

(Full text as transcribe by Jim Porter for clarity)

Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

The hereto attached census of the Indians designated "Sheepranch Indians" only aggregating 13 in number, constitutes the remnant of once quite a large band of Indians in former years living in and near the old decaying mining town known and designated on the map as "Sheepranch."

Though once a very prosperous mining town now is most conspicuous on account of its decline and decay. There are more old vacant houses, both business and resident, than those occupied; the best of course being the ones occupied.

I drove over to Sheepranch from Murpheys, that I might be more sure of a correct census and general line-up of the Indians, though on arriving here found all the old little Indian cabins, only three in number, locked and Indians away. Their white neighbors supposed them some where on the nearby streams panning for gold. Learning that Peter Hodge, the leading member of this little band, was working about 5 miles to the north in or near a sawmill, made an effort to find him, but failed as he was too deep in the forests cutting logs to be found in the limited time. I returned to Sheepranch via of his home [sic], which is located about 2 ½ miles north of Sheepranch where I found his wife, two daughters and son, through whom I am reasonably sure I secured a correct census, as hereto attached. Hodges 160 acres was homesteaded by him 5 or 6 years since, is extremely rough, having only about one acre of land that is worth while to attempt to cultivate, and which he has in a splendid garden orchard and berry patch. His house is a small one room typical little Indian cabin. Hodge has built near a small spring of sufficient volume to water his garden, orchard and vines and domestic uses. Quite a bold running creek runs through the east boundary of his 160 [or 180] acres.

His land is so exceedingly rough, poor and inaccessible as to render same, in my opinion, more of a burden and than a blessing [sic]. His wife informed me that he only comes home from his work at the mill on Saturday nights returning on Mondays to his work. His land is even too rough for value as to grazing. Possibly it may have some hog-range value.

By reason of the long and strong attachment of this small band to Sheepranch, the fact that the country to the S., S.W., and W. has developed into considerable farming and fruit country, giving promise for permanent employment nearby for these Indians, and that in the old town a number of old improved places of one to two acres with more or less orchards and vines may be purchased cheap, would suggest, if possible to do so, one or two of such places be purchased for these Indians.

In furtherance of this suggestion I am by even date herewith writing Mrs. Wm. Hoyle of Stockton, Calif. who I am informed owns and will likely sell one or possibly two of such places.

I have in mind two such places I inspected while at Sheepranch that will fairly well meet the requirements of this little band which I have been led to believe may be purchased for not exceeding \$400.00, perhaps not over \$300.00.

Very respectfully,

/s/ John (*illegible*),

Special Indian Agent.

N.B. the two Indians, "Abe Lincoln" & "Jeff Davis", Abe at Murpheys & Jeff at Sheepranch, were c[h]ristened their respective names by the early miners during the progress of the civil war, they then being quite chunks [?] of boys, spending much of their time around the mining camps.

(Sheepranch Indians)

Census of the Indians at and near Sheepranch in Calaveras Co. Calif.

Peter Hodge 56, wife Annize [?]46, and 4 children, Malida 19, Lena 15, Tom 13 and Andy 10 (Hodge is ½ and his wife full blood)

Jeff Davis 53 [58?] and wife Betsey, 60, full bloods,

Mrs. Limpey 80, full blood

John Tecumchey 46 and wife Pinkey 40, full bloods

Mamy Duncan, Gradaughter (sic) of Jeff Davis, 8 years old, ¾ blood.

[The letter shows number of Indians in a column on right side of page, but all the numbers and the "Total" are illegible on the photocopy I have. The tally above names 12 people. JWP 5/10/11]

N.B. – To some extent the Indians of Sheepranch, Murphys, Six-Mile, Avery and Angles<sup>1</sup> are interchangeable in their relations.

Very respectfully,

/s/ John (*illegible*)

Special Indian Agent.

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<sup>1</sup> Probably Angel's Camp, about 5 miles West of Murphys