

COPY.

Shipping Point, Gallup, N.M.

LORENZO HUBBELL

Indian Trader

Dealer in

Navajo Blankets Moqui Pottery Navajo Silverware Moqui Baskets
Heams Canon, Navajo County, Arizona.

April 3, 1918.

Mr. A. H. Womack,
Albuquerque, N.M.

Dear Mr. Womack:

I am in receipt of your letter of the 27th ult. asking me to give you my opinion regarding the work, and the benefits derived by the Indians, by the putting down of wells and the cleaning and developing of springs, for stock and domestic purposes, in and through the Navajo and Hopi country by the Indian Irrigation Department.

This subject being very familiar to me, I believe that I can justly say that the work that has been done in this line has been the means of the great stock increase in the last four or five years; and the continuation of this work is I might say absolutely necessary for greater stock increase, for the following reasons, even though it may rain a great deal, the dams, or tanks that the Indians make, are not an economy, as the water that accumulates is nothing but freshet water, and the silt gathered as the water is drunk up, becomes a bog hole. Of this we have proof every day; for example, I had occasion to go up a small west branch of the first mesa wash, on the way to Black Mountain, where the Indians had built a dam. There were three cows stuck in the bog, two that were dead, one just about alive, and besides several carcasses that the Indians had dragged out. This is not an unusual occurrence. Then again, when the big rains come these dams are usually washed away, and their springs being so small and scattered, the stock suffers a great deal. When this happens, if by chance a dam at some far distance has held, you will see as many as 20 herds watering at one place, which practically destroys the surroundings for grazing. They may also take their sheep to some far off spring that is capable of watering several herds, also damaging the surrounding country for miles. Then again these washes are very deep, and it is almost out of the question for an individual Indian to build a dam strong enough to throw the water on a more likely spot. There is running water in the Oraibi wash, but I know of only four fairly safe watering places, and then by running horses in and out for several days after a rain, before they can water their sheep. This in itself costs the Indians hundreds of horses and cattle every year, and it is impossible to state what in sheep, but the Indians being at the watering of these, can always drag them out, but I should say their losses will amount to several hundred a year, and when their herds are larger it would be impossible to control them and water them at these washes. Of this I have had personal experience; just at one watering I lost 164 head, and on several occasions a few more, and then at a time when I had as many as four and five men to see that the sheep did not run too far up or too far down the wash. The putting down of wells has avoided a great deal of this, and will do more, since several wells have been put in the Oraibi wash. But in my opinion what has been done is of great value, neverthe-

L.H. to A.H.W.

April 3, 1918

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less a great deal more has to be done in order to come up with the natural increase of the stock.

As to the springs, it is impossible to place any dependability on them. They are insufficient and too far from feed, as the Indians have overgrazed around them. So in my opinion the deep well proposition is the only solution to the stock problem of this locality; as the increase in the stock since the establishment of this service is very noticeable; the water is cleaner and safer and more permanent; the weak springs and boggy dams and freshet water that the Indians have had to use has been the loss of thousands of head of sheep, besides keeping the herds from greater increase.

The only suggestion that I can make of any value in my opinion is that, that before moving the well drills from one locality, to see that there is sufficient of them to take care of the likely increase within their radius.

I feel glad to be able to say something for the Irrigation Service in the work already performed; but there is a great deal to do yet before the work can be called complete.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Lorenzo Hubbell

April 3, 1918

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RG75, B1A, Ariz. Div.
Gen. Cones., 1901-31
Dist. 5, Box 107
Hopi - Hager - 1918

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April 5, 1918

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