

not surrendered. There is in this office a branding-iron, and, on the report of Mr. Bennett, I matured a plan which, if carried out, will not only prevent the stealing of horses from Indians, but will place a check on their raiding and stealing also. I issued an order that all horses in their possession should be brought to the agency to be branded by me with the brand of the Department, and I informed them at the same time that I would take no steps whatever to recover a horse that did not bear the mark. In branding I make a record, in a book I have provided for that purpose, of the horse, any previous brands or marks he may have, the name of the Indian who owns him, and, when possible, the length of time he has had the animal in his possession. I have also, on taking charge of this office, introduced another book not formerly kept, in which I register the description of all animals claimed to have been stolen by these Indians, and by means of these two books I have recovered three horses and returned them to their respective owners.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS.

I find great difficulty in enforcing the laws for the protection of Indians, as the United States officials and also the civil authorities reside at such a great distance from the reservation. The United States commissioner is 38, the United States deputy marshal 48, and the civil authorities 18 miles from the agency. I should, therefore, recommend that legislation be asked of Congress making an Indian agent ex-officio United States commissioner with power to act as marshal in cases of offenses committed against Indians or the laws for their protection.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

F. C. GODFROY,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

#### NAVAJO INDIAN AGENCY, *Fort Defiance, Arizona, October 1, 1876.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following annual report upon the condition of affairs at this agency during the year past:

Upon my taking charge of this agency last December, I found everything in confusion, the Navajoes having driven their last agent and his family away from the agency, which was then taken charge of by Col. Wm. Redwood Price, military commander of Fort Wingate, the nearest military post; and he, considering his to be only a temporary appointment, left all changes to be made by the next agent. I must say for the Navajoes, notwithstanding the difficulty with their former agent, Wm. F. M. Army, that they have conducted themselves in a quiet and orderly manner. They would receive whatever was given to them in the way of supplies, and they are the only Indians that I have any knowledge of who will say "Thank you" in return.

The progress made during the past year has been all that could have been expected. Nearly all plant corn, and they have had a fair crop. Wheat was all destroyed by the grasshoppers. They also have had good success with pumpkins and melons. In the Cañon de Chelly many peaches were raised, many of good size and flavor.

In education the result has not been all that was to be desired, and I would renew the recommendation made last February in a report upon the school that a school-house be erected and school started in the Chusca Valley, where the Indians desire to have it. They promise to send their children to school, but they wish to have them live at home, and the reasons given are good. No missionary work has been done among the Navajoes, and unless some is soon started the Mormons will endeavor to enter the field, and are already making advances. Large numbers of the Navajoes each year visit the Mormon settlements upon the north and west of the reservation for the purpose of trading.

The hand-loom purchased and set up for them two years ago have not proved to be as great a success as was hoped for at that time. The Navajoes seem to prefer their own way of weaving blankets, for which they are celebrated, excelling all other tribes, as well as Mexicans. Navajo blankets are found all through the West, and sometimes command quite fancy figures, as high as \$125 being paid for a single blanket. The blankets, sashes, and leggin-ties, all woven, are their staple of trade with other tribes. The wool they get from their own sheep, of which they have large herds, the total being estimated at 400,000, and this year they sold as surplus of wool at least 200,000 pounds, for which they receive in exchange principally leather, manta, calico, and trinkets. The men are as expert in the use of the needle as the women, and I have often seen them sit down and make their own shirts and pants upon getting the goods, and in less than half a day they would appear in an entirely new suit.

The only building at the agency erected during the year was done by the Navajoes, and the walls of adobe will compare favorably with that done by the regular Mexican adobe-layers. Repairs put upon the corral-walls were both well and neatly done, and never but one or two have refused work when it was offered to them. One thousand laborers could be obtained for enough to eat and 50 cents per day; they are good workers and quick to learn.

The only difficulty of a serious nature among the Navajoes was on account of the killing of a Navajo by one of the herders in charge of one of Don José Leandro Perea's herds of sheep. The Navajoes seized the whole of the sheep in payment, and, as the whole affair occurred about 100 miles east of the reservation and the sheep were held by the Indians away from the reservation, I requested the military commander at Fort Wingate to take charge of the affair, which he did. A settlement was effected by allowing the Indians to retain 450 sheep in payment for the Indian killed, with which, being 250 more than ever before claimed by the Navajoes, they were entirely satisfied.

I will here say that, while I do not approve of the practice of placing a certain number of sheep or horses against the life of a man, this is the first settlement of a difficulty of this kind away from the agency. It is all satisfactory to the Indians. In this case the owners of the sheep had to pay the penalty instead of the criminal, all of which might have been avoided if, as in former cases, an indictment had been found by the grand jury and punishment followed by the courts; but I do not know of any attempt being made to bring them to justice. In a singular case which occurred three years ago, the herder who killed an Indian is still in charge of the same herd. The Indians have often threatened to go and take him in order to satisfy their vengeance upon him in their own camp.

At a full council of the Navajo tribe, represented by their chiefs and headmen, held at the agency April 6, 1876, the agent was asked to make a request in behalf of the Navajoes for an extension of their reservation, which request was forwarded April 13, 1876, as made, together with the reasons of the Indians for such extension. Upon examination made since the request of the Navajoes was made and forwarded, it is found that fully one-half of the extension asked for is covered by the grant made by Congress to the Atlantic and Pacific Railway. They already occupy the country, and the only remedy is to induce them to settle in the northeast part of their reservation upon the San Juan River, which small corner is worth more than all the rest of their reservation put together.

This portion of the reservation is not made use of by them on account of the depredations of the Ute Indians, who make descents upon their sheep-herds whenever they venture there seeking pasture. The Navajoes have not forgotten that the Utes were used against them during the Navajo war ten or twelve years ago, and the Utes are naturally fond of war, while the Navajoes have too much to lose by a war, and rather seek for quiet. Also, the Utes are well armed, having large numbers of improved rifles, while the Navajoes are very poorly armed, having nothing better than the old flint-lock muskets altered to percussion-caps. The removal of the agency from its present location to the San Juan River will be the only inducement for them to occupy that portion. There they could engage in agriculture to a much larger extent, as well as find all the pasture they need. The military commander of this district, Col. Edward Hatch, has recommended that a post be established near the San Juan River, in order to be able to control the Utes, who are becoming troublesome. Such a military post makes the removal of the Navajo agency both feasible and desirable in order to make the Navajoes self-supporting.

Another great need is that of a saw-mill, to furnish lumber for the use of the agency, as well as to provide doors and windows for the use of the Indians in their dwellings. They would build a better class of houses than the hogan, now used by them, if lumber were within their reach, and they would not be so ready to abandon them as they now are, which would be one great step toward making them settled in their habits.

Word has been brought to the agency that a delegation of Ute Indians are now in the Chusca Valley advising the Navajoes to purchase nothing but gunpowder and lead, and to lay in all that they can get; also to get the Navajoes to join them in a war against the Americans, alleging that the Americans, as they call all white men, are going to take all their land away from them.

Now while I can advise the Navajoes of the folly of such a move, and the disaster it would bring to them, it would be well to have the act passed by the last session of Congress in regard to the sale of arms and ammunition made more stringent; for, if I understand it rightly, it applies to Indian traders, and not to any citizen who may see proper to trade with the Indians. Upon this reservation there is one licensed trader. The agency is within 200 or 300 feet of the reservation boundary-line. Any one can establish a trading-post within a quarter of a mile and be outside of the control of the agent. And one party who has such a trading-post informed me that he preferred to have his store outside of the reservation, for the reason that no one could prevent his trading with the Indians and getting such prices as he pleased.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ALEX. G. IRVINE,  
*United States Agent for Navajoes.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.