

(COPY)

QUILLICI MERCANTILE CO.

WELLS, NEVADA

August 20, 1926.

Mr. Frederic Snyder,
Carson City Indian School,
Stewart, Nevada.



Dear Sir:

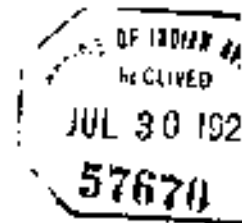
Replying to your letter of the 13th; and in regard to the old Indians mentioned in my letter some time ago, they are Shoshone Indians. They have no allotment whatever nor resources of any kind, they have always been able to work on the ranches and earn their board and clothes but now they are too old to work and earn even their board.

I help them considerable, myself from time to time, I also took the matter up with the County Commissioners, to see if I could get some monthly allowance to take care of them. The Commissioners stated, "that they don't have any funds to be distributed to the Indians," They told me to take the matter up with you, and they felt certain that you would be able to care for this old couple.

Yours truly,

(Signed) D.E. Quillici.

July 24, 1924



Dear Madam

July 24, 24

J. C. Redkins

I want to know
if you could help
old Indians all over
State have old couples
But you got to that
now. I got to have
you to that I got two
old woman here to
help them. I know
two at Ruby Valley
to they can work
if you want to
that I can get them
close the Railroad
so they get some

2
late. I sure want
you to help them.
I want you to
ask facts here at
Death.

From

-Gen. Moore

Death Rev.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE

RENO INDIAN AGENCY,
RENO, NEVADA,
July 26, 1924.



file

Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

Attention is called to letter enclosed from George Moore, a Shoshone Indian living at Beeth, Nev., a station on the Southern Pacific railroad near Piko.

The letter refers to several destitute old Indians of that vicinity, also at Husy Valley (50 to 60 miles south) who are in need of help.

There are a number of cases of the kind among all three tribes of the State--Shoshone, Washoe and Paiute--scattered about in the various villages or camps, to which the consideration of your Office has been asked a number of times.

that

The important thing to know, of course, is as to whether Government funds may be expended toward assisting these people without fear of disallowance of such expenditures by the General Accounting Office.

Kindly take the matter up with that Office and advise me as to the decision.

Respectfully,

James E. Jenkins
Superintendent.

Wells

28753-1924-Revic-224

April 8, 1924



Wells, Nevada
4-8-24,

Dropping you a few lines to
day. You know our treaty
was made in the year of
1863 and our tribe of Indian
was suppose to get \$5,000 a
year for twenty years, so
I'm asking you if you
would know any thing about
this, because we are getting
~~to~~ Hard times now, you know
we want land if we can get
it so ~~we~~ we can farm would
you write to Washington ~~and~~
find out about this, so let
me know. Yours Truly
Dudman Johnson

Wells 28753-1424- Reno -224

April 10, 1924

6-1142

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE



Wells
Indian Office,
Washington

Reno, Nev., April 10/24.

Enclosed is a letter from an Indian (Shoshone, no doubt) from Wells, Nev., near the northern corner of the State. These Indians have no land and no houses to speak of.

I get many letters of this character from the Indians of that section.

Very respectfully,
J. E. Jenkins,
Agent.

Wells / Billy Meyers

File: 78169-39 - Western Shoshone - 153

18169-39-WS-

November 13, 1939

Hon. J. M. Stewart, Director
U. S. General Land Office
Washington, D. C.

18169

Dear Sir:

We, the undersigned, represent the Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada, and particularly in the vicinity of Wells, Nevada, and we have a grievance in this. That about ten miles south of Wells there is a section of land comprising about one mile square, (we are unable to give you the section, township and range) which was originally owned by the Indians and subsequently leased, but no rent was ever received, and now a white man by the name of Charley Sowyer occupies the land and claims to be the owner.

We desire that your office investigate and advise us what his status is. He certainly did not buy it from the Indians and we cannot understand how he is entitled to occupy it and ask that you make an investigation and advise us as quickly as you can.

We are asking for this information for and on behalf of our people and await your early answer.

Respectfully yours,

Chief Billy Meyers

Chief Jim Charley

Chief Johnny Long

Chief Billy Moss

Chief Jimmy Bird

Chief Albert Stanton

Wells, Nevada

December 14, 1939



Honorable J. M. Stewart
Director Land
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Stewart:

Your acknowledged receipt your instant December 8. As we very glad to hear from you. As, the undersigned, we representing of the Western Band of the Shoshone Tribes of Nevada, now we are chief investigated quickly as we can. We understand any of white man no allowed no taking away Indians land to protect the interest of the Indians land, which are be occupied them. And now a white man by the name of Charley Schoer occupied the land and claim to be the owner out there to Clover Valley south of Wells about ten miles and the said a treaty or law no any white person taking away any of Indian land there is allowfully. Do that, you know the Indians as first entitled before, the while no got rights, besure.

Please take this matter up, we put your hand quickly as you can. We are all Chiefs desire that your office investigation and advise us what his status is, we are the Chiefs asking for this information for and our behalf of our peoples, why did any of white person taking away Indians land or Indians rights too. There is not rights to us. We don't satisfied that. But taking away from us every thing upon this earth. Want you to do this action and return to an Indians the legal owner. Please answer quick as you can.

SIGNED BY

Chief Billey Meyers
Chief Jim Charley
Chief Albert Stanton
Chief Jimmy Bird
Chief George McQueen
Chief Johnny Long
Chief Billy Moe

Tribes Councilmen
Lort Bull Brock
Charley Brigham
Johnnie John
Billey Long
Ruby Johnson

Secretary, Glads Bird

1-2-40
Report already requested.
File

Wells / Billy Meyers

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
FIELD SERVICE

Federal Building
Room 1
Elko, Nevada
January 18, 1940

4980

Mr. Carl W. Beck, Superintendent
Western Shoshone Agency
Owyhee, Nevada

Dear Mr. Beck:

Yesterday, I spent the day at Wells going out to locate the lands south of Wells that Billy Meyers claims belongs to the Ruby Valley Band.

The land in question is Section 17 - T- 36 N - R. 52 E. Located in the Schover Ranch Pasture. This Section 17 is one designated as Railroad land, being part of the land grant to the Railroad.

The Indians lived on this tract for nearly forty years, raising hay and fishing and hunting in the nearby mountains. I talked to one of the old ranchers that grew up in this section, Mr. J. H. Bradish. He told me that his people held the water right on this land, and as the Indians died or moved away, they took all the water. The last small part moved away is about 1910 and the Bradish family purchased the buildings and other improvements that the Indians had made. Mr. Bradish stated that the Schover family purchased the southwest quarter of Section 17 from the Union Pacific Railroad.

Mr. Billy Meyers told me that the land claimed is much larger than one section, so perhaps it would best to check all lands in T 36 N - R 52 E.

Respectfully submitted,

13/

Floyd O. Enins
Band Community Worker

ccr

Wells / Billy Meyers

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
FIELD SERVICE

Federal Building
Room 1
Elko, Nevada
February 2, 1940

14960

Mr. C. S. Spencer, Acting Superintendent
Western Shoshone Indian Agency
Owyhee, Nevada

Dear Mr. Spencer:

The Indian Committee of the Wells Community came to my office this morning to find out if they can use the land in Section 17 - 36 E - 62 N for gardens and hay for the crop season of 1940. This tract of land was occupied by this group of Indians for a long period of time and at this time, was used for gardens, hay and a place to live.

The Wells Committee states that they are very anxious to have the use of this land. This has been discussed by the members of the Wells group.

The land referred to is the same as stated in my letter of January 18th which was in reply to a letter from Superintendent Carl E. Beck written January 4th, 1940.

Very truly yours,
15 /

Floyd C. Evans
Head Community Worker

ldr

This letter is written as requested by me and the members of my committee.

15 /
Billy Meyers, Chief
Wells, Nev.

His Mark

sent to the
office of the
Providence

Wells
April 30 - 1854

Dear Mr. Wilkinson

MAY 3 1854

Looking over the contents of the
your commission Bureau of Indian Affairs, and we are informed advised by the
Commissioner, that it does not have a claim filed in its name or the name
of the members that in 1851, the Shoshone at Wells requested U.S. Judge
Drigman - City, Tenn, to sign the petition for relief violation of treaty, to file
in their behalf under the Indian Claims Commission act,

of the said, stated he forwarded that petition later on to you Mr. Wilkinson in the
Wells under the Indian Claims Commission in the behalf of Wells Shoshone group
He received the information from Judge Cass, a letter was dated May 31 1853, and
in your case file in the behalf of the Shoshone at Wells,

we requested you to straighten these particular matter for us, the same was
affirmed the decision of the court of claims whenever a bill was filed giving six
claims to five years in which to file claims against the United States, a bill was
filed a few days before the expiration of this date of August 13 1851, by Joseph
Wilkinson and associates, the Te-muck-band just correct value of land in violation
of treaty.

we meet Nevada, Congressman Clifton spring at Reno meeting, he ask each group
about their violation of treaty, he said, did each group filed their claims before Indian Claims
he ask, there was no group answer the question, he said each group should filed their claims by
August 13 1851 or with such claims thereafter be entertained by Congress. I said to him, which
which Judge will state, did you filed our claims before the claims act, answer is yes, a 1851
Sincerely yours
Thos. H. Lawrence & Co. Wells

Ernest L. Wickham
Brighton, Conn. University
Box 407

Wells River

Wells River
May 13 - 1951
J. H. ...
MAY 13 1951

Dear Mr. Wickham:

I have your letter of May 8th and I received a similar copy from your attorney you stated you were not on record as the Indian Commission which is going and other members of my land is before the August 13, 1951, and are presenting their claims at the present time.

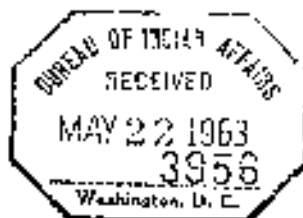
I must receive information from the United States Congress letter you sent to me. I have no authority to restore the lands at Wells River to your reservation and you contact your attorney regarding to restore the lands at Wells River to your reservation. Your attorney regarding the status of your suit before the Indian Claims Commission, and again suggest you notified the Indian Claims Commission Bureau of Indian Affairs that your claims, these claims were filed in the name of the Indians at Wells River, before the August 13, 1951, by Ernest L. Wickham and associate.

When we were notified the Commissioner Bureau of Indian Affairs about this the Commissioner thought these claims does not fit in the name of the Indians at Wells River that in 1951, the Indians at Wells River, requested S. C. the City Judge of Brighton Utah, to enjoin the violation of treaty.

Answer as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours
Dave H. ...
Box 407
Wells River

United States
Senate Committee
James H. Hamble
5100 Pan-Am Senate Office Building
Washington D. C.



Stella, Nevada
April 23 1963

Dear Mr. Hamble

We the undersigned the members of Western Band of the Shoshone Nation of Indians of Nevada, and individual members thereof, it is hereby given this statement for the consider of Senate in behalf of the Indians in the Stella area.

The information given that the Western Shoshone Indians had aboriginal Indian title to a tract of land primarily in Nevada with a part extending into California. that the information given about the claims of the Western Shoshone Indians based on lands in Nevada has been helpful to these Indians in the Stella area.

as you know, there is no original reservation ever been established on the Western Shoshone Indians territorial claims, Now I want the United States Government to development of a reservation under the provisions of the Western Shoshone treaty of October 1, 1863 (12 Stat. 687), that would fulfilling part of the Government promise and No matter how poor the lands are it suitable for the Indians.

These Indians of Stella area, they has been informed that even if public domain lands suitable for their need were available, it could be set aside as a reservation for the Shoshone Indians residing in the Stella area under the provisions of the Western Shoshone treaty of October 1, 1863 (12 Stat. 687). 2 Kappeler 851.

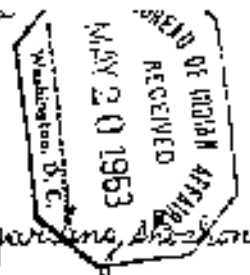
These Shoshone Indians of Stella area said, agree that whenever President of the United States shall deem it expedient for them to abandon the roaming life, which, they now lead, and become herdsmen or agriculturalists, President is hereby authorized to make such reservation for their use as he may deem necessary within the country described and they do also hereby agree to remove their camps to such reservation as President may indicate and to reside therein thenceforth.

With this fact in mind, and trying to discover fairly conclusive answer to this question and returning the answer to me as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours
Jim Chaschira
Robert H. Pahawana
P. O. Box 404
Stella, Nevada

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C.

11. 21. 1963
May 1, 1963
note



Dear Mr. Remington:

This is in response to your letter of April 17, 1963, regarding Shoshone Indians based on lands in Nevada has been helpful to these Indians, we the undersigned the Members of Western Band of the Shoshone Nation of Indians of the Nevada, and individual Members thereof.

It is hereby given this statement for the consider of Bureau official in behalf of the Shoshone Indians in the Wells area, as you know, there is no original reservation ever been established on the Western Shoshone Country Claims. Now I want the United States Government to development of a such reservation for the use of these Indians under the provisions of the Western Shoshone Treaty of October 1, 1863 (U.S. Stat. 489.) that would fulfilling the part of the Government promises and no matter how poor the lands were it suitable for them they has been informed that even if public domain lands suitable for their need were available these Indians of Wells area, they has been contact Mr. Dale M. Baldwin, on November 9, 1962 with his staff, they discussion about Indian land problem and they tried Mr. Baldwin superintendent to restore certain public domain lands for their reservation and they has been failed to do so. Mr. Baldwin superintendent said, these Indians of the Wells area, they get out from the federal state jurisdiction over the Indians in the state of Nevada they would remain under the federal responsibility for the time being upon the desires of the Indians itself, hereafter the federal state does not jurisdiction over these Indians in Wells area, for this reason I cannot contact Mr. Baldwin no use.

United States, being aware of the inconvenience resulting to the Indians in consequence of the driving away and destruction of game along by the white man, and by formation of agricultural and mining settlement, are willing to fairly compensate them for the same; annually for the terms of twenty years, the sum of five thousand dollars in such article, the President of the United States shall deem suitable for their wants and condition, the Indian on the one hand shall acknowledge the reception of the annuities stipulated for, as a full equivalent therefor, that same were due and unpaid by the United States, answer as soon as possible, do not hesitate to write.

Sincerely yours
Doris H. Peterson P.O. Box 404 Wells, Nev.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

Wells - Brief History

TO : Mr. Officer, Associate Commissioner

DATE: December 10, 1963

FROM : Leonard Ware, Chief, Correspondence and Reports L.W.

SUBJECT: Shoshone Indians of Wells Colony, Nevada

This is in response to your request of June 7 to Mrs. Toda for a search of the Archives for information "about when and how the Wells, Nevada, colony of Shoshone Indians became located in their present spot." Wells is in Elko County in Northeast Nevada.

Old Bureau records, beginning in 1868, on file in the National Archives and the Federal Record Center did not reveal any information on this subject. Earlier correspondence from Shoshone Indians in the area (dating back to 1908) mainly concerned their interest in obtaining farm lands in the Wells area and most referred to the Ruby Valley Treaty of 1863 and rights to lands in the area by reason of that treaty.

It has been only within the last 10 years that this office has had frequent inquiries concerning the status of the lands on which Wells Colony is situated. There was nothing in the more recent files and records indicating the exact time the Shoshones finally settled in their present spot. However, information gathered by Agency Real Property Officer Ned Mitchell in 1962, through personal interviews with longtime residents of the area and some of the Shoshones, shows that the Indians had at different times lived on various parts of section 10 lands -- 1886, 1892, 1900, and 1930 -- as well as other lands in the Wells area.

Wells is within the original Western Shoshone territory.^{3/} The Central Pacific Railroad, now the Southern Pacific Railroad, entered Wells in 1869. The City of Wells was incorporated on March 24, 1907.

Agency Real Property Officer Mitchell describes the present camp in his field investigation report of September 25, 1962, as follows:

"A group of ten or more adult Shoshone Indians now live in small shacks located within the city of Wells, Nevada, and probably on lands described as the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, sec. 10, T. 37 N., R. 35 E., MDI, Nevada, which are privately-owned. Most of the

^{1/} A few extracts from early records are attached to this memorandum.

^{2/} See Mitchell's reports of September 25 and October 24, 1962, for names of and information obtained from the witnesses. File: 15893-59-308-Nevada.

^{3/} See section on Early History.

seven dwellings are constructed of railroad ties and some are covered with sheets of tin and one is of frame siding. It is reported that the 8 x 12' frame siding house was moved to its present site in 1928 and the remaining shacks were built about 1934.

* * * The owner, Mr. Birzell, has requested that the Indians be removed from his property (NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ above) which is being prepared for subdivision development."

Following is a brief rundown of the problem: During the early 1950's certain families of Shoshone Indians living in an "Indian camp" outside the city of Wells, located in section 10, T. 37 N., R. 62 E., MEM, alleged that they had title to the land on which they were living because of the Ruby Valley Treaty and requested the status of their tenure to these lands.

Investigations by the Nevada Agency did not disclose conclusive evidence establishing the Indians' claims to the land through either adverse possession or by aboriginal rights. Mr. Mitchell had done considerable research to determine as many of the facts as possible. Superintendent Baldwin reported that the November 1962 meeting with the Wells Indians and others was a distressing experience, in which the spokesmen for the Indians were seemingly unable to accept reasonable explanations. The Indian people feel that the land is theirs by reason of the Ruby Valley Treaty and will not accept anything other than that belief. There is some question whether all the Wells Indians fully support the leadership.

The situation as it now stands is set forth in a letter of June 10, 1963 (2629-63), from you to Senator Frank Church:

The Indians at Wells do not have title to the lands on which they are living. The lands were not set aside for them by treaty. The lands were patented many years ago to non-Indians and the present record owners are pressing for their removal. There is serious doubt that, in the event legal action were brought, the Indians' occupancy of the lands could be protected. There are public domain lands in the vicinity of Wells which might be made available for the use of these Indian people. Also, the City of Wells has offered to make available to them certain vacant city lots which are serviced with all utilities.

Our field officials are working cooperatively with the Indians and the officials of the city to assist in this matter. Our information is that at least some of the Indian people are interested in moving from their present location to lands which would not be subject to other claims of title and ownership.

Status of Section 10, T. 37 N., R. 62 E., MEM. In 1959 records of the Reno office of the Bureau of Land Management showed the $\frac{1}{2}$ of section 10 had been patented to the State of Nevada in 1892 and 1897 and the $\frac{1}{2}$ to W.A. Birzell

in 1938. The entry application by the State discloses no information that the lands were occupied or improved by the Indians. The E₂¹ has never been occupied by the Indians. The existing Indian camp is within the W₂¹.

Owners of record according to the Elko County records were as follows:

NE ₁ ¹ SW ₄ ¹	City of Wells, Nevada
S ₂ ¹ SW ₄ ¹ & NE ₁ ¹ SW ₄ ¹	H. E. Nuttall
E ₂ ¹ & E ₂ ¹ SW ₄ ¹ & NW ₄ ¹ SW ₄ ¹	V. W. Birdzell
SW ₄ ¹ SW ₄ ¹	Mr. Weeks

Mr. Birdzell reported that there were Indian homes on the NE₁¹SW₄¹ and the Indians were living on this property when he acquired it, but that he had no tenure arrangements with them. The deeds in the chain of title on this portion of land contained no reservations for Indian use or occupancy.^{4/}

In his transmittal letter of the above information, dated May 27, 1959, (File 15893-58-308-Nevada), Superintendent Ladd, Nevada Agency, also reported that the Indians at Wells were in possession of an old railroad map on which had been noted in pencil that the W₂¹NE₄¹ and E₂¹SW₄¹ belong to them. However, a later letter^{5/} refers to an old railroad map that Dave Pabawena had, on which they claim the E₂¹ of the SW₄ and the E₂¹ of the NE₄ of sec. 10.

Early History. Before the history of the Western Shoshone Indians became of record, these Indians evidently roamed in small bands or groups in search of food over a vast territory. They had no permanent home. They camped where conditions were favorable and moved as soon as they changed. They cultivated no ground and lived upon wild grass and seeds and roots of wild plants. The largest permanent organization aboriginally was the village, and for most of the year the household was the independent political unit. People of one village within the region were free to utilize the lands within the area occupied by all the Western Shoshone villages.

Under the Ruby Valley Treaty of October 1, 1863 (18 Stat. 689), the Shoshone Indians living in Nevada were designated the Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada. The treaty defined in an indefinite way the Western Shoshone country, covering nearly one-third of the State of Nevada on the east side.^{6/} The treaty provided that the Indians would concede everything that the white

^{4/} Patent dated March 13, 1929, from the State of Nevada to Emanuel Bollschweiler; from Bollschweiler to V. W. Birdzell in 1944; and from V. W. Birdzell to V. W. Birdzell in 1954.

^{5/} Letter of Robert E. Holmes, Assistant to the Superintendent, to Superintendent Ladd, dated September 28, 1959.

^{6/} The lands exclusively used and occupied by the Western Shoshone are described in Findings of Fact No. 23, in Dockets 326 and 367, Opinion rendered by the Indian Claims Commission on October 16, 1969.

people wanted: a right of way for a stage and express lines, railroads, immigrants; the right to mine, farm, to establish stock ranches, use timber; and in fact contained no restriction as to the use of this land by the white people; the Indians agreed to remain friendly and not to molest the settlers and travelers, and to go on a reservation.

lands set aside for Western Shoshones. In 1877 Duck Valley Reservation, outside the Western Shoshone country defined in the treaty, was set apart on the Nevada-Utah boundary. Comparatively few of these Western Shoshones moved to it. The Superintendent in charge had reported that relocating all of these Indians on the reservation would be a difficult task, lasting several years, primarily due to the frequent moving of the Shoshone camps. Some of the scattered groups continued to remain where they were living, many of the families camping near ranches of whites and securing work; others moved near towns and found work on the railroads or in the mines. Thereafter, by executive orders several small tracts were set aside for some of the scattered bands. The others, some 900, remained homeless.

In the 1920's, the Bureau considered purchasing lands for the landless Ruby Valley Shoshone Indians. However, the plan was finally abandoned since a suitable tract with sufficient water rights could not be located within the appropriations limitation.

The land purchase program under the IRA Act (1934) brought new hope to many Indian groups, including the Western Shoshones. Odgers Ranch in Ruby Valley was one of the areas purchased in 1940. Indians from Snake and Wells Colonies had expressed an interest in being included in the program. In fact, one family, apparently from Wells, moved on to Odgers Ranch for a short time according to the Superintendent's report in 1946 (16838-16):

"Since acquisition of the property, five different families have located at Odgers Ranch. Each family has received a loan from revolving credit funds to help establish them in a farm and live-stock enterprise. Only two families have stayed on the project. Of the other three families, two liquidated their property and moved, one to the Wells Colony and one to Owyhee. Children of school age, lack of industry and incompetability were reasons for the move. * * * (emphasis supplied.)

Files have not been checked to see whether Wells Colony Indians may have participated in any of the other purchase programs.

Attachments

Other File References:

2379-03-Nevada-308
14961-52-Nevada-313

Footnote 1/ file references:

78169-39-Western Shoshone-155
28753-24-Reno-224
24195-08-313.1-Gen. Ser.