

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Area Director

FROM : Area Realty Officer

SUBJECT: Sheep Ranch Rancheria

DATE: AUG 13 1971

In reply refer to:
Real Prop. Mgmt.
Acq. & Disp. Sec.
308 - Sheep Ranch Rancher

Mrs. Mabel Hodge Dixie, the sole distributee under the Distribution Plan approved August 18, 1966, died in Sonora, California, on July 11, 1971, and was buried in St. Patrick's cemetery in Sonora. She was born on January 18, 1918.

Mr. Weldon A. Rolfe visited the Rancheria on August 5 and talked to Lena Hodge Shelton, age 71, an Indian who lives in the first house north of the Rancheria. Mrs. Shelton was born and raised in Sheep Ranch. Her daughter, Dora Shelton Mota, age 49, of Long Beach, California, was visiting at her mother's home and said she will be there most of August. Both ladies were at the office here several days ago. Mrs. Mota would like to move into the house and Mr. Rolfe told her that we may be able to issue her a permit. Mr. Rolfe also talked to Mr. and Mrs. Warren Scott, non-Indians and both about 80, who have lived in Sheep Ranch about 50 years.

The house is in excellent condition. The back door is unlocked and Mrs. Mota and Mr. Rolfe went inside. Mrs. Dixie's belongings are still in the house and Mr. Rolfe took an inventory of the furniture. The 20' x 24' house was constructed in 1967 at a cost of \$8,500.00 and the septic tank, installed by Phoenix Health Service, would cost about \$1,500.00. The 0.92 acre was appraised at \$2,500.00 in 1967.

After visiting Sheep Ranch, Mr. Rolfe went to West Point and looked up Richard Dixie, oldest of the four sons of Mabel Dixie, who is staying with his cousin, Lawrence Wilson. Mr. Rolfe also talked to the non-Indian wife of Charles Wilson who lives on Sac-70, Frank Fisher.

The following are the probable heirs of Mabel Hodge Dixie:

Richard Dixie, son, c/o Lawrence Wilson, Box 189, West Point, Calif.

Melvin Dixie, son, c/o Gussie Butler, Sonora, Calif.

Tom Dixie, son, c/o Gussie Butler, Sonora, Calif.

Yakima Edward Dixie, son, California Institution for men, Chino, Calif.

Merle Butler, common-law husband, Sonora, Calif.

The Indians in that area claim that Mrs. Dixie was never legally divorced from the father of her sons, Romie Dixie of Angels Camp, California. It appears that they separated about 25 years ago.



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Mr. Rolfe told Richard Dixie that he should go to Sheep Ranch and look after his deceased mother's belongings. Mr. Dixie said that he planned on going Friday morning, August 6. Both the Scotts and Mrs. Shelton stated that they heard that he planned on returning for the purpose of burning Mrs. Dixie's clothing, which appears to be an Indian custom.

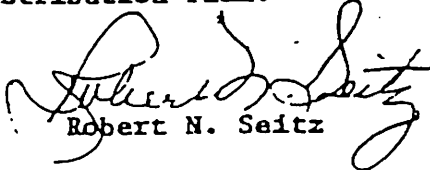
The actions required under the Plan for Distribution of the Assets of the Sheep Ranch Rancheria were completed, except the conveyance to Mrs. Dixie of unrestricted and recordable title. The property was actually deeded to Mrs. Dixie on April 11, 1967 and recorded in the Calaveras County records. The deed was never delivered to her because the Bureau of Indian Affairs was unable to get a court appointed conservator. The transfer of title was nullified by a quit claim deed executed by Mrs. Dixie on September 7, 1967, which reverted the title of the property to the United States of America.

The regulations set forth in 25 CFR 242.9 read as follows:

"Beneficial interest. Upon approval of a plan, revision, or modification thereof by the Secretary and acceptance by a majority of the adult distributees, the distributees listed in the plan, revision, or modification shall be the final list of Indians entitled to participate in the distribution of the assets of the rancheria or reservation, and the rights or beneficial interests of each person whose name appears on this list may be inherited or bequeathed, but shall not otherwise be subject to assignment, alienation or encumbrance before the transfer by the United States of full legal title to such assets, except with the approval of the Secretary." (underscoring supplied)

Following the regulations set forth above, Mrs. Dixie's death should be reported to the Hearing Examiner for probate. We would appreciate an opportunity to discuss this matter to resolve the distribution of the Sheep Ranch Rancheria.

We are attaching a copy of the Distribution Plan.


Robert N. Seitz

Attachment.