



From:

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
to the
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
FOR THE YEAR 1878

(Pages 8-9-10)

MOQUIS PUEBLO INDIAN AGENCY, ARIZONA,
August 21, 1878.

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Sir: In compliance with your circular-letter of July 1, I have the honor to submit the following as my first annual report of the condition of affairs at this agency:

The agency was discontinued on the 1st of October, 1876, and placed under the supervision of Mr. Alex. C. Irvine, agent of the Navajos. The public property belonging to the agency was all disposed of at public auction; consequently, upon my arrival here in February last, I found nothing but the empty buildings, and they were in a dilapidated condition, having been occupied in the mean time chiefly by the Indians. The remoteness of the location from all kinds of supplies makes improvements quite tedious and expensive.

During the month of February I visited their villages, seven in number, and witnessed, by invitation, two of their important dances, the bean and corn dance, which occur annually to please the Great Spirit so that he will send them abundant crops during the coming season. They are an exceedingly superstitious people. Their villages are located upon high bluffs of rock which rise from eight hundred to one thousand feet above the surrounding plain, and are approached only by narrow, precipitous pathways, over which they pack all the products of their farms, either on their backs or upon asses. Their wood and water are also conveyed in the same manner. Their dwellings, built of sandstone and mortar, are from two to four stories high. Their rooms are entered from the top through a small aperture by means of a ladder, which is the only source they have of ventilation.

From the census which was taken July 1, I find that there were 105 births and only 4 deaths in the first six villages, being an increase of nearly 10 per cent. in population during the past year; they now number 1,140. The Oraibies still refuse to be enrolled. They have a population of at least 650, making the total population of the seven villages 1,790.

After a careful survey of the country, I have recommended the removal of the *Moquis Pueblo* Indians and agency to some point on the Little Colorado River between meridians 110° and 111°, for the following reasons:

1st. That a sufficiency of good, arable land, and water for irrigating purposes, can be had for these Indians and also for opening an industrial school, which can be made to contribute largely to the support of said school and which cannot be had at its present location.

2d. It would have a great tendency to Americanize these Indians, by encouraging them to open up separate farms along the river and to abandon their superstitious modes of life and dress by being brought constantly in contact with the Americans.

3d. It would save an expenso of several hundred dollars a year for carrying the mail to present agency.

4th. It would very materially reduce the cost of transportation of supplies. It is a difficult matter now to get teams to come into the present agency, and more especially during the winter season.

5th. The labor of erecting the buildings and making the improvements could all be performed by the Indians except a small portion of the carpenter work. The Moquis are good stone-masons and there is plenty of rock along the river. The cost of erecting suitable buildings would not possibly exceed \$5,000.

6th. The present agency building is liable to be flooded at times during the wet season. It was all that we could do to save it from being destroyed by the floods during some of the heavy showers this month. It is located in a cañon 10 miles in length, $\frac{1}{2}$ miles from its head, 150 feet below the surface of the surrounding country, and is from 200 to 300 yards in width. The agency, as now located, can very properly be compared to the inside walls of a prison yard; short curves in the cañon obstructing the view at a distance of about 300 yards above and 400 yards below the building; so that in appearance it is surrounded by almost perpendicular bluffs of rock 150 feet high.

7th. Their present mode of living, huddled in villages, each house communicating with the other, induces promiscuous intercourse to such an extent that many are afflicted with venereal diseases. This evil can only be remedied by providing separate homes for each family and causing them to live apart from each other.

These Indians have never been at war with the United States; have always been friendly with the whites, with few exceptions, and consequently are deserving of some protection and relief by the government. They were formerly the possessors of all this country, but have been driven to their present location for defense against the more powerful tribes who have surrounded them.

The Moquis Pueblo Indians are more inclined to devote themselves to the cultivation of the soil than to pastoral pursuits. The farming lands surrounding the villages are barren and unfit for agricultural purposes, and but little better for grazing. Fair crops of corn, beans, melons, and squashes are produced on an average of three out of five years. Less than an average crop of corn and about one-half a crop of beans, melons, and squashes have been raised the past season by the almost unremitting labor of the Indians of this agency. At the commencement of spring the weather was cold and wet, and extremely unfavorable to agricultural pursuits. As soon as the corn first planted appeared above ground it was totally destroyed by either frost or insects, and second planting was devoured by caterpillars as soon as it was a few inches high; thus rendering a third planting necessary in most instances. Later in the season a large portion of the lands under cultivation were overflowed with water from the more elevated country surrounding it, which caused the destruction of a considerable percentage of the growing crops. The people of Tequi Village have lost their entire crop, with few exceptions, and are anxious for a change of location. During the past year quite a number of families of Moquis have been engaged in cultivating wheat upon lands in proximity to the agency, but the rains and floods which occurred in August materially injured their crops, about one-third being lost thereby. Wheat was also raised by ten families of Moquis at the Mormon settlements upon the Little Colorado River. They were farming upon shares with the Mormons. The Moquis are yearly extending the area of land planted by them, and the deficiency arising from short crops, does not, therefore, cause any great degree of suffering or want. The Moquis Indians do not, like most other Indians, resist innovations upon their customs and habits; they seem exceedingly desirous of acquiring the white man's mode of farming, and thoroughly examine and investigate any new manner of cultivating the soil.

There has been no school in operation among these Indians since September, 1876. They manifest a great desire to have their children educated. They guarantee to keep from forty to fifty scholars in regular attendance at the boarding school as soon as it shall be opened. They also ask to have a primary school opened in the second and fourth villages, so as to accommodate the smaller children of the six villages and those who will be deprived of the advantages of the boarding school by having other duties to perform at home. I find a marked difference between the young men who attended the boarding school which was in operation at this agency during the year 1875 and part of 1876, in manners, dress, energy, &c.

I would recommend that six of the brightest Moquis boys, sixteen years of age, be sent to a State normal school for four or five years, where they could have the greatest advantages for the least amount of money. I feel confident that they could be maintained in many of the State normal schools for \$200 each per year. These young men upon their return would make competent teachers, as they would understand both the English and the Moquis languages, and could be employed by the government. Such a system would certainly do much toward educating, civilizing, and christianizing these Indians.

There have been no missionaries nor any missionary work attempted among these Indians that I can learn of.

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The only incident that has occurred among these Indians of a serious nature during the past year was the murder of one and the wounding of another of their number by four Pi-Utes, while on a trading expedition to Saint George, Utah. The Pi-Utes were arrested by the Mormons, turned over to the civil authorities, and the leader of the party sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment in the penitentiary.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. R. MATEER,
United States Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.