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George A. Johnson.

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GEORGE A. JOHNSON.

AUGUST 6, 1894.—Laid on the table and ordered to be printed.

Mr. LOUD, from the Committee on Claims, submitted the following

ADVERSE REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 4703.]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4703) for the relief of Capt. George A. Johnson, have carefully examined the same and find the following facts:

Order 166.]

HEADQUARTERS FORT YUMA, *December 28, 1857.*

Capt. Johnson having applied for a detachment of men to protect his steamer on a trip up the Colorado River, Lieut. White, with a noncommission officer and 14 men of this command, will proceed on board of the *Jessup* for that purpose. Lieut. White will take advantage of this opportunity to investigate the reported hostile movements of the Mohave Indians, also collect such information as he can obtain in regard to the murder of two men (citizens) by the Indians, supposed to be the Chimmowawahs.

The detachment will take twenty-five days' rations and 50 rounds of ammunition. By order of Lieut. Winder.

D. R. RAWSON,
First Lieutenant, Third Artillery, Acting Post Adjutant.

HEADQUARTERS, FORT YUMA, *December 28, 1857.*

SIR: The commanding officer directs me to transmit the following instructions for your guidance on your expedition up the Colorado:

You will take careful notes of the general direction of the river, its feasibility for steamboat navigation, and such other information as may be of importance for military purposes.

As it is reported that the Mohave Indians are disposed to be hostile, you will therefore be always on your guard against surprise, never permitting the men to stray from the boat at such points as it may land for the purpose of surveiling, etc. You will carefully avoid any collision with Indians, and return to this post within twenty days.

As it is possible that you may meet with parties of Mormons from San Bernardino, you will make a careful reconnoissance before approaching so near that a collision can not be avoided, should they attempt to oppose your progress.

I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

D. R. RAUSEM,
First Lieut. Third Artillery, Post Adjutant.

FORT YUMA, *December 31, 1857.*

MAJOR: I have the honor to inclose herewith a copy of post order No. 166 and letter of instructions to Lieut. White.

The news of impending difficulties with the Mormons, received by the last mail, and the possible necessity of having to furnish supplies from this department to the troops in Utah, induced Capt. Johnson (knowing my desire to investigate the reported hostile movements of the Mohave Indians, and the murder of two men, citizens of California) to offer his boat free of charge to proceed up the Colorado.

Under existing circumstances I deemed it to be my duty to take advantage of this opportunity for ascertaining the real feeling among the Indians, and whether

the Colorado is navigable above Yuma for steamboats, in order that this important (at this time) information may be furnished to the commanding general several months earlier than it could be in any other way supplied.

It is expected that the detachment will return to this post in twenty days, having gone as far as the Rio Virgin, by which time Lieut. Ires may be ready to move on his expedition.

There are, in addition to Lieut. White's detachment on the boat, 16 citizens, well armed, some of whom are old trappers on the river. Therefore there can be but little doubt as to the success of the expedition. It will, therefore, be certainly ascertained whether supplies can be transported far enough up the river to make it an object to send them this way.

It has been reported to me that the Mohaves are disposed to be hostile, instigated by the Mormons. The Indians have received some information as to the condition of affairs in Utah.

I trust that my course will meet with the approval of the general commanding, and considering the importance of having the information, to be in this way obtained, at an early day, with the fact that it will not cost the Government a dollar, I have reason to hope for his unqualified approval.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. A. WINDER,

Lieutenant, Third Artillery, Commanding.

Maj. W. W. MACKALL,
Assistant Adjutant-General, San Francisco.

FORT YUMA, CAL., *February 2, 1858.*

MAJOR: I have the honor to inclose herewith a copy of a report this day received from Lieut. White.

This expedition left this post on the 31st of December, 1857, in obedience to post order 166, a copy of which, with letter of instructions to Lieut. White, were forwarded at the time.

From Lieut. White's report it will be seen that the *Jessup* reached a point about 320 miles above this post, and probably within one day's travel of the old Salt Lake road from California.

This is the first expedition ever made with a view of determining the navigability of the Colorado above Yuma, and at the lowest stage of water. I think the result can be considered a decided success.

Much credit is due to both Lieut. White and Capt. Johnson for the manner in which the expedition was conducted. The fact that the Colorado is navigable up to the point reached for light-draft steamboats has been demonstrated, and I trust that Capt. Johnson may meet with the reward he so well deserves.

* * * * *
Respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. A. WINDER,
Lieutenant, Commandant.

Maj. W. W. MACKALL,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

From the above orders it seems that Capt. Johnson did offer the services of his boat to ascertain certain information in relation to hostile Indians then operating near the head of navigation of the Colorado River, but it was stipulated on the part of said Johnson that he should receive no compensation or pay. Capt. Johnson was at that time trading on the Colorado River, and while there is no evidence touching that point, we are left to assume that he, the said Johnson, anticipated some benefits to accrue to himself in the way of trade and information regarding the navigability of the river, which would be of some advantage to him, and for that purpose applied for and did receive a guard to accompany him.

In view of these facts, and that he freely made the offer, and that it should be free of expense to the Government, your committee recommend that the bill do not pass.