

7776 C. Q. M. O., Dept. Ariz. Recd APR 25 1889

228 ~~1889~~ 1889

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1390 DEPT. ARIZONA APR 20 1889

497 HQRS. DIV. PACIFIC RECEIVED APR 29 1889

Stokenburg, John M.

2 Lieut: 6 Cavalry.

2467-AR.O.-1889

Preliminary report of

reconnaissance made

by him of the Navajo

Reservation RECEIVED MAY 18 1889

3809

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Endorsement

7 634 DEPT. ARIZONA APR 25 1889 INDIAN DIV. MAY 14 1889

Respectfully forwarded.

Lieut: Stokenburg has

made this reconnaissance

under great difficulties

for want of transport.

ation and guides and he and his party suffered greatly, being obstructed by

the ruggedness of the country and the deep snow.

E. A. Carr

Colonel, 6 Cavalry,

Commanding.

12911

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INDIAN OFFICE. 5194 INCHES No. 40 1890.

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Fort Wingate, New Mexico,
April 20th, 1874.

To the

Adjutant General Department of Arizona,
Los Angeles, California.

(Through the Commanding Officer, Fort Wingate)

Sir:

I have the honor to submit the following preliminary report of the reconnoissance made by me on the Navajo Reservations. As my maps are completed I will submit them with a report on each point where work is recommended. I make a written report at once on account of the necessity of making repairs or enlarging some of the old work especially that at the Wheatfields Townshaw Creek and Cottonwood wash.

After leaving Fort Defiance it was impossible to send any report until I reached here as there was absolutely no means of sending them in except by employing a special messenger at the cost of five dollars a trip to the Agency.

First: We left Fort Defiance on the eighth inst. and visited Cold Springs about five miles North East of the Agency. Some work had already been done here, which consisted of a stone wall about three feet high plastered with mud. This wall was built about three feet from the water all around and no attempt had been made to clean out the spring and I

Third: From Garrado I went to Red Lake about twelve miles north. This lake covers three acres now and is just shallow. As the Indians here say it is about the first time in five years that any water has been in this lake. It was thought advisable not to make any improvements. Fourth: From there, I went to Black Lake about nine miles north where some work had been done. These lakes, there are three of them but some water in them. All of them should be deepened with scrapers during the summer, after they dry up. Until they go dry, this is the greatest water supply for stock near the Chin Lee Valley. The grass in their neighborhood is nearly all tramped out for miles.

Fifth: I then visited a spring about seven miles north west of Black Lake. This spring is nearly filled with sand and was quite Alkali. It had been walled with rock laid in mud mortar and a few sticks. Also some pinyons had been thrown in the mud tank to keep the stock out. This tank was eleven feet in diameter and two feet deep. As this spring is situated at the foot of a sand bank of very loose sand, the tank and spring both were full of it. This spring, if any work is done on it should have a close wall built around it and a tight roof made over it. The water should be piped out into troughs and stock kept away from the spring. I found no Indians living here but some ponies watered here while I was there.

Sixth: From this place I went to the Chin Lee Store at the Mouth of the Canon de Chelly. I hunted for the work that was done here, but could only find some traces of ditches and the rest was filled with sand. The valley is a large one and the soil is very sandy and shifting all the time. If a reservoir was built here a great deal of masonry would have to be used to make

if permanent. I would not advise it at this time, though I will
forward a plan for one as it would be a valuable thing in this valley.
It is recommended that a ditch be taken out at the mouth of
Cannon de Belle, without a dam, as the water is near the head of the
gorge and the ditch extended three miles down the valley. The
Elm Dee there is now running a large stream and a large ve-
tion of the valley could be put under water for a time anyway.
Your wells ought to be dug at distance of three miles up to the
Round Rock Pass. Water at the mouth of the canyon is about at
four feet during the dry season. I think it would be found
anywhere up to the round rocks at from ten to fifteen feet.
The wells not get any forage of Elm Dee or in the neighborhood and
as there was no grass an extended survey of this valley could not be
made at this time. Rock ditches and wells would have to be watered
constantly for on they would fill up with sand. The horses might
most of their crops but over or twice in the spring on that account
I think a ditch alone would be of benefit as long as the water
is. The amount of water flowing here now is quite large.
Stewart. The water here is about twenty eight miles
north east of Elm Dee. I found one family farming here, raising
a ditch that they had made themselves. This ditch is located east
be enlarged at a very small cost and a large area cultivated but
not over two hundred acres.

Eighth: I visited Lu-ka-che-Lai Creek from here which is twelve miles north and found a number of Indians farming, using water that they had taken out themselves. Two streams flow out of the mountains here and unite about three miles down the valley. Now the supply of water is large. The soil is fertile. Two large ditches could be taken out of these streams and in time some of the water could be piped out to a large tank. As it stormed in these mountains and there was no feed. I could not do the detailed work that I wished. The water here is permanent.

I also located a dam and ditch here about a mile north of the Tea lee store for an Indian named "Charley Mitchell". This is the only Navajo that I saw who took any interest in this work and wanted to put in a dam and take out a ditch himself. The dam was located on a small stream he took me to, and I did not learn its name.

Ninth: I then visited the "Wheatfields" about seven miles south of Tea lee, where the Indians were at work. A ditch has been taken out here by the Agent and some work done two years ago. In my opinion material assistance could be rendered these Indians by sending up a large plow and scraper and cleaning out and repairing their ditch. About four miles farther south a ditch and dam had been made. The dam is partially washed out and the ditch needs cleaning out. There was a house here but no work has been done this year. A little work would fix this dam, not over two days work at most.

Tenth: I then visited Spring near Washington Pass. The half breed Henry Dodge lives here. Though the dam built had filled up, the ditch furnished him a small supply of water.

Eleventh: From here I went six miles to the head waters of Whiskey Creek where

a ditch was taken out which is still serviceable. Whiskey Creek could be used with advantage to irrigate a large and rich valley to the West by building a small dam and taking out a large ditch just above the pass. This water is permanent but the stream is smaller in summer. Twelfth: From here I went to Townshaw (Tunicha) Creek where work had been done. This work can still be made use of. I would recommend that the Agent plow it out and enlarge the ditch as suggested for the Wheatfields. The ditch now has water running in it for fifty yards to a break. This ditch ought to be enlarged and another one taken out on the south side of the stream. The valleys in this neighborhood are the finest I saw on the reservation. I went to the headwaters of this creek. I then crossed to the East side of the Tunicha Mountains. Thirteenth: I then visited Cottonwood Wash about eighteen miles North East of the Pass. The water here is not permanent, but now a large stream is running down the wash. A ditch has been made here which should be cleaned out. The reservoir built here is full of sand. A large reservoir ought to be built here and I will submit plans for it. Much trouble will be experienced in keeping it clear of sand.

Fourteenth: I visited Sheep Spring about twenty five miles south of Cottonwood Pass. This Spring should be walled up close and the water piped out. I donot think this is a permanent spring. Three families were living on it, and a great deal of stock water here.

Fifteenth: I then visited Manuelito's Camp and To gay Spring. Work has been done here. I donot recommend any more improvements here now. What has been done seems to answer their needs, at least for the present.

In closing this preliminary report I would consider it unfair to the Indian Department not to add the following from my own observations and the opinions of others who have had large experience with the Navajos. These people are essentially stock raisers and to secure grass they wander about a good deal. But few put fences around their cultivated ground. Therefore the farming done is inconsiderable, whereas it should be large. They should especially raise hay, corn and oats for their stock. If they do not do this their stock must die off during the winter. Now their sheep, goats and ponies are very poor and thin. And their loss last winter was very heavy. Grass is growing scarce every year too.

The Navajos have, as a rule, little or no idea of irrigation and would not take care of their dams or ditches if they had them. Now they do not care to go to work and irrigate places where it would be no trouble at all. There are a few exceptions. Their crops are generally for roasting ears and the ground cultivated is seldom larger than one or two acres and generally not a half an acre.

As for dams, it would, in my judgment be a great waste of the Department's funds to build expensive dams of rock with an idea of holding a body of water, as they would either wash out in a freshet or fill up as they did at Washington Pass and Fort Defiance.

The soil washes easily on all the creeks and if the dam was not filled in or washed out, they would be washed around, and therefore in every case except at Ganado, brush dams could be put in and answer every purpose. If they washed out they could easily be replaced at small cost.

The Navajos are not educated up to the point of taking care of this kind of work, and when a shovel full of earth put in in ~~intention~~ would save a dam or ditch, the Indians would not throw in the earth but stand and let the work wash away and then ride fifty or a hundred miles to tell the Agent.

Indian labor when paid for at even the low rate of fifty cents a day, ^{is dear} unless there is skilled labor with it. Men who thoroughly understand such work. I believe it was a mistake to hire the Indians at all. They should have been made to do the work, as it is for their benefit, to cultivate the land and then the Government should have bought their crops or rewarded them in some other way. If such a method was employed it would not take them long to see the advantage of it and the work would naturally increase and be kept in repair.

This work if it is done should certainly be taken care of preserved and increased from time to time. To this end I would suggest that part of this appropriation be used in employing, say four good men, who understand this business. These men would live in these places and look after the dams, ditches and wells in their districts. At the same time they should show the Indians

how to employ the water to the best advantage. They should fence and plant a tract of land and take six or eight indian boys to teach farming and irrigation. By employing some such method a great deal of real good can be done for the Navajoes.

In my field work, I did not take in at this time over a ~~quantity of water~~. The weather most of the time was cold and stormy and I started most to soon to tell from my own observation what the real supply of water is.

I am, sir,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

John M. Hotcuburg
2^d Lieut 6th U. S. Cavalry.