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SURVEYING LANDS IN INDIAN TERRITORY.

LETTER

FROM

THE ACTING SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TRANSMITTING

A communication from the Secretary of the Interior submitting an estimate for surveying lands in Indian Territory.

FEBRUARY 15, 1896.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

February 14, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith, for the consideration of Congress, copy of a communication from the Secretary of the Interior of the 13th instant submitting an estimate of appropriation, \$200,000, for surveying lands in the Indian Territory during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1897.

Respectfully, yours,

S. WIKE,
Acting Secretary.

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

Washington, February 13, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith an estimate of appropriation of \$200,000, submitted by the Director of the United States Geological Survey through the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, as the amount deemed necessary to continue the survey of the lands of the Five Civilized Tribes in the Indian Territory during the fiscal year 1897.

The estimate is approved, and the early and favorable action of Congress is respectively asked.

Very respectfully,

HOKE SMITH, *Secretary.*

The SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, February 13, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt, by Department reference for consideration and immediate report, in duplicate, of a communication from the Director of the Geological Survey, dated February 11, 1896, relative to the progress made by his office in the survey and subdivision of the lands of the Indian Territory to February 1, 1896, under the provisions in the act of Congress of March 2, 1895 (28 Stat. L., 876), in which an appropriation of \$200,000 was made, and submitting an estimate for the continuance of that work. It appears from the Director's report that about five-twelfths of the entire work in the Territory has been "controlled." He estimates that with the present force it will require about two years from the first of July next to complete the entire work, including the writing up of the field notes, and on this basis an appropriation of \$200,000 will be required for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1897. He states that if it is deemed desirable to push the work more rapidly than at present an appropriation of \$300,000 at the present session of Congress will be necessary, and the force increased fully 75 per cent.

I have no other knowledge regarding the plans and progress of this work than that contained in the Director's report, but as it has been placed in the hands of the Geological Survey, and has progressed satisfactorily thus far, I see no reason why it should not be continued and completed under the direction of that Bureau if it be the policy of the Department to continue the work to completion. I would respectfully submit, however, that this is a question to be determined by the Department.

I have the honor to return the estimate for \$200,000 submitted by the Director of the Geological Survey, together with his communication upon the subject.

It may not be improper to add in connection with this matter that a bill (S. 835) was introduced in the Senate December 16, 1895, making an appropriation of \$300,000 to be expended under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior to survey the lands of the Five Civilized Tribes, and for other purposes. Copy herewith.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

D. M. BROWNING, *Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY,
Washington, D. C., February 11, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following brief report upon the progress made by this office in the survey and subdivision of the lands of the Indian Territory to February 1, 1896, and an estimate for the continuance of that work:

This work was commenced under the provisions of an act of Congress approved March 2, 1895, in which an appropriation of \$200,000 was made. A plan of operations was approved by you on March 21, and preparations were immediately made to begin the work. The requisite animals and camp equipage were purchased and shipped to South McAlester, in the Choctaw Nation, the point selected as the headquar-

ters for the work. Toward the close of March two parties were placed in the field. One of these commenced work by extending the Indian base, which is the base upon which the surveys in the Chickasaw Nation and in Oklahoma rest, and this base was extended eastward 50 miles into the Choctaw Nation. The other party ran the second guide meridian northward as a principal meridian from its intersection with the base line.

Early in April two parties were put in the field for running township exteriors, and shortly afterwards four subdivision parties were sent out. Since then this force has been increased from time to time, two subdivision parties for running township exteriors having been added, besides a number of surveyors for the subdivision parties, until, by October 1, there were in the field and at work two parties for running standard lines, four parties for running exteriors, and sixteen surveyors engaged in subdividing townships, the latter class being grouped in four parties, in charge of topographers permanently employed by this Bureau.

The triangulation by which the work is controlled was inaugurated by obtaining, by astronomic observation, an initial point in the vicinity of Savanna, in the Choctaw Nation. From this a base line was measured and triangulation expanded from it over the area to be subdivided.

Results.—The results of the primary triangulation may be summed up in the statement that forty-nine stations have been selected and signals built upon them and angles measured from them. By means of these stations an area of about 10,000 square miles, or about five-twelfths of the area of the Territory, has been controlled.

The progress in subdivision work may be summarized in the statement that 11,770 miles of line have been run out. Of this mileage 970 miles are of standard lines, 1,790 miles are township exteriors, 8,770 miles are subdivision, or section lines, and 240 are meander lines. The work thus far done completes the subdivision of 120 full townships and 26 fractional townships. It is included mainly in the western part of the Choctaw Nation, but embraces the entire Seminole and a part of the Creek country, while standard lines have been run into the Cherokee Nation. The progress of the work is represented upon the accompanying Land Office map of Indian Territory, wherein the standard and exterior lines are represented by lines drawn with red ink, and the townships which have been subdivided have been colored.

The mapping of topography has followed closely the work of subdivision. Up to the end of January an area of 4,200 square miles had been mapped.

Expense.—There had been expended upon the Indian Territory survey up to the close of January the sum of \$132,000, in round numbers. Of this, in round numbers, \$23,000 was expended for outfit, such as animals, camp equipage, etc., and \$9,000, in round numbers, has been expended upon office work—the preparation of plats and the writing out and copying of field notes. Subtracting these amounts there remains the sum of \$100,000 which has been expended upon field work, including triangulation, line running, and mapping of topography. The mileage of lines run would amount, under the rates allowed by the General Land Office for the different classes of lines and the different kinds of country, to the sum of \$111,000, showing an excess over the amount expended of \$11,000.

Thus far the work has been done thoroughly and accurately, well within the limits of error permitted by the General Land Office. In all cases where the errors have exceeded these limits, the fact has been

discovered and the work has been revised and corrected. The corners have been thoroughly marked and have been connected with the stations in the primary triangulation, so that they can be easily recovered in case the marks should be removed.

Future plans and estimates.—With the present force working through the winter it is estimated that the entire Territory will be completed within two years from the 1st of July next; this to include the writing up of all field notes. On this basis an appropriation of \$200,000 will be required for the fiscal year 1896-97.

The work has proceeded more slowly than was anticipated, owing to the difficulties met with in the lowlands and river bottoms of the Canadian and Arkansas drainage. With the work in those areas it was a question of rapidity in the chopping out of undergrowth and timber rather than one of survey in the strict sense. In the estimate submitted by the Land Office it was estimated that one-fourth of the country was timber and three-fourths open. The actual surveys and observations, however, show that the reverse is the case. Considerable delay was occasioned also by illness in the camps, due to malarial influences.

An examination of the reports of the surveyors thus far received shows that three-fourths of the country is timbered and that one-third of this is mountainous and broken. This proportion will probably be exceeded rather than reduced in the remaining parts of the Territory. On this basis, it is clear that it will require, in addition to the \$200,000 already appropriated, at least \$300,000 to complete the survey of the Territory. If it is deemed desirable to push the work more rapidly than at present an appropriation of \$300,000 should be made at the present session of Congress and the force increased fully 75 per cent. If the work is continued with the present force \$200,000 will be required for the fiscal year, as above stated.

I append an estimate for the continuance of the work.

I am, with respect, your obedient servant,

CHAS. D. WALCOTT, *Director.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

Estimates of appropriations required for the service of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1897, by the Indian Department.

Surveying lands in the Indian Territory:

For the continuation of the survey of the lands in the Indian Territory, \$200,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to be immediately available: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Interior may, in his discretion, direct that the surveys herein authorized, or any part of them, in the Indian Territory shall be made under the supervision of the Director of the Geological Survey by such persons as may be employed by or under him for that purpose. And such surveys shall be executed under instructions to be issued by the Secretary of the Interior, and subdivisational surveys shall be executed under the rectangular system, as now provided by law: *Provided further*, That when any surveys shall have been so made and plats and field notes thereof prepared, they shall be approved and certified to by the Director of the Geological Survey, and two copies thereof shall be returned, one for filing in the Indian Office and one in the General Land Office; and such surveys, field notes, and plats shall have the same legal force and effect as heretofore given to the acts of surveyors-general: *Provided further*, That all laws inconsistent with the provisions hereof are hereby declared to be inoperative as respects such surveys. (Indian act, Mar. 2, 1895, vol. 28, p. 900, sec. 1)..... \$200,000
 Amount appropriated for the current fiscal year ending June 30, 1896.. 200,000