OFFICE OF
INDIAN AFFAIRS
REC'D JUN 25

Winslow Arizona
June 16th 1888
H S Welton Spl Agt
Report
On Oraibi troubles
at Moen Copie

Quiz

File

L. Lowrie
18/112

RG 75 Bureau of Indian Affairs
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Winslow Ariz
June 16th 1888

Hon Sir

In obedience to your Orders of Mch 27th (letter #5417-88) I left the R.R. at this point June 6th traveling down the Little Colorado 75 miles thence access the Mountains to the Moen Copie wash, and up said Wash to Tuba City (distance 112 miles) and have investigated the Oraibi troubles so far as my authority will permit. and would respectfully make the following

Report.

At a small Oraibi Village on a sandstone bluff, at the junction of Reservation canon with the Moen Copie Wash, (shown on the Map of 1887) as "Moencopie") there is now 16 Oraibi Indians Viz 4 Men 6 women 5 boys and one girl. Several others formerly came from the Oraibi Pueblo (40 miles east) and planted here in summer. But since the Mormons have taken nearly all the land and Water, they come no more.

While these indians are still permited to retain a small peice of land they are deprived of water sufficient to irrigate it. Hence I found the men at work for one Smith who had taken their land from them. He had also told them that he had bought the land their Village stands on and last Spring ordered them off. but finaly did not insist upon it. though he took some doors from their Adobe Houses.

These indians tell me they have been here ~~before~~ 8 years before the Mormon (Jno C Young)

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(Son of Brigham) came here, and built the now dismantled water Mill (that was in 1878-) and their Ancestors had Planted here long before that. Hence, there can be no question about the priority of title or claim.

The Indian gardens and crops look well, are clean, and carefully tended, but evidently need more water on some parts than they now have. And the Mormon Bishop occasionally gives them a little as they piteously beg for it.

The Mormons, having impounded the water supply now claim it all.

Without becoming too voluminous or going into "Ancient History" I think you desire I should fully state all the facts and circumstances that you may act understandingly. hence please pardon the following.

In 1875- John D. Young came to this point bringing several Mormon families with him. built a water Mill to buy wool from the Indians. But being overbearing & tyrannical one Mormon found a smaller Spring where Tuba City now is, and moved his family there, others followed, and soon, Mr Young found himself alone with his Mill, which he dismantled and left the country, leaving the Oraibis in the peaceful possession of their Homes.

They so remained until 1885- when Edgar D. Stone (the Complainant) put a stock of goods into the Old Mormon Fort much to the gratification of the Indians. subsequently the Mormon

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Bishop of Tuba City informed Stone that the Fort belongd to the Mormon Church, and that he could only continue to occupy it upon the condition that he would vacate at any time on ten days notice.
To this Stone consented and continued there until January 87 during which time one Lot Smith a wealthy and agressive Mormon had joind this Colony. and ignoring the 10 day agreement. demanded and took immediate and forcable possession. and for a time held Stone his family and Black prisoners, and with force of arms holding at bay. all who would come to Stones assestance.
Stone finaly compromised for $800 gave a quit claim and left with his goods in Aug.

I get the above version from the Mormons themselves. I would Stone but have not seen him I inclose his reply herewith

This quit claim from Stone obtaind under the above circumstances is all the title under which Smith claims to own and hold all the lands and buildings in Moen Copie. He owns a house lives and has a Wife and family in Tuba City He also has a Wife and family living in the Moen Copie Fort. I took dinner with him there on the 12th inst.

The Tuba City Settlers have built three large Reservoirs on Reservoirs Cañon two Miles East of Tuba City. They have also enclosed with wire Many Hundred Acres of splendid

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land in Moen Copie Bottoms some 3 or 4 Miles below the Oraibi Village. which land they now irrigate from these Reservoirs creeping the water down passed the Oraibi Village and lands, They have now good crops on these lands. which does not interfere with the Indians, being miles away. but would be a benefit by setting them a good example in modern farming. if the Indians, but had modern agricultural implements. But showing an Indian the benefits of plowing. while he has no Plow or means to get one. is of little practical benefit.

While these Mormons should not be deprived of the full benefit of their water improvements yet they should not be permited to rob the Indians of it all. for, unimproved it was ample for all the indians requirements.

To be better understood I have roughly sketched a plat of the location in controversy (inclosed herewith) showing from 160 acre tracts with descriptive boundaries thereto attached, which if alloted to the Indians now there. will effectually cover all the lands claimed by the Oraibis, together with the small Springs near Smiths Ranch. which Springs will irrigate but a very small portion of their lands unless they shall be permited to share in the water they formerly used and which now comes from the Reservoirs above

These Indians desire to continue their peaceful industrious habits

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and retain their present Homes. this they cannot do under the present aggressive policy of Smith.

Hence I would respectfully Recommend that (if possible) they be allotted "Lands in Severalty" as shown on the accompanying diagram and descriptive boundaries thereto attached But owing to the impracticable requirements of the rules governing such allotments, and the several Oaths necessary by different persons and it being nearly 200 miles to any Land Office Court of Record, or the Navajo Agency, the applicant might go. but no competent disinterested corroborative Witnesses, can be induced to go, without compensation to subscribe to the "Non Mineral" and other necessary Affidavits. and if they did, they would be personally unknown to the Register or other Officer authorized to administer said oaths. Hence unless some person duly authorized to administer said oaths, can be sent to the vicinity for that purpose. I see no way of protecting these and other Non-reservation indians. Except by extending the reserves to include these lands. thus driving off the Bona Fide Settlers, which should not be done.

Mr David Brinkerhoff (the Mormon Bishop) at Tuba City, is friendly to the Indians, and has saved to them the small priveledges they still enjoy, a correspondence

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with him, might give you further light on the subject. though, he too, holds that the Indians have no longer any rights in the water since the Mormons have built the Reservoirs to retain it.

Your Obt. Servant H S Welton
U S Special Ind Agent

To Hon Commission
of Indian Affairs
Washington D.C.

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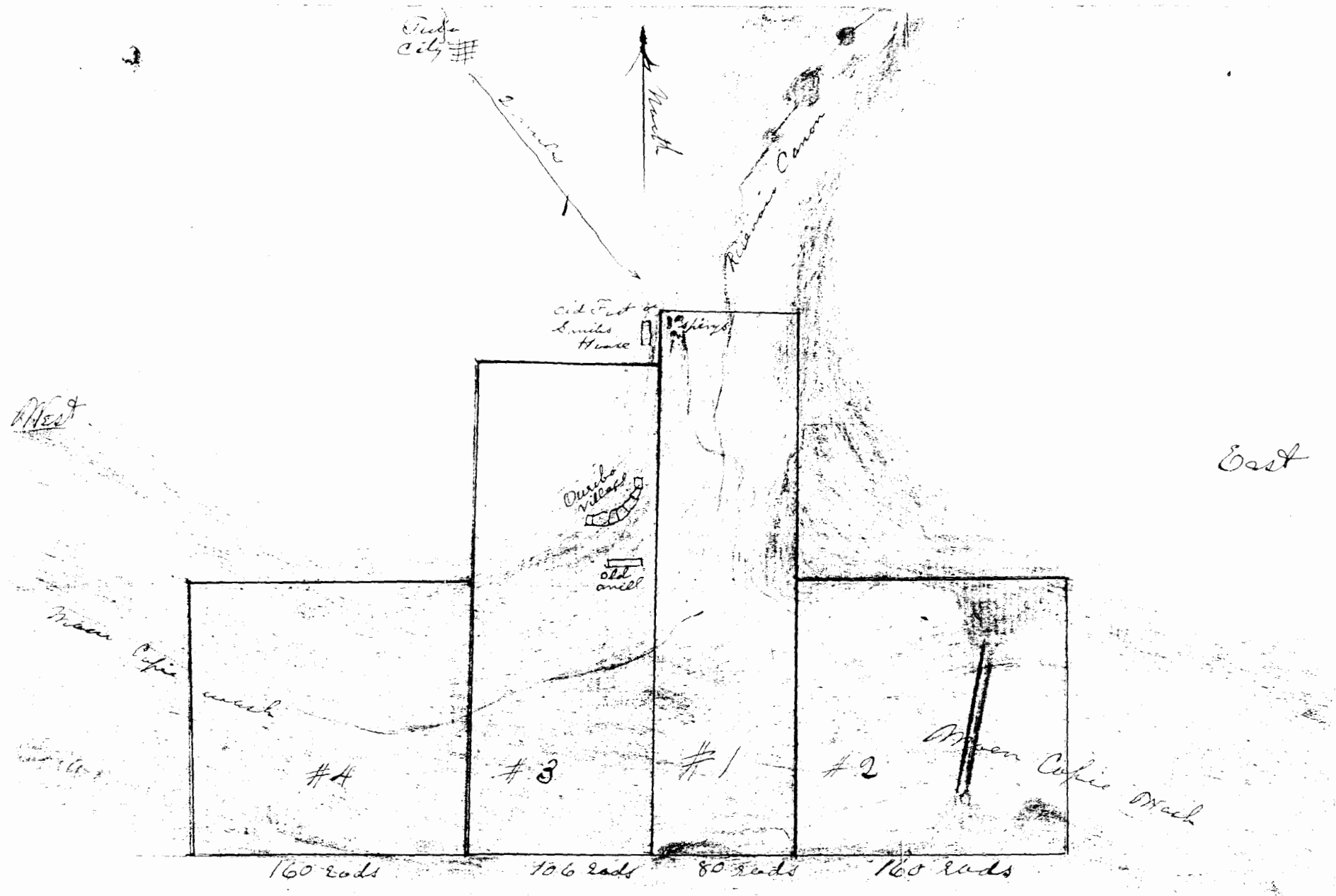

Red represents red sandstone Bluffs
Blue " water
Greene " Arable lands
" proposed Mormon Dam.

South

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