

Land Laws

The new amendment of the land laws, providing for a leave of absence to a settler who is unable , by reason of drouth, whole or partial destruction of crops, sickness or unavoidable casualty, to support himself on his claim, is a beneficent and sensible provision, says an exchange. The leave of absence shall not exceed one year at any one time and the absences shall not be deducted from the period he is required by law to live on his land; the register and receiver to grant this leave under regulations as the secretary of the interior may prescribe--Yakima Herald, W.T. March 14, 1889.

Over two hundred thousand acres---The Yakima land district comprising that portion of Eastern Washington lying north and west of the Columbia river during the past year recorded 805 homestead entries, 644 pre-emption filings, 290 timber culture entries, nineteen desert filings, 51 final homestead entries, 125 cash entries, eight coal entries and two mineral entries, representing an aggregate acreage of pre-emptions of 1-3,040 acres; homesteads, 48,800 acres; timber culture, 46,400 acres; desert-land entries, 12,160 entries; the sum total representing an area of 211,400 acres.

reference:

Land laws, national land holdings, donations to schools,
pre-emptions, homesteads etc.

Herald, December 5, 1889.

Settlement

In the state of Washington there are 21,691,904 acres of surveyed land and 23,153,256 acres are unsurveyed. All of the surveyed lands with the exception of a little over a million acres have been taken by the settler--Yakima Herald, July 3, 1890.

Cold Creek

Two thousand acres of land in the Cold Creek basin have been taken up by homesteaders within the past week. The boom in that direction is very pronounced--Yakima Herald, September, 1891.

Settlement

Desert Lands

Heretofore all desert lands within the railroad limits have been held at \$2.50 per acre and those filing have been obliged to make an initial payment of 50 cents per acre although in the majority of cases this payment has been made under protest, those filing claiming that the lands were not double minimum lands and that the railroad grants did not affect desert lands.

On June 20, 1891, W. I. Steinweg, A.K. Hiscock, H.B. Scudder, Fred R. Reed and others made applications to file on the lands of this character located on the Moxee.

They made a tender of 25 cents an acre which was rejected but an appeal was taken and it was afterward carried before the secretary.

A few days ago the local land office received a letter from the department under date of Jan. 13, 1892 in which the honorable secretary sums up as follows:

"After a careful consideration of the matter, I have concluded that the amount of money to be paid in acquiring title to desert lands under the act of March 3, 1877, as amended by the act of March 3, 1891, is one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre without regard to the situation of the land in relation to the limits of the railroad grants. "--Yakima Herald, February 4, 1892.

Lands

The first selection of state lands in this district has just been made and filed at the U.S. land office. It embraces 5,592 acres along the Columbia in the vicinity of White Bluffs--
Yakima Herald, May 5, 1892.

Settlement

The settlers about Wenatchee lake have discovered that the land upon which they are settled was in 1855 ceded to the Yakima Indians by a treaty as an Indian fishing ground and reserve.

The Yakima Indians have claimed at different times the right to fish on the Wenatchee river below the reserve now sought to be established. But at no time have they sought to establish any claim to the reserve or exercise any right to it under the treaty.

Petitions on the subject have been forwarded to Senator Squire and to the secretary of the interior. The treaty will no doubt be abrogated--Ellensburg Register, April, 1893.

In the U.S. land office at Walla Walla on Friday last Gov. McGraw, Secretary of State Price, Senators Rutter and Van deVanter, Editor Brainerd of Seattle and 13 others filed on 5,000 acres of desert land situated in the eastern part of Yakima county. It is reported that a stock company has been formed for the purpose of building a ditch and irrigating these lands--Yakima Herald, April 13, 1893.

Settlement

Railways

The U.S. Land office has received notice from the commissioner of the general land office of a decision rendered by the secretary of the interior, dated June 9, 1893, granting the application of the Northern Pacific Railroad company to amend the selection made of its moiety of the land lying within the overlapping limits of the grant for its branch line and the forfeited line down the north side of the Columbia river.

This decision settles the question raised at the hearing had at the land office here nearly a year ago in which the contention was between the railroad company, claiming the alternative odd sections under the Sunnyside canal, by virtue of sale to the irrigation company, on one hand, and some fifty applicants for government title to the land under a notice of its restoration to the public domain.

Many of these applicants are residents of North Yakima.

Although the decision makes no mention of the hearing, based on the prior application of the R.R. Co. to amend its selection, it practically gives the company all the odd sections lying under the line of the canal.

The lands relinquished in place of these are on Snipes mountain and in the Horse Heaven country. The decision also cancels the homestead entry of H.J. Williams for the E 1-2 of NW 1-4 and lots 1, 2, sec. 10, twp. 10 n.r. 22 E and the cash entry of Jack Morgan for the S 1-2 of sec. 23 twp. 9 n.r. 22 E.

Yakima Herald, June 20, 1893.

School lands

Under the old law when school lands had been appraised offered for sale and not bid in, the party making a written application and agreeing to pay the appraised price and depositing sufficient money to pay for advertising, which usually amounted only to \$3 or \$4, the land could be ordered up and sold to the highest bidder.

The Spokane Review says a letter received by Auditor Peel of Spokane county from Secretary Ed C. Cowen of the state land commission at Olympia puts an altogether different phase on the purchase of school lands under the new law.

Mr. Cowan states that it is now necessary for the applicant to make a deposit of ten cents per acre and forward this amount to the board. Under the new law the old appraisements are annulled and all school lands to be sold hereafter will have to be reappraised by an agent delegated by the state or by a member of the commission.

The improvement on school lands are to be appraised as heretofore and in the event that the original applicant or lessee should be overbid at public sale the purchaser within thirty days thereafter is required to pay the lessee the difference between the appraised value of his improvements and the appraisement of damages done to the land while leased. It follows of course that lessees of land when they choose to buy, have the advantage at public sale--
August 17, 1893.

Land Settlement

A dispatch dated last Saturday at Arkansaw City contains the following description of the first mad rush for homeseekers on the Cherokee strip. It is difficult to understand what induces sane people to engage in such a destructive and profitless competition.

One hundred thousand people settled upon the Cherokee strip today.

At noon the signal was given and the great race began. As far as the eye could reach in either direction could be seen men mounted and in wagons and on foot, closely packed together, making a solid column 200 feet or more wide in the middle and tapering off to a mere streak of black in the distance.

Confusion reigned everywhere, so closely were the contestants packed together. The start was hazardous. Horsemen were unseated. Wagons were overthrown and pedestrians prostrated in the mad rush.

Cowboys on ponies took the lead and had gone but a short distance when they spread out over the prairie and dismounting, set fire to the thick prairie grass, hoping thus to turn aside those following. The fires spread rapidly at first but were soon stopped by a deep gully which parallels the Cherokee line three miles south of here.

Horses could not be urged through the flames and many turned back. No damage was done by the fire further than destroying grass and impeding the racers.

James H. Hill of Kingborn, N.J. was shot and instantly killed by a soldier at the southwest corner of the Chilocco reservation. He started into the strip before the order was given.

The soldier warned him to stop but he did not heed the orders and they fired on him. He had over \$500 on his person and it was

turned over to the sheriff.

In the race many men were injured and some killed. Of the latter two were murdered, one was stabbed and the other shot through the head.

There are many dead horses on the prairie.

Near Black Bear, northeast of here, the body of James Rearden of Millford, Mass. was found on the prairie after the rush. He had been stabbed to death and the weapon was sticking in his breast.

Further north the body of W.D. Blake, supposed to be from Gainesville, Texas, was found. He was shot through the heart but it is not known whether he was murdered or shot by accident.

The body of Miss Madaline Granger of Terra Haute, Ind., was found on the prairie. No marks of violence were found on her person and it is believed she died from natural causes.

Soldiers shot four sooners near Stillwater, Okla. and one at Arkansaw City, Kan.

Every desirable claim has at least one claimant and many have two or three.

Contests of course are numerous. Maggie Markham of Gouthrie was thrown to the ground and trampled to death by her horse.--Yakima Herald, September 21, 1893.

Land grants

The patents have been issued by the U.S. land commissioner to the Northern Pacific Railway company for lands aggregating 74,158 acres in Whitman, Walla Walla, Warfield and Columbia counties.

These lands are in the lieu land district of the N.P.R. grant and have mainly been under cultivation for the past ten or twenty years.

The decision of the land office effects between two and three hundred filings. The land in question was set aside as part of the Northern Pacific land grant in 1872 and part in 1880; and in 1887 was restored as part of the public domain.

All persons who were bona fide settlers prior to the filing of the list of selection by the railroad company have been awarded prior rights as in the case of Guilford Miller, in all cases that have been contested before the interior department--Yakima Herald, January 3, 1895.

Settlement

J.P. Koch, a representative of the colony of Hollanders who are arranging to locate on Whitby Island was in the city on Friday last and was so taken with the appearance of this valley that he will endeavor to change the destination of his countrymen to Yakima--Yakima Herald, March 14, 1895.

A letter was received this morning from Fred R. Reed who is at Grand Rapids, Mich., looking after the colonization of Hollanders, but spane will not admit of its publication in this issue of The Herald--Yakima Herald, March 14, 1895.

People are flocking to Lewiston Idaho by hundreds in anticipation of the opening of the Nez Perce Indian reservation.

There is not an empty house in town, many cheap shacks are being put up and occupied by families, some of whom have not the means of subsistence and are preying on the country.

The reservation lands are to be sold at auction, the minimum price being \$4.75 per acre. The opening day has not been definitely fixed but it has not long distant, at which time the Indians will be paid \$600,000--Yakima Herald, March 14, 1895.

State lands

The report of the state land commissioners has been printed and is now ready for distribution.

The report shows that the total value of sales of school lands in the last two years in this state is \$164,958 ; there have been 9 8,072.75 acres sold at an average price per acre of \$20.42.

The suggestion is made by the board that the state should first secure from the general federal land office lists of all the lieu and indemnity lands approved ; that it should then secure complete lists of all the lands lost to the state in all sections 16 and 36; and then provide for the selection of lieu and indemnity lands from the Colville, Yakima and other Indian reservations as fast as they are surveyed and the Indian lands have been allotted and prior to their opening to public filing.

The legislature is urged to appropriate about \$2,000 to cover the expense of publishing notice of application to the interior department for certificates showing that the state land is rightly classed as non-mineral land.

In this way alone can jumping of valuable lands as state mineral lands and consequent expensive litigation be avoided by the state.

Comparative tables in the report show that out of 622,000 acres to be selected 518,599 acres have been secured in unsurveyed townships which are to be selected as soon as the surveys are made for which provision has been made.

This makes a total of 657,210.58 acres or 35,210.58 in excess of the grant, a margin in which is necessary to cover selections rejected by the secretary of the interior for various reasons.

The average value per acre selected, which rose from \$9.06 in 1892 to \$10.10 in 1894 and was \$11.19 in 1896; the value for timber land being based on 25 to 30 cents per 1000 feet for first class

timber while the cost of cruising, selecting and making reservations which in 1892 was 10 cents an acre has been in 1895-86 reduced to 6 1-2 cents.

In conclusion the commissioners say that they have now practically completed their work and concur in the suggestion of the commissioner of public lands that the board be consolidated with that office as the constitution requires that lands offered for sale shall be appraised by a board of three members.

If the office of cruiser be retained that the appraisals and such plats as the law may require may be made by him and approved by the commissioners of public lands and any two of the state officers--Yakima Herald, Dec. 24, 1896.

Immigration

Three hundred homeseekers came to Washington on the first day of the homeseekers' excursion rate of \$25 from St Paul. Since that time overland trains have been coming in two sections and loaded to the limit. The railway expected a heavy movement but express surprise at its extent while the travelers coming from the rigorous eastern climes into Washington are so eminently gratified with the change that they will constitute an effective factor in increasing immigration--The Yakima Herald, March 4, 1903.

Homesteading

Living twelve miles from their nearest neighbor and equipped for a stay of six months duration, Miss Elsie George and Miss Fannie Freeland of Sunnyside have taken up homesteads on the Columbia river twenty five miles from the improved part of the valley.

Miss George is the daughter of J.B. George, one of the well known merchants of the valley. She is well known in North Yakima having been employed here for some time as stenographer with the Yakima National bank. She has numerous friends in this city who will await with interest the news of her progress with the homestead.

It is seldom that young women take the step but there are these intrepid and evidently fearless of any lurking dangers where they will make their home. A few young women have attempted the exploit, notably Miss Ethel Ide who at one time had filed on a homestead along the Sunnyside ditch. One night her cabin was entered and her saddle and various other articles stolen.

Miss George is a handsome young woman and does not seem to have any worry about being away from her friends.

Six months is the shortest continuous actual residence which will allow final ownership of a homestead if the young women take advantage of the law allowing them to commute--The Yakima Herald, March 20, 1907.

Washington-Lands

The state of Washington has to a taxable area outside of towns and city plats of 22,148,809 acres of which 6,173,688 acres are classed as improved lands, 5,628,666 are timber lands and 11,346,515 acres are unimproved lands says an Olympia report.

Timberlands assessed all the way from \$4.44 an acre in Stevens county to \$23.70 in Mason county, have a total value of \$76,470,056.

The unimproved lands have an aggregate value of \$63,380,947 and the improved lands of \$140,175,243. Values of unimproved lands vary from \$2.24 in Columbia county to \$19.65 in King county.

Spokane's average is \$4.43 and Pierce's \$16.92.

Schedule D of the state board of equalization furnishes such figures.

Improvements on land were equalized by county boards at \$21,521,610. Yakima county heads the list with \$2,009,050 the high figures doubtless due to the thick settlement of the Yakima fruit lands outside of the towns. Spokane lists improvements at \$1,443,740, Pierce at \$1,003,755 and King at \$1,443,740.

Town and city lots are valued at an aggregate of \$267,078,394 and the improvements at \$110,196,554. King county leads in such valuations, her aggregate value of city lots being \$130,130,958 and improvements \$40,054,470--Yakima Republic, Oct. 14, 1910.

Unappropriated and unreserved public lands in this district total 197,640 acres or 2,880 acres more than one year ago according to the annual fiscal report given out by R.B. Milroy, Yakima land office registrar. The report shows considerable land has been filed on the relinquished (copy) during the year but that as a result of all transactions there is now more vacant land than there was 12 months ago.

The general price of agricultural products with its tendency to put out of use marginal lands is thought to be the cause for the increase. Although the district has more unappropriated lands at this time than a year ago Yakima and Benton counties each has slightly less. On

June 1923 Yakima county had 52,040 acres of unreserved land. The current figure is 40 acres less. Last year Benton county had 68,520 acres of unused land. The 1924 figure is 68,440 acres.

Grant and Kittitas counties both show increases in unappropriated land. Twelve months ago Grant had 24,240 acres of unreserved land as compared to 25,840 at this time. Kittitas county now has 51,360 acres of land not appropriated while last year the figure was only 49,240. -- The Yakima Republic June 30, 1924.