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Adm
Biographical Sketch
McCabe & Maurice

J. MAURICE McCABE

The life of J. Maurice McCabe is far more than another success story. The story containing such a series of overtones of victory over what many would regard as insurmountable odds and obstacles, including a brush with death, would be quite sufficient to elevate the McCabe story to a unique position among American success sagas, but the additional fact that an American Indian could break through the frontier of prejudices which still exist even in this enlightened age and attain such executive and moral leadership among his own Navajo people in the surrounding communities earmarks the story of his life as one demanding very special consideration and appreciation.

Only because the Indian world of affairs is still something separate, unique, and to some degree apart from the run-of-the-mill affairs in the business community of the country could have obscured the otherwise noteworthy fact that this energetic young man is performing the duties equivalent to those of general manager of one of the nation's largest and most active corporations. In a conventional business world, McCabe would already have been noted as a "man of distinction" in the Who's Who of business. Already, he is privately so known among the businessmen who move in and out of the dynamic and volatile developments of this vast underdeveloped country in the heart of the United States where the oil, gas, mineral and timber developments all only matched in their significance and impact on western economy, by the astonishing human development any place among the great Navajo Nation spreading over 16,000,000 acres in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

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A full-blood Navajo Indian, he was born October 18, 1923 at Tohatchi, New Mexico. His father, Edward McCabe, Sr., from the Kinlichee, Arizona, area was a direct descendant of Barboncito, one of the great Navajo leaders of the early days, a signer of the Treaty of 1868. The blood of inherent leadership flows in McCabe's veins. His mother is the formerly Helen Begay of Mariano Lake, New Mexico.

Young Maurice entered the first grade at Tohatchi, New Mexico; later he transferred to the mission school at Ganado, Arizona, and finished grade school at the mission at Rehoboth, New Mexico. He attended the Navajo Methodist Mission High School at Farmington, New Mexico, graduating in 1941.

As war clouds gathered before Pearl Harbor a physical examination revealed that he was a victim of tuberculosis. For a year and a half he underwent treatment in Phoenix, and when his condition improved, he enrolled in the Cox Commerical School there, where he was a student during 1942-43. He found employment as a bookkeeper with the City of Phoenix Transportation Company and in 1945 married Katherine Whipple of Crownpoint, New Mexico. Mr. and Mrs. McCabe have three children: Eldon - 13, Henry - 8 and Carol - 6.

Determined to acquire additional schooling, McCabe returned to Phoenix, enrolled in the Lamson Business College and found employment with a chemical company for on-the-job training as a bookkeeper. During the next three years he attended school nights and weekends did bookkeeping jobs, but found time to teach a Sunday School class on Sundays. He was promoted to office manager of the chemical company in 1946.

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The Navajo Tribe was then in the infancy of Tribal organization. McCabe was appointed Navajo Tribal Treasurer on July 1, 1951. In 1952, his abilities, quickly demonstrated anew in the services of the Tribe, had been brought to the attention of the John Hay Whitney Foundation and he was given one of the Foundation's annual awards--a scholarship to any school of business administration. He chose the University of California and in spite of the lack of conventional credits required for admission to a graduate school, arrangements were made for his admission in recognition of his native executive ability. It would have been a disaster for the Navajo Tribe at that state of its development to have lost McCabe's services. His keen sense of duty and obligation to his people prevailed over his unsatisfied appetite for further education and a natural reach for broader intellectual horizons. After postponing the scholarship for a year in an effort to create a situation in the business affairs of the Tribe of such order that he could be spared for a time, he declined the scholarship to remain on the Reservation to serve his people.

In February, 1955, when Paul Jones became Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council, he asked McCabe to stay on to assist him in handling the vastly increased and complex business affairs of the Tribe in which business administration became an ever more acute problem with the discovery of oil and gas and the rising revenues pouring into the Tribal treasury from oil and gas bonuses and royalties. Uranium developments preceded oil and gas, but even with three uranium processing plants located on the reservation, income for the Tribe never

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rose to the proportions which followed the discovery of oil and gas. Operating as assistant to the Chairman and Vice Chairman, McCabe acquired the confidence of the Navajos and the Tribal Council as one who attended the day-to-day business executive problems, from the little ones to the big ones, from the hiring and firing of personnel, to supervision of the oil and gas leasing program.

In August, 1957, by resolution of the Navajo Tribal Council, McCabe's title was changed from Secretary-Treasurer to Executive Secretary of the Navajo Tribe with a firmer designation of duties and responsibilities and a specific direction to propose a reorganization of the Tribal staff to meet the ever-increasing executive burdens of Tribal business.

The McCabe achievements in organizing and directing the operation of such a unique organization are too numerous to mention. With his knowledge of accounting, and at the demanding pace which he sets for himself, he personally supervised and opened the first set of books for the Tribal organization; he produced the first real balance sheet ever read to the Navajo Tribal Council, and he was the first Navajo to master the complexities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs financing.

He brought in Remington Rand analysts to assist in an orderly establishment of a record system for the mounting files of the Tribe. He introduced International Business Machines, bringing under orderly control an emergency stock feeding program in the crisis of the drought years when the Government opened its granaries to small stockmen threatened with the destruction of their stock by drought conditions,

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utilizing IBM cards to keep track of the distribution which had to be strictly in accordance with Government law and regulations. The Navajo Tribe thus became the first tribe in the United States to adopt the efficient techniques of modern business machines.

With inspired leadership and commanding the respect of all with whom he came in contact, Maurice McCabe organized the Tribal offices on a business basis, met the challenge of the vastly increased business of the Tribe with the establishment of proper procedures to provide employment and produce revenues for the Tribe, in addition to which he has managed all Tribal enterprises at an early period.

Having experienced near poverty during his early days of study, McCabe led the movement to establish the \$5,000,000 Navajo Tribal Scholarship fund which was later increased to \$10,000,000. He has been a constant member of the Scholarship Committee representing the Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council. Continuous interest in the knowledge of the students from Navajoland, now scattered throughout the schools and colleges and universities of the country through the medium of the Tribal Scholarship funds, is only a partial indication of the deep and kindly human interest he takes in his own people. In the expanded Tribal business organization for which he has primary executive responsibility under the Chairman and Vice Chairman, whose duties on the public front of Navajo affairs are too pressing and too vital to permit continuous attention to the business affairs of the Tribe, McCabe has demonstrated the same inspired human interest and leadership in developing the talents and abilities of young Navajos in the opportunities

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afforded to them by the Tribe's own business organization. In fact, there has been one commonly accepted cure-all for crises and difficulties which arise in any organization, from an excess of pets overrunning a neighbor's yard to finding quarters for a newcomer and meeting a crisis of domestic relations in the family of a staff member, there is one well-known remedy throughout Window Rock, the Navajo Capital - "Call McCabe!"

The Navajo Tribal Parks Program, the Navajo Civic Center, the \$7,500,000 Tribal Sawmill now under construction, the Window Rock Housing Program, the great reservation-wide Chapter House Program, and the Boy and Girl Scout movements have all felt the impact of his vision and leadership. Cognizant of the many needs of Navajo Tribal employees, McCabe conceived the idea of bringing the Dale Carnegie Courses to Window Rock, during which several scores of young men and women have learned to become more outgoing and to develop personal characteristics essential in the modern business world.

A reservation electrification program is now underway. McCabe has participated actively in the creation and advancement of a 1,000,000 kilowatt power plant including contract negotiations, leases and power purchase agreements. Working with Federal and State officials, he initiated the procurement of FHA Housing Benefits for the Reservation and helped with other Navajo leaders to procure the 99-Year Lease Bill with the cooperation of Congressmen, who have become personal friends, and who look to McCabe for any help they may give to the solution of tribal problems. His influence extends to the Department of the Interior

where he is regarded with the deepest respect as the right-hand man of the Chairman.

As he has said, "We are building bridges between the Reservation, State departments and official Washington".

Foremost among the goals he has set for his people is a solution to the jobless problem. He constantly encourages Navajos themselves to establish profitable business enterprises on the Reservation.

Always interested in the welfare of youth, McCabe has encouraged Little League and Babe Ruth baseball throughout the Reservation and is a devoted member of the Window Rock School Board. Scouting has honored this unusual man by naming him to the National Executive Board and the local Council Executive Board and he is the holder of the Gold St. Andrew's Award of the Kit Carson Council. He attended the recent Jamboree at Colorado Springs, Colorado.

He is a member of the Board of Navajo Forest Products Industries and Vice Chairman of the Board's Executive Committee.

Over a cup of coffee one morning, McCabe said, "Let's build a Youth Camp on the Reservation for the use not only of our own people, but for the use of all boy and girl organizations which are denied the opportunities and values such a camp can afford".

\$4,500,000 is today being expended at an Alpine-like site on the western slope of the Chuska Mountains to make this dream come true. The new Navajo Youth Camp is another monument, but certainly not the last, to the genius of J. Maurice McCabe.