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Hovenweep National Monument

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April 2024

### US Dept of Interior (NPS) Hovenweep National Monument Square Tower Group: Hovenweep Memorandum

National Park Service of the United States

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UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Region Three  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

February 23, 1950

Memorandum

To: Regional Administrator, Region 4  
Bureau of Land Management

From: Acting Regional Director

Subject: Status of Lot 5, Section 2, T. 33 N., R. 19 W., N.M.P.M.

This will acknowledge Mr. Brown's letter of February 13 regarding trespass or unlawful agricultural use of the land mentioned above. In this letter Mr. Brown requested the attitude of the National Park Service regarding prior unlawful occupancy and agricultural use of the land during the time it was withdrawn under Executive Order 5201.

This area was originally recommended for withdrawal on March 30, 1923, by Dr. C. G. Abbott, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, pursuant to the repeated requests of Dr. Paul C. Martin of the Field Museum of Natural History, who wished to have the major Lowry Ruin, situated thereon, established as a National Monument following his completion of excavation under a sequence of Antiquity Act permits issued by the Secretary of the Interior.

The excavation of ruins on this homestead entry, number 052323, was subsequently so rigorously protested by McKendrie Foster, illiterate brother of the original entryman, that excavations were temporarily terminated pending investigation by land examiners from Salt Lake City, requested by Consulting Archeologist Museum and Secretarial instructions to resume excavation.

Commissioner Spry of the General Land Office reported adversely April 7, 1923, on the proposed National Monument status. It was not the intention of the Antiquities Act to include within a National Monument land embraced in an unperfected homestead claim. Also, a portion of the land was formerly Indian land and could not be acquired unless payment was made to the Indians.

Due to economic conditions, Dr. Martin terminated his excavation program there in the early 1930's and prior to its completion