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Navajo Indian Reservation. Letter from the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting an estimate from the Secretary of the Interior for sinking artesian wells and constructing irrigating dams and reservoirs on the Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona and New Mexico

49TH CONGRESS, 1st Session. } HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. { Ex. Doc. No. 263.

NAVAJO INDIAN RESERVATION.

LETTER

FROM THE

ACTING SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TRANSMITTING

An estimate from the Secretary of the Interior for sinking artesian wells and constructing irrigating dams and reservoirs on the Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona and New Mexico.

JUNE 9, 1886.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *June* 8, 1886.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith, for the consideration of Congress, an estimate of appropriation in the sum of $50,000, submitted by the Secretary of the Interior for the sinking of artesian wells and constructing irrigating dams and reservoirs on the Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona and New Mexico.

Respectfully, yours,

C. S. FAIRCHILD,
Acting Secretary.

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, June 1, 1886.

SIR: In accordance with the provisions of section 2 of the act of July 7, 1884 (23 Stat., 254), I have the honor to transmit herewith, for presentation to Congress, copy of a letter of the 27th ultimo, from the office of Indian Affairs, inclosing, with accompanying papers, an item of appropriation in the sum of $50,000 for the sinking of artesian wells and constructing irrigating dams and reservoirs on the Navajo Indian Reservation in New Mexico and Arizona.

The matter has the approval of this Department, and the papers are furnished for presentation to Congress.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

L. Q. C. LAMAR,
Secretary.

The SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, May 27, 1886.

SIR: Under date of December 19 last I called the attention of the Department to the pressing need of some action looking to the settlement of the constantly recurring troubles between the Navajos and white settlers in New Mexico, growing out of the joint occupation by them of the country east and south of the Navajo Reservation—the public domain.

After a brief recital of the history of the Navajos, the origin, character, and extent of their reservation, and the causes which have led to the disturbances between them and the whites, I recommended that an inspector of the Department be sent to New Mexico, instructed to make a thorough investigation of the whole subject, with a view, if possible, to devising some plan for a satisfactory solution of the difficulties.

It appearing that there was no inspector whose services could be made available at that time, the Acting Secretary (Mr. Muldrow) suggested that the desired investigation might be made by one of the special agents of this Bureau.

Accordingly I directed Special Agent William Parsons (February 4, 1886) to proceed to the Navajo Agency and make a careful study of the situation; to inquire into the condition and needs of the Indians—especially the non-reservation Indians—and their relation to their white neighbors, and, if possible, to devise some practicable plan to relieve the disturbed condition of affairs in that region.

He was instructed to visit the non-reservation Indians and counsel with them, to confer with prominent citizens of the Territory, and to advise prudence and forbearance everywhere. He was especially enjoined to take ample time for a thorough, faithful, and painstaking investigation.

After a careful study of the situation Agent Parsons believes that with an expenditure of $50,000 in sinking artesian wells, and in the construction of irrigating ditches, dams, and reservoirs, the present reservation of the Navajos could be made capable of supporting the entire Navajo tribe, with their immense flocks of sheep and goats, and that the non reservation Indians could be gathered on the reservation without the employment of coercive measures.

To my mind the experiment is worth trying. The Navajo Reservation is for the most part an arid waste. It is so described in all accounts we have of it, and although it has an area greater than that of the State of Maryland, it is incapable of sustaining any considerable population—probably not two people to the square mile.

Unlike the table lands in other portions of New Mexico, which are covered with an abundant growth of rich, nutritious native grasses, notwithstanding the fact that the rainfall at times does not exceed ten inches in a year, the reservation is for the most part a rocky barren desert.

The Navajos number, including those who reside outside the limits of the reservation, somewhere between 20,000 and 25,000 souls. They own, according to the calculations made by Special Agent Parsons, not less than 1,500,000 head of sheep and goats, and 80,000 head of horses.

Various estimates have been made of the number of Indians living outside the reservation boundaries, and Mr. Parsons's estimate, 7,500, is as low as any.

No one believes that the whole tribe could live and subsist their flocks and herds on the reservation under present conditions; but if a

few artesian wells were sunk, and some ditches, dams, and reservoirs constructed, it is believed that they could all find suitable accommodation on the reservation.

The Llano Estacado (Staked Plains), which is an elevated region, without water or wood, in the southeastern part of the Territory, has been reclaimed to a considerable extent by the sinking of artesian wells. The experiment there is said to have been eminently successful, and no doubt good results would follow if a similar experiment were tried on the Navajo Reservation.

The future well-being of the tribe requires that some steps should be taken to settle the non-reservation Indians in permanent homes where they will not be interfered with by the white settlers, who are fast occupying the country, and I think the material interests of the Territory require it in no less degree.

It would be impracticable to settle them on homesteads under the provisions of the homestead laws. There are too many of them for that, and they are not sufficiently enlightened to comprehend our land system and methods of procedure. It is fair to presume that not one in a hundred of them would ever acquire title under the homestead laws. They would not, and it is doubtful if they could, comply with the requirements of the law. It is not their habit to remain in one place for any length of time; they roam about all over the western part of the Territory, wherever they can find water and grass.

Unless the plan proposed by Special Agent Parsons be adopted, I see no way to settle this vexed question, and I am decidedly of the opinion that the experiment should be tried.

His recommendations are:

(1) That the sum of $50,000 be expended in sinking artesian wells, constructing irrigating ditches, dams, and reservoirs on the reservation, with a view to storing a sufficient supply of water to meet the necessities of the whole tribe.

(2) That when the wells, ditches, &c., are completed, notice be given the Indians to remove to and settle on the reservation.

The other recommendations, which relate to a tract of land south of the San Juan, were anticipated, in so far as the addition of said tract to the reservation is concerned, by an executive order dated April 24, 1886.

As showing briefly the history of the Navajos, and the reasons for the present deep concern which is felt by this office in regard to the non-reservation Indians, I inclose herewith an extract from office report of December 19, 1885, referred to in the beginning of this report.

I also inclose a copy of Special Agent Parsons's report (dated April 27, 1886), to which special attention is respectfully invited.

I also inclose a draft of an item intended for insertion in one of the appropriation bills, with the recommendation that, if the plan suggested meets with your approval, the same be transmitted to Congress at an early day, for the action of that body.

The item provides for the appropriation of $50,000 to be used in the work of sinking artesian wells and in constructing irrigating ditches, dams, and reservoirs on the Navajo Indian Reservation in New Mexico and Arizona, and that the Secretary of War shall detail a competent officer of the Corps of Engineers of the Army to superintend such work, under direction of the Secretary of the Interior.

Two copies of this report are herewith inclosed.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. B. UPSHAW,
Acting Commissioner.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

ITEM.

For sinking artesian wells and constructing irrigating ditches, dams, and reservoirs on the Navajo Indian Reservation, in New Mexico and Arizona, $50,000. And the Secretary of War shall detail a competent officer from the Engineer Corps of the Army to plan and superintend such work, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior.

Extract from report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior, December 19, 1885.

The reservation established for these Indians in the northwestern part of said Territory by the treaty of 1868, and which has been extended by Executive order into the Territories of Arizona and Utah, is but poorly adapted to their wants.

The following graphic description of the reservation is taken from the annual report of Agent Bowman for 1884. He says:

"This reservation is about my ideal of a desert; and although very large, it might have been much larger without covering any land of much value. It is merely a space on the map of so many degrees and parallels. Three-fourths of it is about as valuable for stock grazing as that many acres of clear sky. As there are no running streams it can only be irrigated with buckets. Nearly all the water is bad—alkali. The valleys are composed of sand formed by wash and erosion; no soil worthy of the name.

"About three-fourths of the entire tract is covered by rock and barren mesas. Where springs of water do exist the water has usually found a channel through the debris under the surface and is lost there."

The Navajos are essentially a pastoral people. They own upwards of one million sheep and goats, about an equal number of each. Although of a very inferior grade they afford them their chief means of subsistence and a large share of their clothing. They also own large bands of horses, the aggregate number of which cannot be less than 35,000 or 40,000.

This immense quantity of stock requires a large range of pasturage, and as the reservation is so generally barren, nearly one-half of the tribe, or at the least calculation 8,000, live outside the reservation limits. This privilege they claim as a right guaranteed to them by the treaty of 1868 (Stat. 15, p. 667), which provides (Art. IX) as follows:

"In consideration of the advantages and benefits conferred by this treaty, and the many pledges of friendship by the United States, the tribes who are parties to this agreement hereby stipulate that they will relinquish all right to occupy any territory outside their reservation, as herein defined, but retain the right to hunt on any unoccupied lands contiguous to their reservation, so long as the large game may range thereon in such large numbers as to justify the chase." * * *

Although by Article XIII of said treaty they agreed to make the reservation their permanent home, and that they would not as a tribe make any permanent settlement elsewhere (reserving the right to hunt on the adjoining lands as aforesaid), about half of the tribe have never been on the reservation to live, and, so far as I have been able to find, no coercive measures have ever been employed to place them there. They are scattered all over the country, principally east and south of the reservation, for a distance of 100 miles or more. Indeed, some of them live at a distance of 200 miles from the reservation.

Until quite recently they have been but little interfered with. The lands were for the most part unoccupied, and until the Southern Pacific Railroad was built the country appears to have offered no particular attraction to settlers. With the advent of the railroad, however, the situation changed. Settlers began to enter the country, and from that time to the present complaints have poured in from all quarters, with appeals for the removal of the Indians to their reservations.

The multitude of these complaints and the frequent cases of disagreement which of late has arisen between the Indians and settlers, render it necessary that some timely action be taken to prevent the disruption of the friendly relations which have existed between the Indians and the whites for the past twenty years.

The Navajos are a powerful tribe, the largest in point of numbers attached to any agency in the country, if we except the agency of the five civilized tribes in Indian Territory. The census of 1885 gives them a total population of a little over 21,000 souls.

Prior to 1864, when they were subdued by the military, the Navajos were a scourge to the country. They kept the whole valley of the Rio Grande in a state of terrorism, murdering and pillaging, and carrying whole families into captivity. They either resisted peaceful negotiations altogether, or made treaties (which they did not pretend to keep),

as best suited their warlike propensities and designs. Their history shows that they made no less than seven treaties with the Government prior to their subjugation, six of which they broke before the Senate could take action on the question of their ratification.

After their capture they were for a time held as prisoners of war on a reservation in the eastern part of the Territory, New Mexico.

Finally the treaty of 1868 was made, and they were removed to their present reservation. The latter treaty, it appears, they have faithfully kept. This is true, at least as regards deportment. They have been extremely quiet and peaceable, devoting themselves industriously to sheep-raising and to agriculture to such extent as the limited resources of the country would admit.

They have been thoroughly loyal, have occasioned but little if any trouble to the Government, and have been no great burden to the country financially.

If they have failed in any respect it is in that they have not all gone upon their reservation and made it their permanent home. The unsuitable character of their reservation perhaps affords some reasonable excuse for this, and besides many of the Navajos who reside outside the reservation limits were not brought in by the military when the tribe was placed on the Bosque Redondo Reservation in the eastern part of the Territory. Nevertheless they have always been regarded as having been parties to and bounden by the treaty.

Although the Navajos were reduced to pauperism by the disastrous wars which preceded the treaty of 1868, they have more than regained their former prosperity as the result of their own industry. They are far more intelligent than any of the neighboring tribes, and with a fair chance there is no reason why they should not in time become useful citizens.

The non-reservation Indians are those with whom we are now most concerned. As has been stated, they number about eight thousand.

In his last annual report Agent Bowman, speaking of these people, says:

"These Indians have always exercised the right which they believe was given them by the terms of their treaty—that is, to go and live wherever they choose. I believe that one-half of this tribe at least habitually live outside of their reservation lines, some as far as 200 miles outside, and they are constantly coming and going. While this gives them the advantage of competition in selling their wool, it has a bad effect upon them in many ways; gives them opportunity for indulging in many vices, especially gambling and procuring whisky. The class of people with whom they come in contact outside, especially on the eastern side of the reservation, are, as a rule, not very moral, many of the Mexicans living there making a living by gambling with the Navajos and by furnishing them whisky.

"The non-confinement of these Indians to their reservation will soon be the important issue of this section, and one with which your office must deal. The country around here is fast being settled up with whites—earnest men, most of whom do not believe that an Indian has any business off his reservation; men who have no great love for them anyway, and who will be inclined to make them stand aside if they get in their way. It is impossible for these Indians to understand our land laws or the system of public surveys, and harder still for them to comply with the requirements of the homestead laws. It is one of their unaccountable customs to live at great distances from water, and the white disputant is seldom willing to concede that the occupancy of a brush shelter a mile or so from a desirable spring, even if the Indian occupant drives his sheep there daily to water, gives him the exclusive right to it. The present generation of Navajos, in my opinion, will not derive much benefit from the beneficent act of Congress dated July 4, 1884, and passed for their benefit. They are too ignorant to comprehend the requirements. Generations of nomadic ancestors have given them natures too unstable to ever erect many homes that will be substantial enough to withstand the covetous attacks of their white competitors for choice tracts of the public domain. Especially will this be the case when they attempt to make settlements at great distances from the body of the tribe, where they will feel the sense of isolation natural to all who find themselves among a strange people, with strange language and customs, and with different interests. A desire to get back among their own people will soon overcome all others.

"A year ago I did not believe that all of this tribe could subsist within the lines of this reservation; now I believe they could. It is true that it is very dry and barren, but in this respect it does not differ from the adjoining country. I have ridden for days over this reservation without seeing an Indian. Should it become necessary for them to live wholly within the reservation, they would have to improve and store the water wherever it is practicable to do so, and to reduce the number and improve the quality of their stock."

I conceive it to be a somewhat difficult question to decide what is best to be done with these people.

Here are eight thousand Indians living on the public domain for the most part without any fixed habitation and with no title to the lands over which they roam and feed their abundant stock. They have occupied the country for many years and believe they have rights in the soil.

The whites are fast settling around them and in their midst, disputing their occupancy of the country inch by inch. The relations between them are becoming more and more strained, and remedial action is imperatively demanded. Whether the Indians could be induced to go upon their reservation is a question. Indeed it is doubtful if they could subsist their immense flocks on the barren wastes of the reserve. If the number were reduced and the grade improved no doubt the reservation would afford abundant pasturage for all the animals they would require.

To do this they would require some assistance, and the change would necessarily be gradual and require considerable time. Perhaps it would be the best thing in the end, however, if it could be brought about.

It would be a difficult matter where there are so many to give them homesteads under the recent act of Congress providing for Indian homesteads, and their agent says they are not sufficiently advanced in point of intelligence to comprehend or comply with the requirements of the law.

The estimated area of the Navajo Reservation is 8,159,360 acres, or 12,749 square miles, larger than the State of Maryland.

I think it is very doubtful if the entire reservation has ever been explored by any officer of the department, and it is not unlikely that its facilities are greater than has heretofore been supposed.

SANTA FÉ, N. MEX., *April* 27, 1886.

Hon. JOHN D. C. ATKINS,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.:

SIR: In obedience to your telegraphic orders of February 3, 1886, I left Pottawatomie and Great Nemaha Agency and reached Navajo Agency, Fort Defiance, Arizona, February 17, where I found a copy of your office letter to the Secretary of the Interior, dated December 18, 1885, and your letter of instructions of February 4, 1886 (L., 31,061, 1885), awaiting me. Subsequently your supplementary letter of instructions of February 17, 1886 (L., 4,716, 1886), regarding the complaints made by settlers in the San Juan River Valley reached me, and in respect to these several letters of instruction I have the honor to report as follows:

The question discussed in your office letter to the Secretary of the Interior of December 18, 1885, viz, the feasibility of placing all the Navajo Indians upon their reservation, and the adequacy of the reservation, as at present constituted, to maintain these Indians, is of considerable magnitude and surrounded with many difficulties. You directed me to "not exercise undue haste, but to study the situation thoroughly and make full report of my proceedings, with such recommendations as my examination of the question and my best judgment might justify." I had been on the reservation but a few days when I clearly perceived the wisdom of this direction and the necessity of making haste slowly. The interests involved affected the peace and prosperity not only of many thousands of Indians, but also of the white inhabitants of the three Territories of New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah, and the State of Colorado, while the facts upon which a recommendation could be based were not clearly known. It became necessary for me, therefore, to make original investigation, so far as was in my power, into the resources and climatic condition of the Navajo Reservation, the number of the members of the tribe, their habits and disposition, the extent and character of their worldly possessions, the inclination of the Navajoes towards peace or war in case they should be confined upon the reservation, whether their prosperity would be increased by reducing the number of their flocks and herds and improving the quality of the breed thereof, and whether the confinement of the whole tribe upon the reservation would make necessary an enlargement of its boundaries.

A glance at the map of the Navajo Reservation and a very slight knowledge of the character of the Navajo Indians will show the extreme difficulty of making these investigations. The reservation is practically an unknown country, and so far as I have been able to learn it has never been thoroughly explored, either by military expeditions, scientific investigations, mining prospectors, or by officers of the Interior Department. Several bodies of United States troops have marched across it, or made incursions into it, for military purposes chiefly, and the records of the officers in charge of these expeditions throw little light upon the agricultural and grazing resources of the reservation. Several geological parties have penetrated into some of its more remarkable cañons and have given us some interesting facts with regard to the cliff dwellers and ruined pueblos, and two or three agents in charge of the reservation

have made trips across some portions of it, the most active and inquisitive of these last being Maj. John H. Bowman, the present agent's immediate predecessor; but the sum of all the combined information from these several sources I found unsatisfactory, and much of it unreliable. Such mining prospectors as have ventured into the depths of the reservation in search of precious metals have generally been killed by the Navajoes, who are extremely jealous of this class of adventurers.

The reservation at its greatest length from east to west is about 170 miles long and from north to south it extends at its greatest breath upwards of 100 miles, containing 12,749 square miles, or about 3,159,360 acres. Being intersected by several lofty mountain ranges, the Chusca, Tunicha, and Calabasa mountains, cut by a vast number of deep cañons and steep banked arroyos, and largely made up of precipice-flanked mesas, or table-lands, exploration is not only difficult, but dangerous. It is unfortunate that my orders called me to this work at the most inclement season of the year—the months of February, March, and early part of April—the mountain passes being blocked with snow, the level land deep with mud, and grass being so scarce that the horses I rode were constantly giving out from exhaustion and lack of food. In spite of these difficulties I managed, however, to explore a large part of the reservation and to gain sufficient information regarding its agricultural and grazing resources upon which to form a tolerably just opinion as to its capabilities in these respects. The accompanying map, marked Exhibit A, compiled at my suggestion, through the courtesy of General Bradley, commanding the District of New Mexico, gives a very fair idea of the shape, extent, and boundaries of the reservation, the mountain ranges, and principal cañons. The lines in black ink indicate as nearly as possible the routes traveled by myself in the course of my explorations. It was impossible to penetrate, with the means at my command and at that season of the year, into the northern central and northwestern portions of the reservation. The extreme northern central point reached by me was the head of what is called Chin See Valley, about 70 miles by the trail from Fort Defiance. Here our horses gave out on account of the deep snow and mud, and I found that no other horses suitable for so severe a ride could be procured of the Indians.

I held a council with a large number of the Navajoes, however, at this point, made careful inquiry of them as to the character of the country north and west, and was told that while much of it was mountainous and worthless, there was a good deal of it well watered and timbered, and that if a few small dams and ditches could be built a considerable population might be supported. I saw a large amount of fine pine timber in this section, and we crossed the heads of several important watercourses, among others the Rio de Chelley and the Rio To-ha, along which the Indians maintained some small farms. If the water of these streams, which results from melting snow on the mountains, could be stored in dams, many square miles of rich alluvial land could be made highly productive. As a consequence of my exploration into this and other little known portions of the reservation, and of the statements of intelligent and industrious Navajoes, I am thoroughly convinced that there is an abundance of water on the reservation to support all the Navajoes, as well those who now reside off the reservation as those now upon it.

But before the entire Navajo population can be safely and comfortably maintained upon the reservation it will be necessary for the Government to expend a considerable amount of money in constructing reservoirs, dams and ditches, and sinking wells. In considering the question as to how much money should be thus expended, it must be borne in mind that I saw this country when the streams were unusually full from the extraordinary amount of snowfall during the spring, and that while the average rainfall and snow, reduced to water, for the last 15 years in Northern New Mexico has been 14¾ inches, there were 2 years within this period when the rainfall and melted snow aggregated but 6½ and 7 inches. Were the non-reservation Navajoes to be brought back upon the reservation at a season when the rainfall and melted snow amounted to but 7 inches, and before a sufficient number of reservoirs and dams had been built, they would lose a great portion of their flocks and herds, their farms would yield no produce, great suffering would ensue, and the Government would be compelled to furnish the Indians with food until another year, or else experience an almost certain Indian war. In order to prevent any such catastrophe I am of the opinion that at least $50,000 should be expended in dams, reservoirs, ditches, and wells on this reservation before the hazardous experiment of returning the non-reservation Navajoes upon the reservation be attempted.

The Navajoes have an abundance of land, such as it is. What they need is more water. Without a proper storage of water the bulk of the reservation during the greater part of the year is simply a desert traversed by dry and rocky mountains. The climate is very dry, the soil generally very sandy and sterile, but with a wise system of dams, wells, and reservoirs the reservation can easily maintain not only the flocks and herds of all the Navajoes, both those now off as well as those on the reservation, as well as their increase for many years to come.

In regard to the population of the Navajo tribe estimates vary widely. The census of 1885 gives the tribe a population of about 21,000 souls. This number includes reservation as well as non-reservation Indians. It is exceedingly difficult to determine the members of this tribe with accuracy. No real census has ever been taken of the tribe, and from the very nature of things a true census is impossible. Of the 21,000 supposed members of the tribe, good judges estimate that about 8,000 reside outside the limits of the reservation, leaving about 13,000 as the number residing on the reservation. From my recent two months' residence on the reservation, my explorations, inquiries, and study, I believe that I am qualified to form a reasonably accurate judgment as to the members of the tribe. From March 1 to March 4 last I was engaged in journeying from the southeast corner of the reservation to the San Juan River, on the northeast corner, a distance, as I traveled, of about 130 miles from Fort Wingate, and about 100 miles on the reservation. During the first 3 days of this journey I did not see more than 20 Navajoes, the country traversed, however, being a desert, without wood or water. On the third day we came to a spring guarded by an Indian, who demanded a quarter of a dollar for each head of cattle and men for the privilege of a drink of water. As the water was almost solid mud, I declined his offer and we departed without drinking. I refer to this circumstance to show the scarcity of water and the consequent scarcity of animal life. March 4 I came upon a band of about 50 Navajoes, men, women, and children, who had gathered a few miles south of the San Juan River to tender me, as the representative of the Indian Office, the freedom of the country.

That freedom consisted in permitting me to clamber about 200 feet up the side of a nearly perpendicular rock and there to enjoy the delight of a drink of pure water, which, however, was evidently nothing more than rain water, or melted snow, which had gathered in a little basin in the rocks. At the councils held by me at the San Juan River not more than 50 Indians, hardly that number, were present. In my trip from San Juan River across Tunicha Pass, southwesterly across the reservation to Fort Defiance, a distance of about 140 miles, I saw about 40 Indians. On March 10, when the annuity goods were issued, there were about 4,000 Indians present. The weather was very rough, a terrible snow storm raging the entire day, and this probably deterred many from being present. Many others who lived 75 to 100 miles away did not think it worth while to attend the issue on the chance of what they might receive, and the almost certainty that if they received anything of value they would be unable to transport it to their distant homes on the back of a diminutive pony, though I did see one determined Navajo carrying off a large plow on horseback, and another a wheelbarrow, though I regret to say that in the latter case the experiment proved unsuccessful, the fragments of the wheelbarrow being scattered by the refractory horse all over the north side of the plaza.

As the Navajoes are principally engaged in raising sheep, goats, and horses, which require constant herding, the girls watching the sheep and goats and the boys caring for the bands of horses, it follows that on March 10, the issue day, when 4,000 Navajoes were at Fort Defiance, nearly all the boys and girls of an age suitable for that work must have remained at home in the absence of their parents. At a low estimate those left at home on that day would constitute half of the number of each family. Besides these, the women with very young babies, the old, the decrepit, and sick also remained at home on that day. But on account of the lack of roads, the numerous mountains existing, the depth of the snow in the mountain passes, the lack of grass for their ponies, and the inclemency of the weather, it is safe to say that very few Indians living 50 miles north, northeast, and northwest of Fort Defiance were able to attend the issue March 10. In many cases where a Navajo came from a long distance, however, he acted as the representative of several other families besides his, and where he was known to be reliable received goods to be delivered to others. Taking into consideration the foregoing facts, what I saw in my various expeditions and the opinion of others well acquainted with them, I am of the opinion that the 4,000 Navajoes, men, women, and children, present at Fort Defiance, March 10, 1886, really represented about four times that number, or 16,000 persons. As a number of these 4,000 were non-reservation Indians, for whom due allowance should be made, I consider it reasonable to estimate the actual number of Navajos residing on the reservation at 15,000 souls. From my own observation and the opinion of those best informed, I am inclined to believe that half as many more, or 7,500, reside outside the reservation limits. This would give the entire Navajo tribe a population of about 22,000.

Now as to the habits and disposition of the Navajos. The Navajos, who, according to the best authorities, came from Alaska, and who speak the same language as the Apaches, and are closely related to the latter, have, ever since the whites knew anything about them, been a brave and warlike people. The numerous ruined Pueblos, the deserted cliff dwellings on and near the reservation, and the residence of the Moquis, Zuñis, and other Pueblo Indians upon the tops of lofty and practically inaccessible mesas, or table-lands, attest the military powers of the Navajos. The early Spaniards attempted in vain to subdue or pacify them. According to Spanish au-

thorities, the Navajos, about 1629, nearly exterminated the inhabitants of the Pueblo village of Jemez; in 1679 they compelled the Zuñi to abandon the Pueblo of "Ha-in-cu" forever, and during the period of 1680–1692 they drove the Spaniards out of New Mexico, and compelled the Zuñi and other Pueblo Indians to abandon their villages on the plains and take refuge on the mesas. They even made raids into old Mexico, entered towns and cities, and carried off many captives and terrorized the whole country south for hundreds of miles. Nor have they fallen below their reputation for war in more modern times. During the recent civil war they were provoked into hostility and raided the whole valley of the Rio Grande, doing immense damage and causing great loss of life, and it required a large force and the most audacious courage on the part of the United States troops to penetrate their country and finally subdue them. This conflict was carried on with varying success from 1861 to 1864, when the Navajos, or the great majority of them, submitted and were removed to the reservation near Fort Sumner, in the Southeastern part of New Mexico, where they remained until 1868, when they entered into a treaty with the Government, under which they were permitted to return to their country, the present reservation, upon condition that they should remain at peace. For eighteen years these Indians have kept this treaty. They have been peaceful, but they still are a warlike people and cannot be wronged or oppressed with impunity. Though they possess few fire-arms and have maintained a peace for eighteen years, they still wear upon the left wrist the leather band which protects the wrist from being cut by the blow of the bow-string, and their war bows and iron and steel pointed arrows constitute a rather formidable weapon in the hands of daring and desperate men.

While the Navajos are still a warlike people they have devoted themselves since 1868 to the cultivation of the soil, the raising of fruit in the warm and fertile cañons, and most of all to the rearing of sheep, goats, and horses. As the raising of stock is their chief occupation the Navajos are nomads both by nature and habit. To obtain grass for their flocks and herds, they are forced under the present condition of the reservation to range over a large extent of country. As they wander so far and so frequently in search of grass, they do not think it worth while to build substantial houses, and they use comparatively few tents, or tepees. Instead of a house they build a hogan, which is for winter use—a rough circular stone wall 4 or 5 feet high, covered with a dirt roof, large enough for a man to stand erect in the middle of the floor, and capable of containing the family and the few skins and pots necessary for beds and cooking. In summer many of them use brush shelters and do not go to the bother of even constructing a hogan. With such habitations as these it is easy to see that the Navajos have no inducement to abide in a fixed place. Recent efforts on the part of Agent Bowman and other representatives of the Indian Office have induced many of the Navajos to build substantial stone houses and to make permanent homes near some spring or running brook. But as springs and running brooks are scarce it will be necessary, in order to bind any large proportion of these nomads to a fixed place of habitation, for the Government to supply nature's deficiencies in this respect by the construction of dams, ditches, reservoirs, and wells in suitable locations. One of the unfortunate superstitions of the Navajos is that when a person dies the house or hogan in which the death occurred must be burned down, or abandoned. To reside in such a house is unlucky, or "bad medicine," and is certain to produce further deaths and misfortunes—so the Navajos think. To escape this superstition some of the more liberal minded and unorthodox Navajos, when they suspect a member of their family of an intention of dying, remove the dying one out of the house or hogan just prior to dissolution. This saves the trouble of building a new hogan, but is not productive of comfort to the sick person or conducive to his recovery in case his disease has been diagnosed erroneously. As the Navajos are a progressive people there is reason to believe that when they are persuaded to build better houses they will abandon this superstition. It is only a short time ago that they instituted a radical reform in the medical profession as practiced in the tribe. Several deaths having occurred in spite of all the conjurations of the doctors, a public meeting was called; the doctors, placed under arrest, were threatened with death unless they admitted that they were quacks. In a moment of weakness they confessed that they were frauds and could not cure disease, and therefore their angry accusers immediately killed them because by their own confession they were quacks. Since then the practice of medicine has been less popular than formerly among the Navajos; there are fewer practitioners, but the death rate among the tribe has materially lessened.

The number of sheep, goats, and horses owned by the Navajos is rather a matter of conjecture than of knowledge. John H. Bowman, the late agent, who was best qualified of any man I have met to form a fair judgment on this subject, placed the number of sheep at 750,000, of goats at 750,000, and of horses at not less than 75,000 or 80,000. I am of opinion that this is as good a guess as anybody can make. In my excursions on and off the reservation I saw many flocks of sheep and goats, containing from 500 to 3,000 in number, and many bands of horses containing from 50 to 300. In my judgment Mr. Bowman's estimate of the sheep and goats is under

rather than above the mark, while I think that there are nearer 80,000 than 75,000 horses. All of these animals are of an inferior grade, but I do not believe that the Navajos can be induced to reduce the number of their animals with the hope of increasing their value by improving the breed. In every council I held with them I discussed the question of improving the breed and reducing the number of the animals, and in every instance I was met by the argument that the kind of animals they had were suited to the country and the climate, the Navajos understood how to manage them, and they answered their purposes. Ganada Muncho, whose name means "the man of many herds," the head chief, declared positively that his people cared more for numbers than for the quality of the stock, and when I argued with him that one large, strong, fine horse was worth in market as much as four small, weak, underbred ponies, he said that the large horses could not go as far in a day as his small, hardy ponies—which was true—required more care to keep them in condition, and were unsuited for a country where there were no roads and where horse-back riding was the only means of locomotion. He also claimed, as did others, that the finer breeds of sheep and goats could not survive the severe winters and droughts of summer. Whether these arguments are true or false, the fact remains that the Navajos are opposed to cutting down the numbers of their sheep, goats, and horses, and it will require many years and a great deal of argument to make them change their minds on this subject; nevertheless, I think it the part of wisdom for the Indian Office to supply the Navajos, through their agent, with a considerable number of high-grade and improved species of sheep, goats, and horses with the view of bettering the quality of the live stock owned by them. I think it out of the question to induce them to reduce the number of their stock as an economical measure. The barbarous Navajos prefer to count heads rather than to estimate the fineness of wool. They are industrious beyond almost all other Indians, but they are as wild and savage as any, and have not reached that point when they can value a thoroughbred sheep, goat, or horse at a fabulous sum. Two dollars' worth of coral beads are worth more in their eyes than $20 in gold, and a thousand scraggy sheep are of more value than nine hundred and ninety-nine high-grade and tender merinos. It is a mistake to assume that because the Navajos are industrious and self-supporting they are partially civilized and free from Indian and barbarous habits of thought. No tribe of Indians is more thoroughly superstitious, barbarous, and uncivilized than the Navajos. Indeed their very independence and industry make them less susceptible than other tribes to civilizing influences. Other tribes, which receive supplies of food and clothing, can be induced to cut their hair and wear the garb of white men, but every Navajo wears long hair, fastens it back with a red "banda," and clings to his blanket and Indian dress. None but the scouts and school boys will consent to wear anything but the Indian dress.

In the various councils held by me with the Navajos, I put the question bluntly to them whether, in case the whole tribe was confined upon the reservation, they would submit and remain at peace, and I found that while all the chiefs insisted that they could not live with all their people upon the reservation as it now exists, yet they admitted that there would be no opposition of a violent character to the execution of such an order. They are a warlike people, but have suffered so much from war and have such a wholesome respect for the power of the Government that they will submit to anything that can be endured rather than resort to hostilities.

I have already discussed the question as to whether the confinement of the whole tribe within certain limits would make necessary the enlargement of the boundaries of the reservation, and have expressed the opinion that the Navajos have already an abundance of land—land sufficient for the whole tribe—but that what they need is more water. And this brings up the matter of the disputes between white settlers and Navajos in the San Juan Valley. So far as the Navajos are concerned, outside of a few individuals who have houses on the disputed land and have cultivated farms there, the issue relates to water rather than land. The question with the Navajos is "shall they have access, with their flocks and herds, to the San Juan River, or shall they be deprived of approach to the only important and thoroughly reliable watercourse on their reservation?" It is true that several Navajos have houses and cultivated farms upon the south side of the San Juan River, just outside the limits of the reservation. It is also true that several white men have filed claims for these lands in the proper land office, and that there is danger of personal collisions between whites and Navajos attempting to farm the same piece of land at the same time. It is hardly probable that these personal collisions will result in an Indian war, though such a result is possible; but the question underlying the San Juan difficulties—the question that interests the tribe—is a question of water. The San Juan River bounds the reservation from its junction with the Colorado River on the northwest to the extreme eastern edge of the reservation, with the exception of the fractional townships 14, 15, and 16, No. 29 north, range west, bordering the San Juan River on the south—a strip of land about 15 miles long from east to west, and about 5 miles deep, consist, ing almost entirely of worthless table-land. This strip, however, contains about

2,000 acres of good bottom land, all of which has been occupied by the Navajos for farming purposes, and all of which has been filed upon by white settlers. With the exception of this small tract of bottom land, over which the approach to the river is easy, the mountains and table-lands crowd so closely upon the San Juan River its entire length as to make it almost impossible for the Navajos to reach it with their flocks and herds at any other place. As the reservation south of the San Juan at this place is practically a desert for many miles, the Navajos prize greatly this approach to the San Juan River. The river is the natural boundary. It is deep and rapid and for a large part of the year cannot be crossed. The strip of land in question was added to the reservation by executive order of July 6, 1880, at and subsequent to which time the Navajos took possession of it, built some houses, dams, and ditches, and farmed the bottom land. By executive order of May 17, 1884, this strip was taken from the reservation and thrown open to settlement. This order was a grave mistake. Before its publication, the Navajos, under the instructions of their agents, had made improvements, being told that such improvements would give them a sure title to the land. Now they were told that their improvements were not sufficient to hold the land. This contradictory condition of affairs they could not understand, and they felt, and now feel, that the Indian occupants of this bottom land are in the right; and in all equity they are. The white claimants, however, have the legal right to this land and will gain possession under due process of law, unless this order of May 17, 1884, is revoked. In my deliberate judgment this order should be revoked without delay, and the strip of land in dispute rejoined to the reservation. Unless this is done there will be constant irritation between the two races at this point. The Navajos must get to the water in the dry season with their flocks and herds. When they attempt to do so they will find the farms of white settlers and fences in their way. The farms will be trampled upon by the Indian flocks and herds, the fences will be broken down, and collisions will surely ensue. To preserve the peace in the future it is the part of wisdom now to remove all cause for disturbance. This can be done by restoring this strip of land to the reservation. Nor am I alone in this opinion. Ex-Agent John H. Bowman, who was well conversant with the situation, and the present agent, S. S. Patterson, an intelligent and careful observer, have both joined with me in recommending such action, and I transmit herewith a letter, marked Exhibit B, of General Luther P. Bradley, U. S. A., commanding the district, who has been among the Indians twenty years, and for six years in this district, in which he emphatically agrees with me. Nor are the difficulties in the way of such action serious. I found from personal examination that there were only about half a dozen *bona fide* white residents of this strip, though about thirty claims have been filed by white speculators. From examination of the records of the land office at Santa Fé, N. Mex., I find that thirty whites have filed claims upon this land, only one of whom has "proved up." I transmit herewith a Land Office draft, marked Exhibit C,* of this disputed land and also an abstract of claims filed to this date, marked Exhibit D.* From my knowledge of the land and the lack of improvements by white men upon it, I believe that the sum of $10,000 would be a very liberal estimate for all "damages" which might result to white claimants from the restoration of this land to the Navajo reservation. This is a very insignificant sum when compared with the expense of maintaining troops to preserve the peace in the San Juan Valley, the unceasing irritation in the future, and the possibility of a collision which might result in a war disastrous to the whites and ruinous to the Indians. In my opinion the Indian Office should take immediate steps to restore this land to the reservation. Whether your office has the power to dispose of the matter of "damages" to white claimants, I am not prepared to say, but if it has not it should secure the necessary legislation immediately, revoke the order of May 17, 1884, and have a commission to assess the damages. Such action—and this alone—will permanently pacify the troubles in the San Juan Valley.

As regards the question whether the confinement of the whole tribe upon the reservation will necessitate an enlargement of its boundaries, I have partially discussed that subject under the question of the reservation's resources, but will add this much: The chiefs and head men of the Navajos are very anxious that the reservation should be enlarged, especially on the south and west. This will appear more fully in the proceedings of councils held with me, and marked Exhibit E, herewith transmitted, but I see no necessity for such enlargement, provided the Government uses a little wise economy and expends a sufficient sum to store the water upon and within the present limits of the reservation. By giving them the strip of land on the San Juan River they will feel that they have gained an important point, and, in my judgment, will be content.

Having come to the conclusion that all the Navajos should be brought upon their reservation, and that with improvement of the water-storage system and the restoring of the strip on the San Juan River to the reservation, its limits will be ample for the support of the whole tribe, the question naturally arises as to when the non-reservation Indians should be brought back? This cannot well be done earlier than

* These exhibits not furnished.

next year. Dams, reservoirs, ditches, and wells should be made during the present year, or if no funds are available for such purpose this year, then such improvements should be made next year, and when sufficiently near completion ample notice should be given the non-reservation Indians that they must, excepting those who have secured a legal title to land outside the reservation, return within the reservation limits on or before a certain date. The date should be determined upon only after consultation with the agent of the Navajos and the general commanding the district. With the consertion of the San Juan boundary to the Navajos and the improvement of their water supply I am confident that all those living off the reservation as nomads would return without the necessity of using force.

It is of great importance that this action should not be postponed. The San Juan country is not the only place where danger threatens. Difficulties of a serious character may and are liable to arise along the borders of the reservation and far remote from it at any moment. The white men crowding into the country surrounding the reservation are cattle-raisers. The Navajos are mainly engaged in sheep and goat raising. The interests of cattle and sheep raisers, whether white or Indian, are hostile. Cattle cannot range where sheep are in the habit of grazing, and cattle men will drive off the sheep herders by force. Only a year ago a cowboy killed a Navajo sheep-herder on the southwest border of the reservation for no other offense than that the latter presumed to water his sheep on the cattle range. A bloody reprisal for this murder was only prevented by the skill and daring of one man, John H. Bowman, the late agent, who at the risk of his life persuaded the infuriated Navajos to forego summary vengeance and let the law take its course—the result being that the murderer went scot-free, as is usual in such cases. The appropriation by whites of springs and grass long used by the Navajos, though outside the reservation, is a fruitful source of irritation. The Indians cannot understand why they have no rights which white men are bound to respect in these matters, and when dispossessed of long-enjoyed privileges they become angry and revengeful. As these cases are becoming more frequent each day and the danger of serious collisions more imminent it becomes the part of good government to remove the source of irritation swiftly and effectually. This can be done only by confining the Indians upon their reservation and improving it in the way above indicated. When Geronimo and a band of not more than 50 renegade Apaches are able to terrorize half of the territory of New Mexico and Arizona, and give employment to a large part of the Federal Army—a misfortune this section is now suffering from—it requires no stretch of the imagination to believe that the Navajos, if allowed to drift into war through lack of prompt action in remedying these supposed grievances, could inflict untold injury upon the prosperity of this section, and retard its growth many years.

I therefore respectfully recommend:

(1) That the sum of $50,000 be expended as soon as practicable in constructing dams, reservoirs, irrigating ditches, and sinking wells upon the Navajo reservation, with a view to store a sufficient supply of water for the necessities of the whole tribe.

(2) That when this has been done, or when sufficiently near completion to remove all doubt, the non-reservation Navajos be required upon reasonable notice—the time to be determined by the agent of the Navajos and the district commander—to return and remain upon the reservation.

(3) That the executive order of May 17, 1884, whereby the fractional portions of township No. 29 north, range 14, 15, and 16 west, south of the San Juan River, just above the northeast corner of the Navajo reservation, Rio Arriba County, New Mexico, were taken from the reservation, be immediately revoked and the said land restored to the reservation, thus making the San Juan River, the natural boundary of the reservation at this point, the real boundary.

(4) That the Land Commissioner be directed to issue instructions that no entries for any portion of this land be received after June 1, 1886.

(5) That a suitable person or persons be appointed to assess damages for all claims entered for this land up to June 1, 1886, by white settlers in good faith who have been evicted from any portion of said land by the revocation of the executive order of May 17, 1884.

(6) That during the pendency of these proceedings, and until the settlement of the question in dispute in the San Juan country, a subagent for the Navajos be appointed, whose duty it shall be to reside upon or adjacent to the land in question, to care for the interests of the Indians and to aid in preserving peace.

It is proper that you should know, if you have not already been advised of the fact, that the district commander has stationed two companies of soldiers, one of infantry and one of cavalry, on this disputed territory. If General Bradley thinks the presence of two military companies necessary, it would seem, in view of the great distance of this point from the agency, that the Indian Office should consider the troubles on the San Juan of sufficient moment to require the services of a subagent until the emergency is past.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

WILLIAM PARSONS,
United States Special Indian Agent.

EXHIBIT B.

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO,
Santa Fé, N. Mex., April 26, 1886.

DEAR SIR: I am in receipt of your letter of this date, referring to lands withdrawn from the Navajo Reservation by executive order in 1884, known as fractional townships 14, 15, and 16, bordering the San Juan River.

You ask my opinion as to the best way of settling the difficulties between Navajos and whites on the above-named lands, and I reply that in my judgment these fractional townships ought to be restored to the Navajo Reservation, and the claims of settlers extinguished, if it is possible so to arrange the matter.

From six years' acquaintance with the Navajos and their country, I know that the great want of their reservation is water. They have land enough, but they have not water enough for their great flocks and herds, and for irrigating land for their crops of wheat and corn. For this reason, access to the San Juan River through the townships named is important to the Navajos, and these lands are of more value to them than to any one else.

Looking to the time when the Navajos will all have to live on their reservation, the water facilities and supply ought to be increased in every practicable way, and it is little enough to say of the Navajos that their good conduct and good qualities entitle them to the favorable consideration of the officers in charge of the Indian Bureau.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. P. BRADLEY,
Colonel Thirteenth Infantry, Commanding.

WILLIAM PARSONS, Esq.,
Special Agent, Indian Bureau, Santa Fé, N. Mex.

EXHIBIT E.

Memoranda of the proceedings of some of the councils held by Special Agent Parsons with the Navajos in the months of February and March, 1886, and of a meeting with white settlers in the San Juan Valley.

At a council of Navajo Indians held at Fort Defiance, Arizona, with Special Agent William Parsons, February 25, 1886, Coska, a non-reservation Indian living near Manuelito, spoke as follows:

"I remember all the treaty made at Fort Sumner. We changed our habits after that treaty. We gave up evil ways and have striven to become better people. They told us if we gave up our bad ways they would send us back to our own country; so all the young men promised. They told us the Americans would be our friends. The people on the other side of the Staked Plains in Texas were to be as our brothers. The people this side were also to be our friends. At Atua Chiquo were to be our friends. Our friends at Nachessi who were coming here have gone south again. I remember that Sherman told us we could go to Albuquerque. At Laguna we were also to stay. This side of Carino we could pass through there. At Fort Wingate we had relatives, and the Navajos and whites are now all friends, and we have been trying to do what is right ever since. And we were told we could plant crops, and they gave us tools. We gave up all stealing and attended to our work. I have not heard of trouble off of the reservation. We were advised to have farms. If we acted like white people, we were to have farms, and we were to have sheep and property. That goes to prove that the American advice was good. The Americans are like spirits; whatever they say they do, and our people are richer for taking their advice. My father told me where the line was. We have a great deal of stock, and need much grass. This is because we followed the American advice. Therefore we need much land. We have had trouble about our herds and stock with Americans off the reservation about the grass; some of our people have been killed in quarrels about the grass, and some of our horses have been stolen. We have, however, let these injuries pass. We are blamed for things the white men do. The whites are always ready to point their guns at us. The springs are taken up by white men, and they kill our horses when they come to get water. We do not injure them in return. Our cattle are thus deprived of grass and water. This present reservation is hardly big enough on account of scarcity of grass for our cattle and sheep. We have lots of horses and sheep which increase all the time. We would rather have more cattle and sheep even if they are not so good. We prefer the large herds of horses. We think it would be better to let our stock increase as we have in the past. We think the American advice to have few horses and sheep is not good.

"In the center of the reservation the mountains are high and the snows deep, so that we cannot live there unless we lose our stock. Much of the reservation is taken up by these mountains. Therefore we think we should have more land down in the valley where we can raise corn, melons, and other crops. Our fathers have thought this best. Alongside these mountains and in the north we have tried several times to raise crops, but the early frosts have killed them. But our stock increases down in the valleys away from these mountains. We are satisfied that our young men off the reservation conduct themselves peaceably and well. I hear nothing among my people about our young men stealing horses from the whites, but whites steal from other whites and then tell the Great Father that the Navajos did it. None of our people do wrong to the whites. We wish the Great Father would let us live off the reservation, but we know that when we do we have trouble. Several years ago we promised to live in peace and we try to do so. Many old men come to hear you talk and will go back and tell the young men what you say, and are glad that we are at peace instead of at war. In war we had trouble, now we are comfortable. We all have something to wear and eat, and have good horses and saddles, and we think the Americans ought to thank us for taking their advice. All our people look upon the President as our father; we don't want him to crowd us upon a small piece of ground where there is not room for us. We do not ever intend to break out in war again. When we take trips off the reservation it is not to steal or just for fun, it is for trade to sell our goods or for grass and water. I always lived off the reservation near the Zunis, because they are my friends and I can trade with them. I have always lived near them. I wish the Great Father would give us a little more land on the south, east, and west.

"I would like the reservation extended about 35 miles south so as to reach Fort Wingate on the east and Navajo Springs on the west, so as to include Navajo Springs. A great many Navajos live down there, are used to the country, and like it. Most of the chiefs here present are from that section. The grass down there is better and the sheep get fatter. We are going to keep on eating plenty of mutton and having good food. I don't know whether the people living in the San Juan country would consent to shorten the reservation an equal length on the north."

Captain Tom, a scout, who lives on the reservation in the north, near the San Juan country, at the "Cottonwood Wash," spoke as follows:

"I am glad to see you, and want to hear you talk about the land, and am glad you have come to find out about things. This little strip of land at San Juan, called the Hog Back, lays on the south side of San Juan; it is about 15 miles long and 3 miles wide. We have had a little trouble here, and I have done what I could to keep from trouble. We would like to get this strip included in the reservation. I don't think there is any serious trouble up there. On the north side of the San Juan, in the northeast corner of the reservation, there are Navajos living. On the strip 15 miles long and 3 wide at the Hog Back several white men have settled; less than ten. Some of these have built houses on land occupied by three Navajos, and that makes bad feeling, but the Navajos have not resorted to violence. The Indians have made a ditch here to take water from the San Juan to their farms, and they now want to go on and fix the ditch. The Mormons started the ditch, but did not complete it; then the Indians finished it.

"Is glad I am going to San Juan, for I will know more about the trouble up there then. They do not want to lose the northeast corner of the reservation south of the San Juan River."

Manuelito, one of the head chiefs of the Navajos, living on the southeast part of the reservation, spoke as follows:

"Manuelito is the head chief of the east side of the reservation, and Ganada-Mucho is head chief of the western side. You have already heard some of the history of the tribe. When our fathers lived they heard that the Americans were coming across the great river westward. Now we are settling among the powerful people. We heard of the guns and powder and lead—first flint locks, then percussion caps, and now repeating rifles. We first saw the Americans at Cottonwood Wash. We had wars with the Mexicans and Pueblos. We captured mules from the Mexicans, and had many mules. The Americans came to trade with us. When the Americans first came we had a big dance, and they danced with our women. We also traded. The Americans went back to Santa Fé, which the Mexicans then held. Afterwards we heard that the Mexicans had reached Santa Fé, and that the Mexicans had disarmed them and made them prisoners. This is how the Mexican war began. Had the Mexicans let the Americans alone they would not have been defeated by the Americans. Then there were many soldiers at Santa Fé, and the Mexican governor was driven away. They did not kill the governor. Therefore we like the Americans. The Americans fight fair, and we like them. Then the soldiers built the fort here, and gave us an agent who advised us to behave well. He told us to live peaceably with the whites; to keep our promises. They wrote down promises, and so always remember them. From that on we had sheep and horses. We had lots of horses, and felt

good; we had a fight with the Americans, and were whipped. At that time we thought we had a big country, extending over a great deal of land. We fought for that country because we did not want to lose it, but we made a mistake. We lost nearly everything, but we had some beads left, and with them we thought we were rich. I have always advised the young men to avoid war. I am ashamed for having gone to war. The American nation is too powerful for us to fight. When we had a fight for a few days we felt fresh, but in a short time we were worn out, and the soldiers starved us out. Then the Americans gave us something to eat, and we came in from the mountains and went to Texas. We were there for a few years; many of our people died from the climate. Then we became good friends with the white people. The Comanches wanted us to fight, but we would not join them. One day the soldiers went after the Comanches. I and the soldiers charged on the Comanches, but the Comanches drove us back, and I was left alone to fight them; so the white men came in twelve days to talk with us, as our people were dying off. People from Washington held a council with us. He explained how the whites punished those who disobeyed the law. We promised to obey the laws if we were permitted to get back to our own country. We promised to keep the treaty you read to us to-day. We promised four times to do so. We all said 'yes' to the treaty, and he gave us good advice. He was General Sherman. We told him we would try to remember what he said. He said: 'I want all you people to look at me.' He stood up for us to see him. He said if we would do right we could look people in the face. Then he said: 'My children, I will send you back to your homes.' The nights and days were long before it came time for us to go to our homes. The day before we were to start we went a little way towards home, because we were so anxious to start. We came back and the Americans gave us a little stock to start with and we thanked them for that. We told the drivers to whip the mules, we were in such a hurry. When we saw the top of the mountain from Albuquerque we wondered if it was our mountain, and we felt like talking to the ground, we loved it so, and some of the old men and women cried with joy when they reached their homes. The agent told us here how large our reservation was to be. A small piece of land was surveyed off to us, but we think we ought to have had more. Then we began to talk about more land, and we went to Washington to see about our land. Some backed out of going for fear of strange animals and from bad water, but I thought I might as well die there as here. I thought I could do something at Washington about the land. I had a short talk with the Commissioner. We were to talk with him next day, but the agent brought us back without giving us a chance to say what we wanted. I saw a man whom I called my younger brother; he was short and fat; and we came back on foot. So Ganada-Mucho thought he would go on to Washington and fix things up, and he got sick and couldn't stand it, and came back without seeing the Commissioner. I tell these things in order that you might know what troubles we have had, and how little satisfaction we got. Therefore we have told you that the reservation was not large enough for our sheep and horses; what the others have told you is true. It is true about the snow on the mountains in the center of the reservation. It is nice there in the summer, but we have to move away in the winter. But we like to be at the mountains in the summer because there is good water and grass there, but in the winter we always move our camps. We like the southern part of the country because the land is richer. We can have farms there. We want the reservation to be extended below the railroad on the south, and also in an easterly direction.

"We all appreciate the goods issued to us by the Government. At first we did not understand, now we know how to use plows and scrapers. We have good use for these things and wagons. We can then make new farms and raise crops. We are thankful for what the Government sends. We give nothing back to the whites. When we make blankets our women sell them. They look well in white men's rooms on the beds or walls. If I had a good house I would keep the blankets myself. When any man comes from the East we tell him our troubles. There are some bad men, both whites and Indians, whom we cannot keep from doing mischief. The whites control them by laws, and we talk ours into being good. I am glad the young men have freed their minds; now we old men have our say."

Ganada-Mucho, the other head chief of the Navajos, remarked as follows:

"I have little to say. Mannelito has said all there is to say, and I agree with all he has said. What he has said is true. I live off of the reservation, near Pueblo, Colo., near the southwest corner of the reservation. I like to talk about land. I think of it night and day. We should have more land on the south end of the reserve. If we had more land there we would be happy and think our Great Father was good to us. I am glad to know you have come to see about our land. I went to Washington and thought I could do something. I had a talk with the Secretary, Commissioner, and the President, but I did not have an opportunity to say much. My hands are ready to receive the land we need, but it does not come. We have talked for several years about the land, but nothing is done. I went north to Utah

eight years ago. I saw many houses of Mormons. The trip to Washington I remember little, because I was sick. I had Captain Tom and Little Captain. They went further than I, saw houses on the water, and there was no chance to get land there. So I came back and concluded that I would take my chances at the little strip of land down here, because there is no chance in the East. The gray-headed fellow I met in Washington I told that the whites were increasing very fast. Now the white men's houses are built all over the country, and I told him that they ought to think of the poor old man at Navajo and give him a little more land before it is all gone. Our people are increasing, too, and we must have some, else we will have to roam around. I have wanted to tell you what I said in Washington. We ought to have the land within the four mountains. We don't expect to get all that land, but we should have a little more land on the south. The men from the south have told you how much land they want, but there is land on the west we should have. We should have the Moqui reserve extended to Navajo Mountain and east to the line spoken of by the men from the south. We want the Moqui reserve extended south for us to the Rio Colorado. If we get that land we will make no more bother with the Indian Office, and will be happy and attend to our business. If we get that land we will not go beyond the new reservation lines. I and my people do not want to decrease our herds. We prefer more cattle and sheep and horses just as they are.

"When we got back from Texas we came afoot, and now we have plenty of cattle and horses and sheep.

"The big horses look nice; our ponies are small, but they carry us far and swift. They are very strong, and will carry a man if his legs drag on the ground. I am a small man and like small horses. I cannot climb on to big horses, but fall off when I try to mount. I believe in obeying the Great Father. We promised not to go on the war-path, and then after we had promised not to fight, the commander at Fort Wingate sends for scouts to go and fight other tribes of Indians."

At a council of Navajo Indians held near Olio, on the San Juan River, New Mexico, March 5, 1886, the following proceedings were had:

Special Agent Parsons stated the object of holding the council; the complaints which had been made by white settlers against the Indians; counseled forbearance and obedience to the laws, and then called upon the Indians to state their grievances and wishes. Whereupon Casiano, a Navajo Indian, who resides in a frame house on the south side of the San Juan, a short distance below the place where the council was held, and on the disputed territory, spoke as follows:

"My friend, I should be sorry to lose my land where I live. White men and Government officials have advised the Navajos to build better houses and dig irrigating ditches; some of us have done so here, and now if we must lose our houses and farms it will grieve us. The river from the Hog Back Mountain up here is the only place where we can get water, and we think that the Government should give us this land. We would be very thankful if this land should be given back to us. We shall be proud of you, my brother, if you secure this land for us. All the Navajos present desire that this shall be done. Some of us have come many miles to meet you. I have always tried to obey the Great Father. I have planted a little farm with corn and melons, but my ditch is full of sand, because I was told I could not keep my farm. I may have made mistakes. I have little sense. Others here are wiser than I, and can talk straighter; but the complaints made by the whites against me are not true. We have some cabins on this land, and, as you see, some of the whites are building their cabins in front of or alongside of our cabins. We would like a little chance so we can work on our land. Most of the Navajos, you see, live near here. If we are crowded away from the river we cannot get water for many miles, and our cattle, sheep, and horses will suffer. Therefore we want this land. There is land belonging to the reservation on the west side of the Hog Back, which the San Juan runs through, about 10 miles from here, but it is crowded with Navajos and their herds. We want to live at peace with the whites and, therefore ask that the river this east side of the Hog, Back may be the boundary line of the reservation, so that the whites may be on the north side and the Navajos on the south side. We do not want to mix with the whites, but must have water. If the whites remain on this side we will constantly have trouble with them when we drive our flocks and herds through their lands to get water at the San Juan River. We trade at the store on this side, and also on the other side. When the river is high we cross in boats. Some of us have to come many miles here to the river to trade. It is our only outlet for pelts and wool, for Forts Wingate and Defiance are 125 miles south of the San Juan River. I and other Navajos here are poor, and we want to make an honest living. We are willing to work hard and do what is best for all. I do not speak with a forked tongue. My brother and my friend, I am now ready to go to work on my farm, to plant crops and fix up the ditches. I won't be afraid now to go to work to fix up our flumes and ditches and work hard. My mind is now easy and I will improve my house and farm. I have few tools to work with, but I buy some from the whites. I get none from the

agent, because it is so far to go, and the other Indians who are nearer Fort Defiance get them; but we would like axes and hoes and spades. We never go to the issues; it is too far. The complaints against me and other Navajos here are all lies. I never interfered with the white settlers here, and have stolen none of their cattle. I do not know why they have made up these complaints against me.

"The whites want to crowd us out; hence they talk about me. It is because they want this land. I have told you now all I have to say. Now I want you to tell me in how many days we may begin work on our farms."

The special agent replied that he would meet the white settlers this evening, would hear what they had to say, would think the matter over, and in the morning would tell both the Indians and whites what they ought to do.

To this Casiano replied: "I thank you, my brother."

San Duval, an aged chief, then spoke as follows:

"You have told us to wait, and we have waited. We have come a long way and would like to know what to do before we go away. You can now see how this country lies. We look upon you as our brother and friend. Let the whites stay on the other side of the river and the river be the boundary line. The San Juan is like our father and mother. It is kind to us; we have lived near it for many years. Let the whites get water from the other and the Navajos from the south side. There are many whites on the other side. We never trouble them. We want to have this side. We feel as if it should be ours. Several years ago we used to occupy the land north of the river, but now whites have made ranches there and have taken all that land. They have crowded us south of the river, but should not crowd us further; we need the land on this side. Look at me. I am very old; I have lived all my life on the San Juan River, except when we were prisoners. The agent told us to return to our homes. We came back here and we don't like to be driven away again. We do not want trouble. We meditate peace only and want to do what is right always. We are old men here. Salla-wool, Barbara Swara, Go-las-be-yea, and myself used to be chiefs long ago. We have advised the Navajos to do right, and we now want you to tell us what to do about the land."

The special agent then told the Indians that he would first consult with the settlers and in the morning would advise the Indians what to do.

Casiano then said that about three months ago, when he was away from his hogan, white men came and tore it down and began to build a cabin. Then Casiano came back home and burned the foundation down. He then asked permission to attend the meeting of the white settlers and to ask them to point out any Indians who have done wrong. Permission was accordingly given them to come.

San Duval again spoke as follows:

"Stories are bigger away from home. We will meet the whites in council to-night. The trouble is all about the little strip of land, but all is quiet and we have behaved well. The whites make up such stories as they think will injure us; they have the ear of the Great Father. We have no place to go to if we lose this land; no place to get water, for that is scarce on the reservation. It would be best for all to have San Juan River for the boundary. You have given us good advice and we thank you for it, and will try to do as you tell us. We want to be friends with the whites and to share with them the wood and water. I live near the Hog Back. My people live all along the river, from here down below where I live."

Barbara Swara then spoke:

"I have been East and seen all the land fenced up. I have lived in one spot since we came back from Fort Sumner. We have always behaved ourselves and tried to obey the agent. Manuelito and I are friends. I speak these few words to tell you that I think the whites the greatest people in the world. They can tell what kind of a man one is by a single glance of the eye. We do not like the way the whites have jumped on our land here. I went to see the agent twice about it. I asked these whites to go off our land, and we have had more and more trouble all the time. I have always advised well. I would have gone to the council at Fort Defiance, but I was sick. It warmed my heart when I heard you were coming here, and I came to see you. For five years I have been sick, so I don't go to the agency, but I look at the whites very closely to see what kind of men they are. American advice is good; hence we have sheep and horses, and after awhile we will have more. For that reason, land—this little strip here to water our stock and do a little farming. I have heard we should reduce the number of our stock, but we think that is bad advice. Our stock is our own, and we are proud to have so much; hence we watch it close. We want to build better houses, like the Americans and the Mexicans, also like Manuelitos. The advice you have given us about sending our children to school is all true."

Little Captain, a Navajo scout, said he hoped I would settle this difficulty before I left and stop the whites from settling this land till the dispute was determined. "These poor people here beg you to help them. The land back of this is a desert, and if the Indians are driven away they will have no crops. They do not know what to

do unless you tell them to go ahead and put in their crops and fix their ditches. I try to do my best for the people. I said nothing at the Fort Defiance council. I want you to make these people happy by giving them this land, and so they will speak well of you when you go away. These people want to do right and the best they can. We will build good houses here; we have already built some."

At a public meeting of white settlers held at the Olio post-office school-house, north of the San Juan River, March 5, 1886, the following proceedings were had:

W. P. Hendrickson, a settler, white, upon the south side of the San Juan River, said he was anxious to preserve the peace, but that the settlers had complied with the laws in regard to settlement of lands under homestead, pre-emption, timber-culture, and desert acts. "We do not desire to quarrel with the Indians or anybody else. We have simply obeyed the land laws. We have no contest with the Indians. We have made our filings and some have proved up. We are ready to contest our cases in the Land Office. I cannot tell how many settlers there are over the river. There are perhaps 20 or 25 settlers, possibly 40, on the strip 15 miles long. Every available quarter-section has been taken. I have been there but a few days. But few white men have built anything in the shape of houses. Practically they have built no houses. They have put in some work in clearing land and making fences and getting ready for crops. The whites have paid no regard to Indian houses built on quarter sections of land. About a dozen white men have built houses and attempted to live on the other side of the river. I know of 4 or 5 who now live on the other side, but there may be more. Some parties have built houses and have not lived in them on account of annoyance from Indians."

Judge Webster, a resident of the north side of the river, says:

"Some white settlers have had their lives threatened by Indians if they attempted to live on the south side. As a general thing the threats were general, not specific—against all white men. I might name one or two cases of specific threats, but do not deem it advisable. I have heard good judges of land from Colorado say that a quarter-section of the land on the south side was worth $1,000 before a blow was struck on it. Six or seven years ago I paid $500 cash for a naked quarter-section, and I think the land on this is worth four or five times as much now. The tract I paid $500 for is on the north side. I think the unimproved land on the south side as valuable as on the north side; of course there is poor land on both sides.

"I think there are about twenty good quarter-sections of land on the river bottom on the south side in the 15-mile strip; but there is good mesa lands farther back, though it would be difficult and expensive to get water upon these mesa lands—every foot of land on the river bottom on both sides of the river.

"Indians have built a good many houses on the other side on the bottom, such houses as they have built in other parts of the reservation. They have repaired and extended some ditches begun and made by white settlers six or seven years ago. They have built one log house that I know of, but there may be one or two more. They occupy two of the old settlers' houses that they didn't burn down. If the land on the south side were occupied exclusively by whites I do not think there would be any trouble with the Indians coming down to water with their herds and flocks. The Indians have been encouraged by Agent Bowman and other agents to believe that if they had made any improvements or settlements on this south-side bottom, that they had acquired rights to the soil which could not be taken from them. This has made the trouble. If the Indians were once given to understand that they had no rights there and must leave, they would acquiesce.

"Since this strip was taken off the reservation the line has been run and marked by Government surveyors, and the Indians know the line, and if they were given to understand that they had no right on this side that line, there would, I think, be no further trouble."

Charles M. Tonkinson, who has taken a claim on the south side, of land occupied by a substantial Indian log house, said as follows:

"Indians are different from whites. They must understand distinctly. I filed my claim nearly a year ago. I bought out a man who had filed on it a year ago last October. I paid him somewhere between $15 and $25 dollars for his interest. The log house was on my claim nine months ago when I first knew about the claim. To my knowledge no Indian has occupied that house, but they might have slept there. They also had household goods there. We could have had fifty men here, but did not think it necessary to have more."

S. P. Hendrickson, who has filed on a quarter-section on the south side, spoke as follows:

"It was generally understood that this land was open to settlement. The Indians have not disturbed me. I have a house and my family there. I have been there three or four months. The dispute arose from white men building a ditch and improving the land. It was then clear from Indian claims. Then the white settlers

were removed through the influence of the agent. Albert White and Fowler Kimble built houses in 1879; also Mr. Tully and Pete Wimple and Mr. Gannon. These men were driven away by the agent. Therefore they were not intruders. The trouble arose through the agent trying to get the land away from the whites. I do not blame the Indians, but the agent. The Indians told me I could occupy the land I am now upon. I think but one house built by the whites now remains."

Joseph Winton:

"I filed on a quarter-section on the south side in 1884. I have worked all winter with a team on my ditch. A cabin built by Gannon stood there; also the head of an old ditch started by Gannon. I shall remain there till the Government moves me off. My ditch has cost me rising $200. Another man is in with me on the ditch. Think the ditch will cost us about $300 apiece."

MAP OF THE
Navajo Indian Reservation

UTAH
COLORADO
NEW MEXICO
ARIZONA

NAVAJO
PUEBLO
MOQUI IND. RES.
APACHE
NAVAJOE
SOUTH'N UTE IND. RES.
RIO ARRIBA
VALENCIA
MESA
MOUNTAINS
INDIAN
TERRITORY

Ex. Order May 17th 1884.
Ex. Order Oct. 29th 1878.
Ex. Order Jany. 6. 1880.
Ex. Order Jany. 6. 1880.
Treaty of June 1st 1868. Vol. 15. P. 667
Extended Presidents Order Jany. 6. 1880

SAN JUAN RIVER
COLORADO RIV.
Glen Cañon
NAVAJO MTS.
Epsom Cr.
Colorado Guide Mer.
Hallett's Cr.
Recepture Cr.
Montezuma Cr.
McElmo Cr.
Rio de Chelly
Rio Mancos
Herman's Pk.
Parrott
Ft. Lewis
Durango
DENVER & RIO GRANDE
Rio La Plata
Aztec
Wallace
Rio Las Animas
Rio San Juan
Rio Navajo
Fanmington
Porter
Rio Puerco
Rio San Juan
CALABASA MTS.
SAND DUNE PLATEAU
Cave Dwellings
Lee's Ferry
WHITE MESA
Navajoe Sp.
Bitter Sp.
Limestone Water Pockets
Laguna
Ojo Limita
Ojo Puerto
Pueblo Tocalate
MESA LA VACA
SQUASH MTS.
Trout Sp.
Walker
Church
Rio de Chelly
Cañon de Chelly
TUNICHA MTS.
CHUSCA MTS.
Wilsons Pk.
2nd Stand. Par.
Sulphur Spr.
Rio del Pajarito
Hay Spring
Pena Blanca Spr.
Bennetts Pk.
Gros Pk.
Tunicha Cr.
Spr.
1st Stand. Par.
Sulphur Spr.
Rio Escalada
Cañon de Chusco
Canon Amarillo
Canon Largo
Laguna Colorado
Laguna Negra
Flat Top Pk.
Cox's Pk.
Mesa Fachada
Divide of Puerco & De Chelly
Old Agency
Peach Orchard
Sp.
White Rock Sp.
Ft. Defiance
Ft. Wingate
Military Reserve
Wingate
Defiance
Manuelito
Pacific R.R.
Atlantic & Pacific R.R.
Bonito Cr.
Rio Puerco of the West
Ieroux Fk.
NAVAJOE FOREST
Spring Butte
Chimney Butte
Signal Butte
Moqui Buttes
Spr. Cr.
RIVER MESA
Tesuque Peak
Pecos River
Rio San Juan
Canon Largo
DIVIDE
PACIFIC AND ATLANTIC

SCALE OF MILES
0 10 20 30 40 50

Former reservation line.
Extended " " .
Line traveled by Special Agent Parsons.

Compiled from Official sources
at
Hd. Qrs. District of New Mexico.
Santa Fe. N. M.

Prepared in the Office of Indian Affairs by Paul Brodie. Draughtsman. June 12. 1886.

111° 110° 109° 108°
37° 36°
XV XIV XIII XII XI X IX