wet and muddy hole. Now, nothing but very costly dikes can even do that.

I enclose some interesting photographs, some of which you may have seen before. I got them yesterday at Leupp. The first is from the air, taken by one of the relief bombers on January 20, 1932. This shows the situation immediately around Leupp, as of that date, quite graphically. From the left lower corner to the center of the print, the old river bed, - a channel the river sometimes still uses when it feels so disposed. From left to right almost across the center of the picture the river flowing as it then was, for much of the way, alongside the main earthen dike which stretches from the hillsides on the south for nearly two miles to a point in the riverbed below the school; augmented on the inside, as will be seen, by numerous jetties and auxiliary dikes - and on the river side (not seen in this air photo) by thousands of dollars worth of iron Kellner jetties., now mostly submerged in the sands and generally ineffective.

Then across the picture, up and down, east and west, the original Janus dike, first built by Superintendent Janus, I understand, years ago, as a terraplane for his irrigation pumped water. This dike saved the school from final inundation in February. It is tighter than the new dikes and does not dissolve so readily. But even so, the water did break through - or under it - on February 12th.

CJR 5

To the left and south - off from the Janus dike, is seen the new road causeway, though the bridge or trestle on it cannot be clearly discerned.

The next picture is a panorama on four post cards which I got at the trader's store for 30 cents and pasted together. It is a vivid picture of what was happening on February 12th when the flood, so fortunately, began going down. You are looking southeast from the school's north water tower. In the distance (Card No. 1) is seen the whole river spread out over a vast stretch of flat ground, but divided east of the school into two flood streams, one south, one north of the school grounds. The south stream, between the school and the hills, is what you mainly see in this picture - an inundated area caused by the breaking of the main dike, seen in the distance on Cards 1 and 2. These breaks started from the south end - near the hills, then more came as the angry river followed north along the dike, until there were six or eight openings and nearly the whole area between the main dike on the east, the hills on the south, the causeway on the west, and the Janus dike on the north was flooded. Luckily the flood was not bigger than could be carried off under the trestle and through a gate next the Janus dike and near the trader's store. (Upper right hand corner of Card No. 1).

But what frightened them badly was a sudden break in the main dike on the third day of the flood, way down near the Janus dike (just over the smokestack, Card No. 1), and an undercurrent break in the Janus dike which started flooding the flat east of the buildings. The ground south of the Janus dike and above the main dike is now several feet higher than the school grounds.

The third picture - a patchwork panorama made with some kodaks taken from the south water tower - which Mr. Baber gave me, shows how near they were to being inundated from the main river on the north. It is appalling! A little more rise and the whole plant would have been inundated and the buildings crumbling away. It is simply in the bottom of a sink. The three photos give a more vivid picture of the actual conditions there than I have ever had before. It is too bad the airman did not happen over there the days of the flood, but this picture, with the two others are, anyway, enough to show what an awful mess

CJR 6

this place is and how utterly futile it is to keep on spilling more thousands of dollars in this slough of despond in vain attempts to save the school.

In order to orient oneself, it may be said that the large building to the right of the first panorama, the club and mess hall, is the same as the building to the left in panorama No. 2.

The matters of land status and possible Navajo additions, as well as that of adequate water supply are so closely linked in with plans for school installation that it is difficult to make worth while suggestions as to schools without knowing where reservation lines are to be. One cannot intelligently advise about schools in this region before knowing whether plans for day schooling in lieu of all boarding schools are to be carried out. It does not seem that they can be in this part of the Indian country, where conditions differ so radically from those on the Pima or even on the Papago reservations. On the Pima, under changed conditions being brought about by the San Carlos project, it is quite possible that the use of day schools for all these Indians and their withdrawal from all the boarding schools - accompanied with the abandonment of the Sacaton school as a boarding school - can be effected. The plan may be possible of realization in a country of comparatively reasonable distances, especially if, as I hope may be the case, the use of such public schools as can be reached, can be made a part of the plan. According to the information given me by Superintendents Kneale, Walker and others, and with my own observation in the few places in the southwest where Indians are attending public schools, results show a far greater degree of attainment which we hope from Indian education than in most of our own boarding schools.

At best though, in this region and in the Navajo country generally, it does not seem as though more than a very few of the Indian children can be taken into public schools. Here at Winslow, some more than the children of the Indians working in the shops may be arranged for - more, too, at Flagstaff perhaps, especially if we have there the institution planned; where they can be properly cared for, around Ignacio, Colorado, where the Southern Utes are already doing excellently well in the public schools, and,

CJR 7

perhaps, around Laguna and Acoma in New Mexico, if race prejudice will permit it. Also, at Farmington, New Mexico, and at Blanding, Montecello, and perhaps other places in southeastern Utah, but, at best, the total number will be very limited.

Dr. Ryan is just now - as have others - diligently seeking for locations in the Navajo country where Indian day schools may possibly be successfully installed. The reservation, in its various jurisdictions, has been pretty thoroughly canvassed for sites which afford accessibility to sufficient numbers of children and water, and it has already been demonstrated, in my opinion, beyond the peradventure of a doubt, that, in the whole Navajo Reservation, there are not at the present time more than fifteen locations, besides those already used, where day schools could be successfully installed. That such is the fact Dr. Ryan will I am sure, be ultimately convinced. Superintendent Hunter at Fort Defiance has been especially keen in trying to find proper sites and has found some. All the superintendents are, I am sure, anxious that day schools shall be established where they give promise of success, but there is no use fooling ourselves into believing that they will be successful except where conditions are unusually propitious. In the Castle Butte area, Dilkon, Cedar Springs or Indian Wells might be good sites. Some one of them might possibly be a good site for a larger school, but we certainly would not be justified in recommending considerable expenditures there until the land status is determined and assured.

It is therefore clearly apparent that, if we are to continue the schooling of the Navajos, with their increasing numbers, we must still depend to a large extent on boarding schools. My hope is and always has been, that these schools can be made different from the average run of the present establishments; that sufficient day and public schools can be established so as to take care of the number of Navajo children who are now sent off to the distant non-reservation schools, and that sufficient "border" schools and intra-reservation schools such as the Chas. H. Burke School at Singate and the proposed schools at Flagstaff and Farmington can be provided to care for the various needs of the Navajos - with the intra-reservation schools already established. This is what I have long had in mind and

CJR 8

constantly advocated. It is, I submit, a reasonable program, bearing in mind of course that those intramural reservation schools shall be gradually transformed into the kind of establishments the Commissioners now have in mind, that is, the kind of establishments best fitted to the sanitary, curative, industrial and cultural needs of the Navajo Indians.

Remembering always the special title situation as to the area now comprising the so-called Leupp Reservation, and of the adjacent Castle Butte country, fully set out in my report of January 1st, 1933, and also that some decision must be made as to the disposition and salvage of the Leupp plant as soon as possible, I have the following plan to now submit to your consideration.

1st. That it be immediately determined to definitely abandon the Leupp school.

2nd. That part or all of such wooden buildings as can (and there are a number of them) be moved to a site about one mile south of the present location, beyond the reach of any floods.

3rd. That such wooden buildings be carefully and tastefully disposed of and placed on such new site with a view of establishing there as the nucleus of an Agency headquarters for the Leupp Agency or of the Agency - by whatever name it may be called - that will take the place of the present Leupp Agency when jurisdictional lines are altered as a result of carrying out the recommendations of the report of January 1, 1933.

4th. That preparation be made at such site so established to open next fall a temporary school for such number of the Leupp Indian children as can be there accommodated until further permanent school or schools be built elsewhere.

5th. That at once the tearing down of the stone structures at the present Leupp school be commenced with a view of salvaging so much of the stone and other materials as can be rightly made use of in the construction of a new permanent school on the reservation at a point between Leupp and Winslow, and that such material be trucked at once to such site for use as soon as possible in building a new plant there for about 240 children.

CJR 9

6th. That the site chosen be one approximately ten miles southeast of the present Leupp school, just inside the present Leupp Reservation line - an area particularly surrounded by a low, circling escarpment, which makes of it a far better site for a school, in my opinion, than any other in this immediate vicinity. Water has already been developed on both sides of this site - towards the northwest in the reservation, towards the southeast by the Babbitt Brothers. It is hoped, however, that this Babbitt well may be secured for the reservation by exchange of lands in accordance with the recommendations of the report of January 1st, 1932. This site would be only about fifteen miles from Winslow.

This plan presents various advantages. It affords immediate employment to numbers of Indians and non-Indians. It makes possible the salvage for specific uses of a large part of the buildings and material at the present plant, which, because of the destruction of the dikes in the last flood, may at any time be made inaccessible or be destroyed by the next flood. It provides a way for reopening in part, a school for Leupp children this coming fall. It will establish at a good location - to-wit near the costly bridges over the Canyon Diablo and Little Colorado rivers, which are entrances to the Hopi and Navajo countries - the headquarters of an important agency. It will provide in part material for a new school plant at a desirable location.

It is very important to preserve those bridges and bridge heads, whatever becomes of the school. There is no other crossing of the Little Colorado River between General and Winslow.

The idea too, of having the agency headquarters at a different place from the principal agency school is right, I believe. That has been frequently discussed, but it is increasingly desirable, in view of the changed policy of the Office and Dr. Ryan as to the aims and quality of the Indian schools.

All the office records are still at Leupp. There is also between fifty and one hundred thousand dollars worth of equipment and personal property there which might be inundated at any moment. Owing to the constantly rising soaked zone, the water level and the school is getting nearer and nearer the surface. There is water in some

CJR 10

of the cellars. Mr. Baber believes - and rightly, I think - that with the first flood that actually invades the grounds, the stone buildings will start sinking and crumbling.

Prompt action is therefore clearly indicated.

Those dikes are flimsy and inadequate affairs because of the nature of the soil - sand and loam, easily dissolvable in water. The main dike, everywhere it hasn't been broken through, is now in many places merely a shell. It would cost many thousands of dollars to repair it. At the principal break nearest the school, it could not yet be repaired, as a drag line could not yet approach it. Repairs anyway would only postpone the inevitable - if even that.

I again urge action.

In the old school building here at Winslow the 175 Leupp children are being quite well cared for, under all the circumstances, and Mr. Balmer and the people of Winslow who assisted him in the emergency are deserving of great appreciation. The teachers, too, are doing excellently well. I was much impressed with the cheerfulness and good morale of the children and staff.

But the quarters are crowded and inadequate and should not be continued longer than absolutely necessary.

I have been spending a couple of days in again studying the situation on the ground and also have been a good deal with Mr. Balmer. He and his staff have been pretty badly worked out. The strain of such a situation is awful.

As I am writing this I see an AF dispatch from Washington saying that, in the Interior appropriation bill the item for flood protection at Leupp has been slashed by the Senate from \$40,000 to \$10,000. Ten thousand dollars would be nowhere near enough to make or repair dikes which would protect the school. It would, I should think, go quite a ways in tearing down and removing the school on the lines herein indicated. Could that money be so used? It would certainly be "protection against floods".

Respectfully yours,

H. J. Hagorman
Special Commissioner

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