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### Report : Mr. Washburn

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 17, 1875.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. WASHBURN submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 534.]

*The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (S. 534) to pay Samuel Adams for services rendered in exploring the Colorado River and its tributaries, having considered the same, submit the following report:*

Captain Adams's communication to the House of Representatives, first session Forty-first Congress, (Miscellaneous Document 37,) is composed of four parts: first, a letter to the Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War; second, concurrent resolutions of the Territory of Nevada, tendering thanks to Hon. Samuel Adams and Capt. Thomas Trueworthy; third, a petition to the honorable House of Representatives United States of America, signed by Samuel Adams; and fourth, a report of Capt. Samuel Adams on the exploration of the Colorado River of the West and its tributaries, to the Hon. W. W. Belknap, Secretary of War.

The first part briefly describes the efforts of Captain Trueworthy and Captain Adams to establish the business of transportation on the Colorado River with the lower Mormon settlements in Southern Utah and Southern Nevada. In this they were unsuccessful; and Captain Adams complains that parties in San Francisco successfully conspired to defeat their plans. Two trips were made by a vessel owned by Captain Trueworthy. It does not appear that Captain Adams had any money invested in the enterprise. When the vessel made her second trip Captain Adams did not know of it until the vessel had left San Francisco. He being in Oregon and hearing of its departure, proceeded to Calville, in Southern Nevada, built a raft, and descended the river to La Paz, where he met the boat, and returned to Calville. On one of these trips he proceeded to the head of the first cañon above Calville, there built a raft, and returned to Calville. The distance which he thus traversed he estimates to be eleven miles.

In the winter of 1857-'58 Lieutenant Ives explored the Colorado River, from its mouth to Calville, and made an elaborate report, accompanied by maps. This report was published by the General Government. The only part of the Colorado River included in Captain Adams's explorations which had not been explored and thoroughly mapped previous to the trips made by himself, Trueworthy, and Rodgers, was the eleven miles above Calville before mentioned.

The fourth part of the communication, which is entitled "An exploration of the Colorado River and its tributaries," &c., is a journal of a trip

from Breckinridge, in Colorado Territory, down the Blue to its junction with the Grand, and down the Grand for a number of miles.

It appears that Captain Adams, with several others, built small boats at Breckinridge, intending to explore the Colorado River, and expected to reach that river by descending the Blue and then the Grand. They started on their journey on the 14th of July, 1869, and continued until August 14th following. On August 8th three of the party abandoned the expedition and returned to Breckinridge. On the 15th the remaining members of the party, with Captain Adams, gave up the expedition also, and returned to Breckinridge.

That part of the Blue below Breckinridge, and the Grand, from the mouth of the Blue to the point where Captain Adams's party left the river to return to Breckenridge, was not an unexplored region.

In the first part of the report, when Captain Adams was at the head of the cañon, eleven miles above Colville, he says: "From an eminence at the head of the cañon I could see an open valley, 60 miles in length, extending to the northeast." Doubtless this was the valley of the Rio Virgen. The journal of the 12th, 13th, and 14th days of August has the following record:

Three years before I stood at the head of the Black or Big Cañon of the Colorado River, and, looking to the northeast, I could see a valley extending 75 miles in length.  
\* \* \* \* \* Now I stood at a point above, and, looking southwest, I could see the narrow territory which separated us.

It is easy to trace on the map the progress made by the party from day to day and until it passed through the Park Mountains, which form the western wall of Middle Park.

The record of distances shows that they went 95 miles. If we make allowance for his usual exaggeration of known distances, this point would be situated about half way between the mouth of the Blue and the mouth of Eagle River; but giving him the benefit of his own estimates, he should have reached the mouth of Eagle River, though in his journal he makes no mention of having seen that stream.

Supposing, however, that he reached the mouth of Eagle River on his trip down the Grand, he was yet one hundred and seventy-five miles from the Colorado River, or from the mouth of the Grand, in a direct line, and by way of the river more than three hundred miles. From the Rio Virgen, which he states that he could see, it was more than eight hundred miles by way of river. The two points are separated by more than seven degrees of longitude and four degrees of latitude.

In the heading to the fourth part of the document above mentioned the following words are found: "Discovery of ancient ruins, cities, canals, abandoned mines," &c.

In the body of the journal Mr. Adams goes on to describe the pueblos and ruins of New Mexico and Arizona, but does not, except in the heading, claim that he discovered them. They were in fact discovered early in the history of the explorations of North America, and many travelers give more or less elaborate accounts of them. In the first volume of Bancroft's History of the United States an account of these earliest explorations and discoveries in this country is given. Elaborate descriptions, with illustrations, of these pueblos and ruins can be found in various reports made to the General Government of the United States. See reports of Emory, Abert, Cooke, and Johnston, made in 1848, and reports of Johnston, Smith, Bryan, Michler, French, and Marcy, made in 1850, and by Ives in 1861. Very elaborate accounts of these pueblos and ruins can also be found in Schoolcraft's report.

A number of years ago Mr. Lewis H. Morgan, of New York, published an extensive account of the same ruins, pueblos, and people, in the North American Review. Indeed, the literature concerning this subject is very extensive.

On this trip which Captain Adams made down the Grand, he did not visit these pueblos, nor did he reach them. The nearest mentioned by him were more than four hundred miles away from any point which he claims to have visited. If he had at any time previous to that visited them, it cannot properly be said that he discovered them; and what he says of them is in part erroneous, and in part exaggerated. At the time of the writing of the first part of the document under consideration, which is dated March 29, 1867, the upper part of the Colorado River was unexplored. This unexplored portion he attempts to describe in two places, as follows: "From my observation, and from information received from Indians, and from the maps and correspondence in the Historical Society of Salt Lake City, to which I had free access through the kindness of George A. Smith, secretary of the same, I am satisfied there are none of those dangerous obstructions which have been represented by those who may have viewed them from a distance, and whose imaginary cañons and rapids for several hundred miles below had almost disappeared at the approach of the steamer." And again, in the fourth part, he speaks of looking over the country and seeing the mouth of the Rio Virgen, more than eight hundred miles away, as above quoted.

The whole paper is a complex tissue of errors and exaggerations. He starts on his voyage down the Blue, 700 feet above the highest peak of the Rocky Mountains. He discovers fields of wild grain, unknown to the botanists of North America. He discovers mines of precious metals of fabulous wealth. He states that those opposed to his exploration of the Colorado River cut down the timber along its banks, so that he could procure no fuel for his boat, &c.

Mr. Adams has made no map of any part of the Colorado River, or any of its tributaries. He has determined no latitude or longitude, and no altitude, and in describing parts which he has probably seen he often errs in giving correct position by several hundred miles. Whatever may have been the services of Mr. Adams, they were rendered without any authority of law, and your committee seeing no reason why the Government should be called upon to pay for them, report back the bill referred to them, and recommend that it be indefinitely postponed.