

THE RONAN PIONEER

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GOV. NORRIS ON LAND LAWS

Address at Land Show is Good

TELLS OF GREAT NORTHWEST

Governor Edwin L. Norris was the principal speaker at the Northwestern Products exposition at Minneapolis on Montana Day, November 21st. Practical and less drastic public land policies was the theme of his address, parts of which are given below. His contention that the present land laws and the interpretation thereof are too drastic and to the detriment of the northwest and the thousands of settlers who have come to this country to make homes, will be unquestionably met with an almost unanimous approval. In part, the governor said:

"Large in area, rich in undeveloped resources and small in population—these terms correctly describe the northwest. Having more than one-fifth of the area and resources and less than one-twentieth of the population of the nation, it today offers more attractive opportunities to the homeseeker and investor than may be found elsewhere.

"No valuable purpose is to be served by a discussion of the reasons for the tardy development of this most favored section. It seems more profitable to consider some of the problems which demand attention than to describe the richness and extent of our resources and possibilities. It is not wise to accept what the present offers without heed for the future. That course has been followed in the past, and a small population scattered over a large territory has been the result.

"This is a commercial age, and intelligent effort is the price of success in any undertaking. We may point with pride to the fact that for more than half a century the west has poured a steady and ever increasing stream of gold into the commercial centers of the nation. This lifeblood of business has built up great industries, stimulated trade, and done much to place our country in the forefront in commerce and wealth. This stream first had its source in the mines, later in the mines and ranges, and now the mines, ranges and farms combine to swell its volume.

"The miners were the pioneers of western settlement, the stockmen were the heralds of western development, and the farmers are now becoming a more permanent factor in western commercial life. While the mines and the ranges will continue to contribute in undiminished volume, the harvests of our farmers will in the future prove the greater source of wealth.

"With its many and superior advantages the northwest should speedily become thickly populated and fully developed; but the public land policy of the government must be changed before that ambition can be realized. The title to more than two-thirds of the lands of the northwest is now vested in the federal government, less than one-third having passed into private ownership. Of this two-thirds about 60 per cent is subject to entry under the public land laws, while

the remaining 40 per cent has been withdrawn from entry by the government. This condition gives to the problem two important phases: One relating to the lands subject to entry under the laws now in force or which may hereafter be passed, and the other concerning the enactment of laws necessary for the administration of lands withdrawn.

"The laws governing the appropriation of public lands subject to entry by settlers are reasonably satisfactory. The chief objection is to the manner in which those laws have been interpreted and administered. For nearly half a century it was the fixed policy of the federal government to hold its lands in trust for the benefit of those who should claim them according to law. Under that policy title to the lands of the middle west passed into private hands and that section developed from tenantless wastes into populous communities and cultivated fields. A like policy would produce similar results in the northwest.

"A few years ago the long standing policy was changed, the change being due, it is claimed, to the discovery by federal officials that title to land in some instances was being obtained by fraud. To the measures taken to check frauds and to punish the guilty parties, no honest citizen objects. Only in rare instances were actual settlers upon agricultural lands found to be guilty of an attempt to defraud the government. In order to reach a few guilty parties, a policy was thereupon inaugurated which has proven more burdensome to the innocent than effective against the guilty. Settlers upon public lands have since been so constantly harassed by inspections, delays in acquiring title, and technical objections to immaterial delinquencies that many have abandoned their claims in disgust, while others have been deterred from making entries. The retarding effect upon entry and cultivation of government lands by virtue of this policy cannot be estimated.

"Toward securing material changes in the policy of administering the public lands subject to entry, earnest and intelligent effort on the part of the west should be directed. If the interior department cannot be convinced of errors in the regulations and decisions made, then congress should be appealed to for appropriate relief, and appeals should be made as often as adverse decisions may render them necessary.

"The lands withdrawn from entry by the government and not subject to appropriation by settlers under the laws of congress are chiefly valuable for timber, coal, oil, gas, phosphates and power sites.

"The withdrawals were hastily made, and include a large volume of agricultural and grazing lands that have no value for other purposes. Examination and classification of eliminated areas proceed slowly, and restoration to entry of lands not valuable for the purposes for which withdrawn are most reluctantly made. These withdrawals cover all the known power sites, coal, oil, gas, phosphate and timber lands, except such as had previously passed into private ownership, and, it is estimated, approximately 60 per cent of the lands of the northwest are now withdrawn from entry by the government. (Continued on second page.)

THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN.



EASTERN MONTANA DEVELOPING FAST

While Western Montana has developed rapidly in the past few years, it has by no means had a monopoly in this line. That portion of Montana lying east of the mountains has also been making strides in this direction almost beyond belief. Where but a few short years ago there was little but sheep and cattle grazing upon the vast prairies and uplands, today in traveling through this section one sees nothing for miles and miles except fields of grain, stacks of hay, and neat and commodious farm homes, and here and there a band of sheep or a bunch of cattle as a reminder of early days in Montana.

The writer returned last week from a ten days trip through that part of Montana, visiting some portions for the first time in twenty-two years. That it is the same country over which we traveled at that time is hard to comprehend, and the wise ones in Eastern Montana declare the transformation has only begun. Leaving Ronan, the writer went direct to Glasgow, via Kalispell. At Glasgow we met a former Flathead homesteader, Mr. Peter Griz, and to himself and wife are indebted for many courtesies. Glasgow is the county seat of Valley county, a freight division on the Great Northern railway, and here also is located the U. S. land office for a large portion of the northeastern part of the state. Glasgow is a live, bustling, up to the times Montana town with a population of about 1,200. It is surrounded by a vast dry farming country and this year at least, the yields have been marvelous. Acres and acres of grain remain in the field in the shock, the weather having been too wet to permit threshing. The 320 acre homestead law prevails in the country around Glasgow and hundreds of eastern farmers have availed themselves of this opportunity to secure a free home. It is a country with a great future.

From Glasgow to Great Falls the country is about the same, a vast rolling prairie that has

ABOUT RAVALLI WHEAT MARKET

A late issue of the Market Record, the official organ of the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, says:

"Already more than 100,000 bushels of grain have been marketed in Mandan, North Dakota, this year, and indications are that the total receipts there will be about 200,000 bushels, making Mandan one of the greatest primary grain markets in the northwest."

If the marketing of 200,000 bushels makes of a town a "great primary grain market," then what must Ravalli be? One of the Ronan merchants, Stanley Searce, will ship almost, if not quite, that amount of grain from Ravalli this season, to say nothing of the many other buyers and the many farmers who ship direct. So far this season, Mr. Searce has shipped 40 car loads alone, and the Beckwith Mercantile Co., of St. Ignatius, has probably shipped as much if not more. These gentlemen are simply merchants, who buy as an accommodation and collect their outstanding accounts, and all this grain goes into the open market. Many farmers are shipping direct to Minneapolis again this year, believing they can make the middlemen's profit themselves. So when the aggregate is bunched, 200,000 bushels will look small indeed.

Mandan is not only a shipping point, but it has one of the largest flouring mills in the country, a mill which has the reputation of turning out as good a grade of flour as any mill, and this flour alone will require many thousands of bushels in the making.

With a flour mill to consume the wheat locally, any point along the Northern Pacific tributary to the Flathead, would double discount Mandan as a primary grain market, and the country has only begun to develop.

A. Fraser started Wednesday for Butte to be with his family for a turkey dinner yesterday. He will be gone ten days or two weeks.

PAYS FREIGHT BOTH WAYS

Farmers are grumbling considerably over the fact that they are compelled to pay the freight both ways. The occasion is this: A new flour mill has been built at Polson and it was expected that they would be able to get their wheat ground into flour and receive much more in return than heretofore received. That seems to be an illusion they suffered from. Instead of getting more flour out of a bushel of wheat they get less, it being said they are to receive only 26 pounds of flour from a bushel of wheat.

Much grumbling was heard when the government mill at Ronan gave them only 30 pounds and 10 pounds of bran, but to get four pounds less is worse still.

It all comes about, so it is said, by reason of the great milling trust which has the people of the country by the throat. No matter how many flour mills are built in a country, remote from big mills like the Flathead is, the consumer here must pay the freight both ways. That is, the consumer must pay the freight on the wheat sold here to local millers, to the Minneapolis market and then pay the freight on the flour back to the Flathead again. In other words, he is caught both coming and going.

Wheat is selling in Polson now at 47 cents per bushel; flour is selling at \$3.20 per hundred, or about the same price paid when wheat was near the dollar mark. That makes it seem strange to some why flour remains at the old price and wheat way down on the market. Somebody is getting more for their products than the market price warrants. Building of local mills does not seem to result in a benefit and the matter should be investigated.

HUNTING PARTY GOES TO SWAN RIVER COUNTRY

D. N. Mason, G. E. Broughton and Howard Stansbury constituted a hunting party which left Ronan Sunday morning last enroute to the Swan river country, going in Mr. Mason's automobile. They went via Bigfork, skirting the lake to the west to reach the latter town, and from there they go into the deer country across Swan Lake. They had intended to go to Thompson river but hearing of so many hunters in that section made up their minds that more game could be found elsewhere, and so changed direction. The party is expected home today or tomorrow.

EQUAL SUFFRAGE MEETING IN MISSOULA SATURDAY

The equal suffrage county central committee met in Missoula last Saturday and organized for the campaign in this county. Mrs. A. M. Sterling was the delegate and committeewoman from Ronan.

The Sunday Missoulian has the following account of this meeting and what was done: "The ladies who are members of the Missoula county central committee in the equal suffrage campaign, had luncheon with Miss Jeanette Rankin at her home on Madison street, yesterday afternoon. The luncheon table was daintily ap-

pointed with yellow and white flowers and favors. A yellow satin "Votes for Women" banner was appropriately placed for a center piece. Those present were Mrs. Vealey, chairman of the first precinct; Mrs. Tylar Thompson of the second; Miss Alice Woody and Mrs. Angevine of the third, Mrs. Mossman of the fourth, Mrs. Albert Butzerin of the fifth, Mrs. Beacom of the sixth, Mrs. Ector of the seventh, Mrs. Clements of Orchard Homes, Mrs. Prescott of Park addition, Miss Edna Hollenstiner of Lolo, Mrs. Addison Sterling of Ronan, Misses Knowles, Stewart and Zurr of the University club, Mrs. Miles of the Political Equality club, and Miss Barnett of Seattle. Misses Grace Rankin, Florence Leech and Louise McDonald served the guests. Organization of the county central committee was completed, and Miss Stewart was chosen chairman; Miss Zurr secretary; Mrs. Tylar Thompson treasurer, and Miss Alice Woody chairman of the committee on literature. A resolution was adopted to ask the governor-elect and the lieutenant governor-elect, also Senator Donlan and Representative Higgins to support the bill for the suffrage amendment. The other representatives have already promised to give their support.

GREW PEANUTS AND WILL TRY SWEET POTATOES

James M. Carver has been working at his trade, a carpenter, in Ronan during the past two weeks. Mr. Carver is a native of Georgia and has a fondness for the vegetables and other good things grown in that state. On his homestead in the Moiese last year he grew peanuts and this coming year he will experiment with sweet potatoes.

While in the office the first of the week, he said that he raised as fine water melons as one could wish for, besides great quantities of tomatoes and other tender vine vegetables. He likes the country and his place is not for sale, as he took it for a home for himself and family and is sanguine the country will afford him a fine living once water is furnished the land. That his section needs water he is certain, and thinks the government should get busy and supply the system to water the land in that valley, where it is needed more than any other portion of the reservation. In this matter he simply voices the general sentiment of all who are acquainted with the facts.

GETS GOOD FLOW OF WATER AT 567 FEET

The Melton, Cope & Co. well drilling outfit has been at H. R. Robedeau's for some time past endeavoring to find water for Mr. Robedeau. Last week they encountered water at a depth of 567 feet and it has risen to a point where it must be pumped a little over 250 feet at this time. While such wells are expensive, it is certainly worth the money rather than to put in so much time hauling water for every purpose, such distances as many are compelled to do. The cost of a well increases the value of the farm in proportion.