

THE RONAN PIONEER

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RONAN, MISSOULA COUNTY, MONTANA, DECEMBER 29, 1911.

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Senator Myers and Congressman Pray Will Act

During the early part of December the Ronan Commercial Club adopted some resolutions addressed to Senator Dixon, Senator Myers and Congressman Pray, wherein were recited the principal grievances of the people living here respecting the administration of affairs on the Flathead reservation by the Indian department. Copies were sent to each of them, as well as to the Secretary of the Interior and Commissioner of Indian Affairs at Washington. During the past week answers have been received from Senator Myers and Congressman Pray, and the Senator writes as follows:

December 18, 1911. — President Ronan Commercial Club: I am in receipt of the resolution of the Ronan commercial club, adopted December 4, and addressed to Senator Dixon, Mr. Pray and myself. They will receive my careful attention. I will consult with Senator Dixon and Mr. Pray about the subject matter thereof and will be glad to cooperate with them to the extent of my power to secure the relief desired.

Yours truly,
H. L. MYERS.

Congressman Pray answered more in detail. He does not hesitate to say that he will assist every way in his power to correct the abuses complained of, and his letter is as follows:

December 19, 1911. — President Commercial Club, Ronan: I have just received today the resolutions adopted by the Ronan commercial club, December 4, 1911, relative to the leasing of Indian lands, patents to Indian lands, sale of portions of allotments, sale of heirship lands, withholding Indian lease money, etc., etc., contents of which I have given careful attention. I shall take pleasure in at once bringing this matter to the attention of the Secretary of the Interior, and will request that the various subjects discussed by your club be given immediate investigation. You rest assured that I shall be pleased to do all in my power to impress the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs with the necessity of giving prompt attention to the petition of your club and granting relief to the settlers on the Flathead reservation. Very truly yours, CHARLES N. PRAY.

An investigation of the matter by those in a position to call the attention of the department and congress, if necessary, to the manner in which this reservation is being administered by the Indian office, will develop that the settlers and business men residing here have good cause to complain. Not only the white people who have lately come here to make homes, but the Indians as well, are strenuously objecting to the treatment given them. It will be remembered that a delegation of Indians has lately been to Washington to secure some relief from the matters they object to. While there the Montana delegation in congress had an opportunity to hear their complaint first hand, and it is certain that it was only corroborative of what the resolutions set forth and of what the white man alleges to be a gross injustice to the Indian and new settlers alike.

To speak plainly as to what a great many voters think of this question, it can be said that many have expressed themselves in this manner: "Things are so bad that I fear the only remedy is to vote so as to cause the removal of the entire personnel of government officials from president down." Voters are not expressing this sentiment in the nature of a threat, but are serious and

of a firm belief that the present policies can only be changed by a thorough cleaning of the departments in Washington.

It should not be a complex problem to administer the affairs of the wards of the government in a manner to give them no cause for complaint. One of the easiest things in the world to do would be to specify audit the money received from rentals and pay it over to the one to whom it belongs and to whom it should be paid. Instead, it takes from two to four years to get this item arranged. What individual owner of a farm would submit to such a course in his private affairs? Then, too, if the Indian has a trust patent for the land, and the government recognizes his right thereto, then he should have the right to do with it as he pleases; that is, rent it out or work it himself. To those who are judged competent to manage their own affairs should be given the right to sell the land if they so desire — like any other citizen. In fact he should not be governed so much and so strenuously. These are the principal grounds of complaint on the part of the ward, and it applies with equal force to the white settler and business men on this reservation.

It is gratifying to know that the resolutions are to receive attention and it is as earnestly hoped that some relief will come from an investigation.

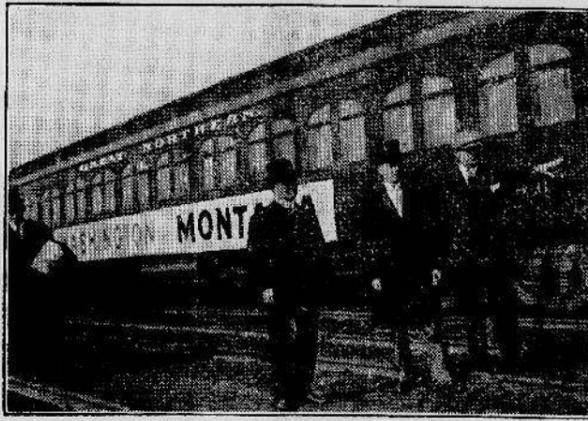
For Small Farms

In compliance with the request of numerous settlers on the irrigation projects of the government, the secretary of the interior has issued the following regulation governing the subdivision of farm units:

1.—A homestead entryman subject to the reclamation act may relinquish a part of his farm unit and have the payments which had been made on the relinquished part credited to the charges on the retained part, provided that the amendment in question may be allowed without jeopardizing the interests of the government in the collection of the charges against the portion of the tract relinquished.

2.—The entryman desiring to make such relinquishment should submit his application therefor to the project engineer, who will transmit the same with his recommendation through the proper channels to the director who, if he finds no objection, will proceed as in other cases of proposed amendments of farm units.

This ruling is regarded as one of the most important of recent years relating to the reclamation work. It is a confirmation also of the prediction which the officials of the bureau made several years ago that the greatest successes on the reclamation projects would be those on the small farms. The requests for permission to subdivide their farms comes almost without exception from the men who have taken up land in excess of their ability and means to cultivate. While the large land holder has been wasting his energy, time and capital in an attempt to subdue his farm, and now finds the burden too great for him to meet the charges for building, operation and extra labor, the small farmers as a general rule have prospered and are slowly gaining a competence.



GREAT NORTHERN'S MONTANA EXHIBIT CAR.

Strong influence was brought to bear on the department in the beginning to fix the farm units at not less than 160 acres. Every effort was made to convince the department that a man could not make a living on less than this acreage. The most influential advocates of the large farms were the prominent farmers and business men in each of these communities. In this connection a recent letter from Col. H. W. Rowley, the president of the Billings chamber of commerce, is particularly interesting in view of the fact that until recently he was apparently in doubt as to the small farm idea:

"I am most earnest in favoring the small farm unit for this section of the country. The forty acre farm unit as established on the Huntley U. S. reclamation project has proved a great success and as a whole, it is perhaps today the most prosperous section in our country, due entirely to the small farm units. Our experience certainly is that the 20 to 40 acre farmer is as a rule successful, while the larger units are not.

"One of the most important problems that our chamber of commerce will deal with during the next year will be to educate our people to the advantage of the small farm unit devoted to diversified farming. When this is brought about we will have a wonderfully productive country capable of sustaining a very large population of successful home builders.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) H. W. ROWLEY."

On some of the projects, the department, yielding in part to the importunities of the people, fixed the units at 80 and 40 acres each, and has often since had occasion to regret that it did not insist on the smaller unit.

The new ruling, however, will go far to correct the mistake which was then made, because it will encourage the subdivision of the large units and will relieve the farmers of a portion of the charges now assessed against them. It will accordingly make for more intensive cultivation of the land which they retain, will eliminate the expenses in part of the hired help, and will insure larger returns from the lands in crops. It increases the number of farm families, as each relinquishment will provide for a new home on the land.

La Follette in Ohio

In furtherance of his plans to capture the republican presidential nomination, Senator Robert M. La Follette left Washington on Dec. 26, for Ohio, and he will tour that state on a speech-making campaign.

From Ohio he goes to the middle west, where he has arranged meetings at many of the leading

cities. It is expected that the senator will be absent from Washington about three weeks.

Jail First; Officer Next

In the matter of the appointment of a deputy sheriff to be located at Ronan, petitioned for by the people of this community, the Pioneer is in receipt of the following explanatory letter from Sheriff Kelley:

I beg to acknowledge receipt of petition for a deputy sheriff from the residents of Ronan, and immediately upon receiving same I took the matter up with the board of county commissioners and they were willing that I appoint a deputy for your town, but they realize the enormous expense of maintaining an officer there, not only the salary but other incidental expenses, also the necessity of providing a jail. The final proposition they made to me was, if the residents of Ronan would get together and build a suitable jail to hold prisoners over night, or until they were tried before the justice, they would consent to me making an appointment of a deputy.

I showed the petition to the Board and they did not seem to think that a man selected there would give as good results as a man sent from here, on account of the man there being so well acquainted he might be inclined to favor some of his friends, and they believed that all the residents would receive a square deal if the man were sent from here. Trusting that the people of Ronan will take this matter up at their earliest convenience, and advise me of their action, with kindest personal regards to all, I beg to remain,

Yours very respectfully,
W. L. KELLY
Sheriff.

This is a matter of real interest to every resident of Ronan. An officer is badly needed here at this time and the people should take immediate action on the proposition as stated in Sheriff Kelley's letter.

Methodist Church Notice

Preaching service will be held morning and evening next Sunday. District Superintendent O. A. White will preach in the morning at 11:30 and administer the Sacrament of the Lord's supper. The pastor will preach in the evening at 7:30. Sunday School will be held at 10:30.

All friends are cordially invited to attend these services.

Quarterly conference business session will be held Saturday evening at 8:30 at the home of A. Sutherland.

Big chicken dinner every Sunday hereafter at the Ronan Cafe, from 11:30 to 4:00 o'clock. 221f

Conference of Officials On Reservation Roads

Joseph A. Edge, chairman, Henry Good and R. W. Main, comprising the board of county commissioners of Flathead county, arrived in Ronan Wednesday evening, to keep an appointment with the boards of county commissioners of Missoula and Sanders counties and Major Fred C. Morgan, local Indian agent, in a conference to secure title to the public highways contemplated and already platted on the Flathead Indian reservation. After their arrival here the big storm started and up to last evening only Major Morgan besides them had arrived. Word was received from Dixon to the effect that the Sanders county delegation was there and would come on up just as soon as possible. A wire was sent to D. T. Curran, chairman of the Missoula county board, by Mr. Edge yesterday notifying the former that the Flathead delegates would remain here and for them to come as soon as possible, as it was important that the conference be held at once.

It is proposed to place before Major Morgan the demands of the three counties and endeavor to secure from him a strong recommendation to the secretary of the interior for an approval of the plats already made and which have lately been rejected by the Indian bureau. In talking with one of the Flathead commissioners it was learned by the Pioneer that the board of that county had platted and laid out 120 miles of public roads and had sent their profiles and maps to the department at Washington for approval and that same had been turned down. This gentleman said that not a foot of the proposed highways was unnecessary, but that all were needed and demanded by the new settlers recently endeavoring to make homes in that portion of the reservation. Of all the allotments which would be affected by the roads, the owners of all but 14 had readily signed a waiver for the easement across their holdings, but that the others had effectually blocked the whole scheme. He said it was the intention to force these roads if no other process was possible and that condemnation proceedings would be commenced if necessary.

The same condition is to be found in all the three counties comprising parts of the Flathead reservation. Each of them have been refused permission to establish adequate roads and all on account of the Indian bureau's attitude regarding the taking of the lands of allottees for road purposes. That bureau has lots to learn about land values, it would seem. If it would not be presumed an unfair question, this paper would like to inquire as to what would be the value of any allotment which was entirely shut off from a road?

It is just as necessary that the Indian have a road to his land as it is to the white man, and may it be said to the Indian's credit, very nearly all of them recognize this fact and readily assent to the opening of the roads. But when his consent is before the Indian office at Washington, very little consideration is given his signature or wishes in the matter.

It is said that the government says, when requested to take action in this matter, "See the Indian and get his consent." When this is done, the government says, "The Indian is the

ward of the government and not competent to say what he wants." So there you are; no matter which way you take out of the dilemma the farther you go the worse off you are.

Yesterday afternoon Axel Schulstad, one of the county commissioners of Sanders county, and N. H. Morgan, county clerk of said county, arrived from Thompson Falls, and word having been received that the Missoula county board could not be represented, those present entered into the conference with Major Morgan and went over the entire matter fully. Major Morgan explained in detail the method which the government demanded should be followed and signified his willingness to assist in every way in straightening out the tangle.

In conversation with one of the conferees, the Pioneer learns that Major Morgan is heartily in favor of securing all that the several counties demand, and will make a strong recommendation to the department for the approval of the plats and profiles which will be again submitted. There seems to be considerable hope that the road question will be settled before spring opens and that the counties will be given the necessary authority to establish public highways and to improve them as they should be.

Central Hotel Changes

Commencing next Monday morning, Stansbury & Welch assume the management of the Central Hotel. They announce that the lobby will be enlarged to twice the present size, that it will be steam heat, with hot and cold water, electric lighted, baths, and all the modern conveniences possible to install in a first class hotel. They also announce a special New Year dinner on the day they take charge.

These gentlemen are both well and favorably known to all the people of Ronan and surrounding country, both having been in the employ of Stanley Scarce ever since that gentleman first commenced to prepare to go into business here. The former manager of the drug department and the latter of the implement department. Both will give the hotel their active attention and ask only for a trial in their new venture.

King Wilson of the New Creamery cafe, will take charge of the Central dining room and will open Jan. 1, 1912. Tim Hong will be his cook. He will serve the lunch for the New Year dance.

New Year Dance and Show

The management of the Ronan opera house announce another dance for New Year night, and everybody invited to attend. The music will be up to the standard and good order will be maintained.

Preceding the dance there will be motion picture shows at 4 and 7:30 p. m., with splendid pictures at each hour. The admission to the show will be a general one of 15 cents.

Miss Florence Bateman of Hardin, is visiting with Miss Imilda Morigeau during the vacation of the Sacred Heart academy at which both are pupils. Miss Bateman is an acquaintance of the publisher and family while living in Hardin.