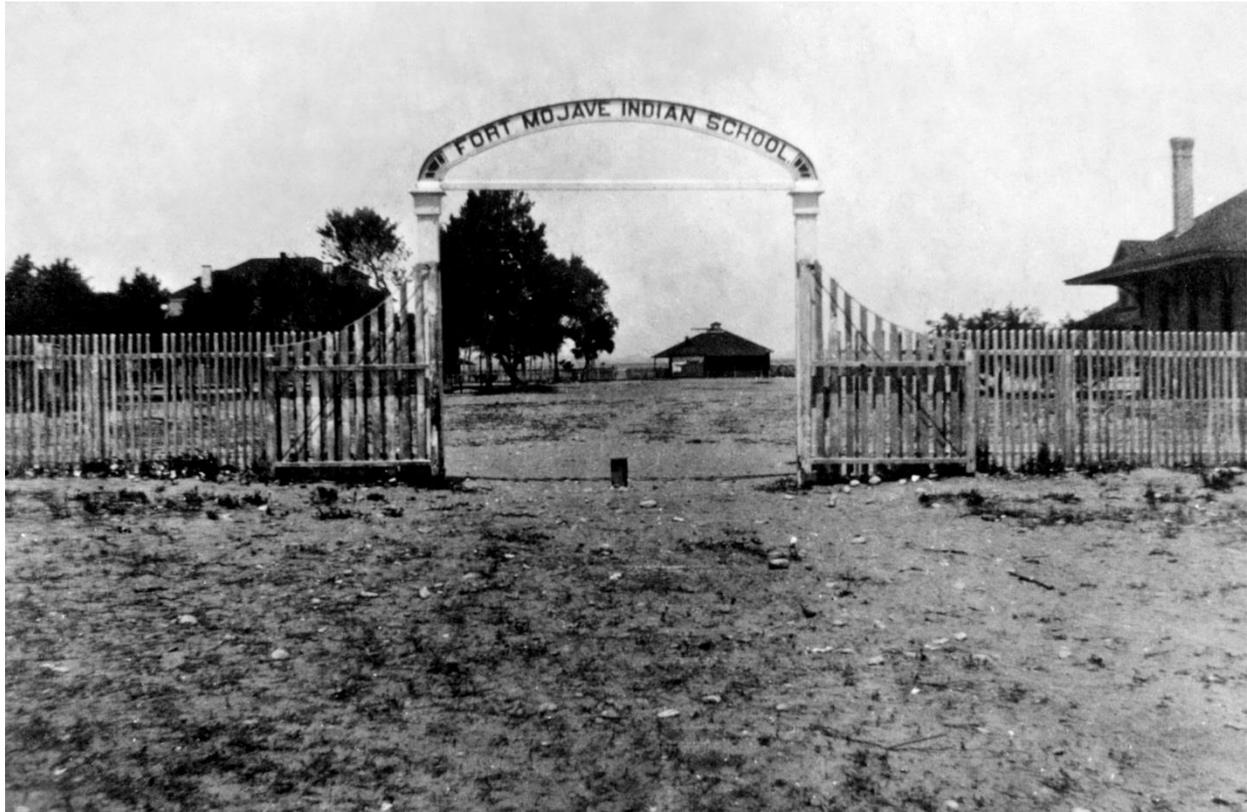


FORT MOHAVE INDIAN SCHOOL



On June 16, 1890, Samuel M. McCowen, was sent to organize a school at the military post at Fort Mojave, as its first superintendent. The formal transfer of the post was made on August 22, 1890. The name of the Fort Mojave Agency and School was retained until March 9, 1891 when the institution became known as the Herbert Welsh Institute. By December 1892, this name was dropped, and the old name of Fort Mojave resumed.

The Fort Mojave Indian School was combined with the Colorado River Agency on December 1, 1915 under August F. Duclos. Duclos was formerly the superintendent at Fort Mojave but became the superintendent of both agencies. On April 1, 1917, William E. Thackrey assumed the superintendency of the just the school, which became a separate jurisdiction at that time. The reservation continued to be managed by the Colorado River Agency in Parker, Arizona. Thackrey was the sole superintendent, until 1930, when Timothy G. Mackey assumed that function. Discussions regarding the closing of the school began in 1929, when Charles J. Rhodes became Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and the

school was closed on August 31, 1931.

Superintendents included Samuel M. McCowen, John J. McKoin, Duncan D. MacArthur, Charles S. McNichols, August F. Duclos, William E. Thackrey, and Timothy G. Mackey.

Reference: The National Archives

In 1889 President Benjamin Harrison selected Thomas J. Morgan as his new Commissioner of Indian Affairs to oversee the reformulation of indigenous education policy. In 1890 the United States Congress allocated funds to establish a boarding school to serve the Hualapai and Mojave Indians. On August 22, 1890 Commissioner Morgan formally turned Fort Mojave over to his choice for superintendent, Samuel M. McCowan. McCowan oversaw the opening of the school in 1890 and remained its supervisor for six years. The school was originally called the Fort Mojave Agency and School until March 9, 1891, when it became known as the Herbert Welsh Institute. By December 1892, the name was changed to the Fort Mojave Indian School. At various times, the school was also referred to as the Fort Mojave Industrial School and the Fort Mojave Indian Industrial School. While at the school, Superintendent McCowan used the guidelines already in use at nearby schools in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Grand Junction, Colorado. McCowan hired teachers to instruct students in Guide to the Fort Mojave Indian School Records - Page 4 rudimentary English, mathematics, geography, and American history. He received funding to hire a farmer, blacksmith, and carpenter to teach males vocational skills, and a matron to guide females in domestic skills such as sewing and cooking. With limited funds, McCowan found himself placing more emphasis on the vocational curriculum in an effort to provide students with necessities such as food and clothing. By the mid-1890s, problems associated with the removal of Native American children from their homes became evident as runaways became a major problem at all schools. Reformers highlighted the hardships placed on both children and their families who were caught between two cultures. A movement to reform educational policy began when Theodore Roosevelt appointed Francis Leupp Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1905. Between 1905 and 1920

Leupp worked to build a case against off reservation boarding schools. In 1926 Secretary of the Interior Herbert Work commissioned the Institute of Government Research to complete a thorough study of reservation conditions throughout the country. Presented to Congress in 1928, the report, titled "The Problem of Indian Administration," known as the Meriam Report, found United States Indian policy to be a failure and was especially critical of education efforts. Utilizing the social momentum of the Meriam Report, Indian policy shifted back toward the expansion of reservation schools and worked to close the remaining off-reservation institutions. The Fort Mojave Indian School closed in 1931.

Source: "Department of the Interior. Office of Indian Affairs. Fort Mojave Indian School. (4/1/1917-8/31/1931). Organization Authority Record," The National Archives Catalog, accessed April 12, 2018. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/18573420>.