

BITTER ROOT (IDAHO) RESERVE.

RILEY, January 20, 1907.

PERSONNEL, EQUIPMENT, AND PROTECTION.

PERSONNEL:

The administration that has been allotted this reserve so far has been pitifully inadequate. It can truthfully be said that the eastern portion of the area has received little or no attention at anytime. So far the principal effort has been to keep down fires, by putting on a force of guards to do patrol during that season. The force tho insufficient has been able to do much effective work, but there have been fires in the eastern and southern portion of the reserve which have burned themselves out and received no attention simply because they were not located, as the ranger force was not sufficient to discover them. Of course the argument arises here that the number of men allotted the past year were, upon an acreage basis, sufficient to patrol the area to advantage. This would be the case were the country fairly accessible, but here there are few trails, and most of the country cannot be traversed without them. The following discussion of the present force, the recommendations for promotions, together with the recommendations for the coming season's work, are made with the one point in view, that the area must be made accessible before it can be administered properly.

Forest Assistant Barton should not return to this reserve, as he is not suited to the work, and it has been recommended further on that he be assigned to Boundaries. There should be

--2--

some one to take his place, and it is urgently recommended that the man selected be chosen for his engineering ability and successful handling of men, as the looking out of trails and roads will be his most important work. This matter was taken up with Messrs. Olmsted, Du Bois, and Sherrard, before I left the office, and it was decided that Mr. Von Weinsted was available and could be assigned here. He is, therefore, recommended for this position, and it is hoped that he will be assigned immediately, so there will be ample time for him to plan the coming season's work.

It is recommended that the reserve office be moved to Grangeville, and that the Supervisor be authorized to spend not to exceed \$15 per month for office rent, and to move the records and equipment as soon as the weather will permit.

Forest Supervisor C. M. Day was raised on a farm in Kansas, and came to Idaho when a young man. He is about fifty years of age, short of stature and rather stout, in fact, too much so for him to take readily and kindly to traveling in the mountains afoot or horse back a good part of the open season. He is married but has no children. Mr. Day has followed ranching most of his life, and has had little experience in stock raising or timber work. Prior to entering the government service, he took an active part in Idaho County politics, and for several years represented the county in the State Legislature. Thru the active work for the republican party he secured a position in the Lewiston Land Office, and later in 1902 was appointed Supervisor of this reserve.

Mr. Day, who has very little education, is a thorough politician. He is genial, easy-going, and believes in putting off

---3---

until tomorrow what can not be done with ease today. His policy has been a loose one, hardly calculated to demand respect and remove the bitter feeling which has existed against the reserve policy in this region for many years.

Mr. Day has little clerical ability and has avoided correspondence as much as possible, often passing clerical matter thru his office which he realized was not sufficiently definite in expression. Mr. Day told me that he did not put in an expense account for his trip to the National Irrigation Congress, because he did not want to bother with it. The office correspondence shows that he has had much trouble with accounts, and that he has profited very little by the directions and instructions given him by both the Land Office and the Forest Service. Mr. Day has followed the regulations so literally and without practical construction in some cases, and ignored them in others to such an extent that his administration on the whole has been impractical. He has left the timber sales entirely in the hands of his rangers and Forest Assistant, and has made little or no effort to assist the rangers, or direct their work.

The office records were found in very bad shape. Mr. Day had a system of docketing his letter which was unique, because it so scattered the papers relative to the different subjects and cases that it was a hard job to get them together and a job which Mr. Day in several cases could not accomplish. The file cases and directions for filing were received by Mr. Day in the winter of 1905-6, but he made no effort to straighten out the old records, or to keep the later ones by subjects as directed. Many of the letters to and from the office, relating to definite cases on file

in his office were filed separately. Mr. Barton informed me that he made an effort to straighten out the office files, but Mr. Day would not adhere to his suggestions and gave him to understand that he wanted them just as they were.

Mr. Day has not given his correspondence prompt attention, and in numberless cases has failed in reporting to take the subjects up sufficiently to make a direct concise report that would acquaint the office with the actual conditions.

I have gone over the work thoroly with Mr. Day and called to his attention the errors and directed him how to rectify them. This was done prior to my leaving for Washington, November, 26, 1906. On returning to the reserve in January, I went over the matters again with him and I am perfectly sure that he can not be counted upon to make the effort to greatly improve his work. His administration has been more or less detrimental to the Forest Service, and I do not believe that he can improve sufficiently to be of use on another reserve. It is, therefore, recommended that his resignation be asked for, and that Deputy Supervisor George Bentz be placed in charge; that he be sent a list of the Government property charged to Mr. Day, and be requested to account for it when he takes charge.

Forest Assistant Barton. Salary \$1,200 per year, and per diem of \$1.25 per day. Mr. Barton is a graduate of the Yale Forest school. He passed the Field Assistant's examination in the spring of 1905, and was assigned to the Bitter Root (Idaho) Reserve in the summer of that year, being given general administration work by the Supervisor Day, who had but a few small timber sales then in progress, and was short-handed owing to the assignment of Mr. Homer Fenn (one of his best men) to the Henry's Lake Reserve. At this

-5-

time Ranger Bentz was put in charge of the Southern division at Elk City. Mr. Bentz was dissatisfied with this assignment owing to the heavy expense he had to incur in keeping his family at Elk City, and also because Mr. Day was unable to secure his promotion to the salary which Mr. Fern had, when he was in charge of this division. Rather than lose him, Mr. Day transferred Mr. Bentz to the western division and put Mr. Barton in charge at Elk City, where he had direct supervision over the bulk of the living sales in the reserve. Mr. Barton had several rangers and guards under him and directed their movements in the patrol and general work.

At the time I visited the reserve, Mr. Barton had been instructed to proceed to the Medicine Bow (Wyo.), and assist with the timber making there. I saw him one afternoon in Elk City and discussed his work, but I had no opportunity to go over the district or the cutting areas with him where he had directed the work. It was found that he had succeeded only fairly well with the general administrative work thru his inexperience and lack of tact in trying moments. All of the rangers spoke well of him, but in such a way as to convey the impression that they had little respect for him. All the men had stories to tell of mistakes he had made thru his inexperience.

Mr. Barton worked hard and it can not be said that he is lazy or lacks interest, but he has shown inability to assert himself to advantage. This, Mr. Barton feels, I think, tho he did not express himself so to me in words, further than to say that he was dissatisfied and would like to be transferred to Boundary work.

The timber sales which Mr. Barton made and had charge of are in extremely bad shape. The stipulations required of the contractor were impractical and more or less impossible, with the result that about all of the stipulations of the contract were violated and the cutting areas left in very bad shape. One of these sales, Mr. Barton recommended closed, making the statement that the area had been cleaned up and the contract complied with.

I feel that while Mr. Barton's work has been poor, that he has been working at a disadvantage because he was thrown directly into responsible work by the Supervisor, which required immediate action, at a time when he had had no experience whatever to fit him for the administrative part of it. Mr. Barton's survey work has been fairly good, and it is thought that his experience on this reserve will fit him for Boundary work. It is, therefore, recommended that he be transferred to this work under Mr. W. H. B. Kent.

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER, EDWARD O. THENON; Salary \$900 per annum. Mr. Thenon is of medium height, weighs 150 pounds, is 29 years old, and unmarried. He is well educated and speaks German. Mr. Thenon has followed mining and prospecting in Idaho and Montana for the past fifteen years, and has also spent some time working around the sawmills of the Northwest. His physical condition is good and he can be depended upon to perform the most arduous duties of a ranger. As a miner and mill hand, Mr. Thenon secured from \$2.50 to \$5.00 per day.

Mr. Thenon owns no property or stock in this region aside from pack and saddle horses used by him in his duties as ranger. He is well liked by those who know him, and is respected

by all who come in contact with him. He shows a good deal of personal force, is rather quiet and reserved in manner.

Mr. Thenon's past and present work in the Service has been good, but so far he has not been given sufficient responsibility to show his full worth. His reports have not been altogether satisfactory, though it is thought that this has been due to his not having proper instructions, because he writes distinctly, expresses himself well, and has a very practical grasp of local conditions. He shows ability to handle men, and is well liked by his brother officers.

Mr. Thenon is interested, and enthusiastic, and it is thought that he will be a valuable ranger to superintend general administrative work under the Supervisor's direction.

It is recommended that Mr. Thenon be promoted to Forest Ranger, at \$1,100. per annum, as soon as his present furlough expires; that the Supervisor be instructed to express the Forester's appreciation of his past work and inform him that he will be promoted when he returns to duty. The last step is thought advisable because Mr. Thenon was not altogether satisfied with his salary, so he intended to secure, if possible, a position elsewhere while on furlough.

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER JAMES STEWART: Salary \$900 per annum. Mr. Stewart is a half breed Nez Perce indian, of medium height, wiry build, weighing about 160 pounds, and 35 years of age. He is married. His wife is a full blood Nez perce indian, who is very well educated. Mr. Stewart's physical condition is good and he is able to perform the duties of a ranger.

Before entering the service he was interested in the

Archival research by  
Dennis Baird  
University of Idaho Library  
Date Collected: OCT 2006  
Source: NARA Seattle RG 95

-8-

allotment and disposal of the Nez Perce Indian land. Mr. Stewart represented the indians in their transactions and did the larger part of the surveying of the allotments.

Mr. Stewart owns property in Kooskae. He owns no stock aside from four head of saddle and pack horses used in his duties as ranger.

Mr. Stewart is well liked by both the indians and whites of the district in which he lives; in fact he demands the respect of all those with whom he comes in contact.

The record that Mr. Stewart has made at trail and patrol work is good and he has done good work as a surveyor. So far as could be ascertained he has been able to handle the men put under his supervision at such work with success, tho it is thought that this has been due to the fact that themen know and respect him for his ability. It would undoubtedly be a mistake to put him in charge of a district or general construction work with a strange crew, because the whites of this region have more or less contempt for indians as a whole. Mr. Stewart is thoroly honest, and can be depended upon absolutely. He can be of great value to the service on this reserve as a surveyor, for there is a large amount of surveying to be done, both on the boundary and interior claims and trails. His field notes, reports, and sketch maps are not what they should be. He has the ability to improve them tho if he is given proper instructions. Mr. Stewart has been furloughed for the winter. I recommend that he be put on as soon as the spring work can be started and promoted to ranger of the second class, at \$1,000 per annum. He should be given a sufficient crew and assigned to survey work, first locating the west boundary,



and then take up the urgent work of the interior.

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER THOMAS S. RACKLIFF: Salary \$1,100 per year. Mr. Rackliff, who is 35 years of age, is of medium height, and weighs about 160 pounds. He is unmarried and lives with his father and sister on their patented homestead just within the reserve on the middle fork of Clearwater river. Mr. Rackliff was injured by a mine cave-in in Colorado several years ago, with the result that his left leg is two or three inches short. He is active and capable of performing the ordinary duties of a ranger, but I do not believe that he can be depended upon for work requiring unusual exertion and endurance of severe exposure.

Prior to entering the service, Mr. Rackliff was a miner and prospector. He has spent more or less time in all the large mining districts in the West. He has prospected every quarter of the Idaho portion of the Bitter Root Reserve, with which he is thoroly familiar. He has had little experience in handling stock on the open range, but is a thore woodsman, having had much experience in timber work and trail building in connection with mine work and prospecting. As a miner Mr. Rackliff secured from \$3.00 to \$5.00 per day. Since locating on the Clearwater homestead he has realized from \$500 to \$700 per year from trapping and from \$600 to \$700 per year from the sale of fruit raised on the homestead.

The few head of cattle owned by Mr. Rackliff and his father are grazed on the reserve under permit, and all his horeses (two or three) are used in connection with his work as ranger.

Mr. Rackliff, who has an even disposition and is slow to

---10---

take offense, appears to be liked by his neighbors and the reserve users. He has no bad habits. It is said that he is somewhat of a crank on spiritualism. Mr. Rackliff's work in the service has not been altogether satisfactory, but it is thought this has been largely due to the fact that he has not had proper instructions and guidance from the Supervisor. The ranger who was in charge of the Northern division, and under whom Mr. Rackliff worked prior to being put in charge of this same division, was very thorough and put rather a liberal meaning upon the Use Book regulations. He kept excellent records of the work accomplished and made detailed reports to the Supervisor, so it can not be said that Mr. Rackliff failed entirely to get proper teaching, tho it must be remembered that in the past the rangers assisted each other but little. Mr. Rackliff has kept no records of the work done under his direction, and has not been required to do so. He has built a large amount of excellent trail; in fact too good in one or two instances, when it is remembered that such a large amount of this trail work needs to be done in the shortest possible time.

Mr. Rackliff is well liked by most of the rangers of his division, tho it is thought this is due to some extent to the fact that he allows them to do just about as they please, has not pushed the work, and is rather eager to excuse the rangers' laxity. In discussing the failure on his part to require greater effort of rangers and more strict discipline, Mr. Rackliff's one point was that under the old administration, things were very lax, and that it is very hard to improve. Granting ample weight to Mr. Rackliff's argument, it is still thought that a much greater improvement could have been accomplished if the proper exertion had

--11--

been made.

Supervisor Day has perfect confidence in Mr. Rackliff's reliability and does not question his thoroughness. It is thought that Mr. Day's confidence is somewhat misplaced, that Ranger Rackliff is inclined through conceit to exaggerate obstacles to carry his own points in matters of general administration, and that while he writes a very good hand and expresses himself very well in making reports, he has failed to keep proper records and report in cases when he fully realized the necessity of so doing.

Mr. Rackliff has rendered much excellent service, and it is recommended that he be promoted to \$1,100 per annum with title of Forest Ranger. His case has been discussed very fully with the intention of bringing out the point that he is worthy of the present promotion recommended, but that he should not be given greater promotion, and should be relieved of supervision of the Northern division as soon as a more capable man can be found to take his place, unless he greatly improves.

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER EDWIN M. CLARK: Salary \$75. per month. Mr. Clark is 42 or 43 years of age, is married and has children grown. His family live in Lewiston, Idaho. He has a good education and tho he claims to be a surveyor, timberman and civil engineer, he has shown no efficiency in these lines of work, and there are grounds for grave doubts as to the truthfulness of his statements setting forth his own ability. Mr. Clark writes a distinct hand and his reports and letters filed in the Supervisor's office are well expressed, but they clearly show Mr. Clark's eagerness to enlarge upon his own ability.

Mr. Day informed me that on one or two occasions, he has found Mr. Clark's statements incorrect, and he feels that he can not be altogether relied upon inasmuch as he is inclined to enlarge upon minor details of little importance. Mr. Clark's patrol and trail work under the supervision of Rangers Rackliff and Bentz has been fairly good. His physical condition is not perfect. Last spring he suffered severely with rheumatism and was stationed at the Red River Hot Springs by the Supervisor. Just what services he performed while here, I can not say. The record of his work as shown in his report was principally patrol. His work as compared with that of the other rangers is good. He has constructed more trail per day, and of a better grade, than any one of the other rangers. Mr. Clark came to Idaho from the Michigan Lumber district and has worked at mining and ranching earning from \$2. to \$3.50 per day.

He has no stock outside of his five head of pack and saddle horses used by him in his duties as ranger. His standing in the country is fair. He uses both intoxicant drink and tobacco, but not to excess.

Mr. Clark is not very well liked by the rangers, because I think they have taken offense at his persistent efforts to impress them with his undue importance. I feel sure that he would fail to handle men to advantage for this same reason. His trail and cabin work has been good and <sup>he makes</sup> a fair all-a-round man if kept under the direct supervision of a more competent man.

Mr. Clark is recommended for promotion to Deputy Forest Ranger, at \$1,000 per year to take effect January 1.

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER LOUIS F. FITTING: Salary \$75. per month. Mr. Fitting is 40 years old, of medium height, rather heavy set and of the hardy type found among mountain men. Mr. Fitting is an excellent hand at trail or cabin construction, and can be depended upon to carry out manual work requiring great exertion and severe exposure. Mr. Fitting has little education, writes poorly and expresses himself in writing with effort. He has been kept a trail construction and fire patrol under the direction of another ranger with the result that he has had little clerical work to do. Mr. Fitting's record of work performed is good, but he has a little drink habit, and gets more or less drunk when he visits the settlements. Forest Assistant Barton reports that when Mr. Fitting discontinued patrol work in the Southern division at the close of the patrol season in October he became helplessly drunk in Elk City on his way to report to Supervisor Day. When Mr. Fitting was in Kooskia on November 23 to secure supplies he was drinking. I think Mr. Fitting's continuous drinking warrants a request for his resignation, but such a request just now would be illadvised, owing to lack of efficient men on this reserve and the difficulty to secure others. I recommend that Mr. Fitting be given no promotion and that he be sent the following letter over the Forester's signature:

"Dear Sir:

Your work upon the Bitter Root Reserve is reported as very satisfactory. I wish to commend your excellent service in trail construction and general patrol work.

I should be glad if you would improve your clerical work and insure your advancement in the service, but must call your attention to the fact that you are drinking too much for

--14--

your own good and for that of the Service. Continuous excessive drinking on the part of a reserve officer on or off duty will not be tolerated. I, therefore, request that you discontinue drinking altogether, or I will be forced to recommend your dismissal from the Service."

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER H. J. DURANT: Salary \$75. per month. Mr. Durant is 30 years old, and of that hardy woodsman type found among loggers and trappers of the western forests. He is short, rather thick set, bright, intelligent, and quick to comprehend. He has a common school education, expresses himself only fairly well and writes poorly. He worked at mining and ranching prior to entering the Service, and owing to his experience as a minor, Supervisor Day has given him charge of the blasting in trail construction on the Northern division. From Mr. Durant's correspondence, I should say that he dislikes clerical work of a ranger's duties and reports to the Supervisor only when forced to. Mr. Durant's work is praised by the Supervisor and I feel convinced that he is capable of filling a responsible position, such as, running a gang at trail or cabin construction, or for caring for an isolated district.

I recommend that Mr. Durant be promoted to Deputy Forest Ranger, at \$1,000 per annum, and informed by a letter over the Forester's signature that his clerical work is poor and that he should make the effort to improve it.

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER DANIEL J. DUNHAM: Salary \$75 per month. Mr. Dunham is 30 years of age, single, and without much education. His family live in Kooskia, where Mr. Dunham

--15--

owns a part interest in the Clearwater river ferry. Prior to entering the Service, Mr. Dunham was interested in mining and ranching. His education has been neglected and for this reason his clerical ability is very poor. His writing is indistinct, tho he expresses himself rather well. Mr. Dunham's reports or letters to the Supervisor are not full or clear and I think, distinctly show that he lacks an interest in the work to the extent that he has failed to inform himself on important points, a knowledge of which is necessary to properly perform ranger duty. Mr. Day told me that he has tried repeatedly to arouse Mr. Dunham into taking an interest in the work, but has failed.

Mr. Dunham has been furloughed for the winter, and I think it would be illadvised to appoint him again in the spring unless it is impossible to secure a better man.

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER GEORGE G. BENTZ: Salary \$78 per month. Mr. Bentz is 28 years of age, short of stature, and stockily built. He is married and has two children. Prior to entering the Service Mr. Bentz worked in the Buffalo Hump mines where he secured \$3.50 per day for underground work. He also worked on his father's ranch on Kamas prairie, where he gained much experience in handling stock, both cattle and horses.

Mr. Bentz owns a string of four horses and has an unperfected homestead claim on the breaks of White Bird Creek, four miles above White Bird. This claim adjoins that of Mr. Bentz, Senior, who has worked it for his son. The horses owned by Mr. Bentz have been grazed on his claim, when not used by him on reserve business.

Mr. Bentz has many friends in the communities adjoining

ing his district, and he is well liked and respected by the reserve users with whom he has come in contact. He has no bad habits and conducts himself above question. He does not use strong drink, and uses tobacco moderately.

Prior to the creation of the Southern division, Mr. Bentz was in charge of the Elk City division, which he managed very well. Thrus his experience as a miner he was able to handle the mining business very well. The office records, considering the instructions which Mr. Bentz received, were well kept. Mr. Bents is original and has accomplished much thru his own efforts. He is considerate of others and is well liked and respected by the other reserve officers. This, I think is the strongest proof of his ability to handle men. He is desirous of pushing the work, works hard, and writes a concise report in which the existing conditions for the most part are stated. He writes a distinct bold hand and has the ability to use a typewriter. Mr. Bentz, like all the officers on this reserve, has been greatly handicapped by the teaching he received under the Land Office rule, as he is inclined to follow the letter of the regulations too closely regardless of the local conditions and his own judgment. This I think he will soon overcome when he thoroly understands the present administrative policy.

I recommend that he be appointed Deputy Supervisor, at \$1,400 per annum, January 1, 1907.

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER WILLIAM GRANT LITCHFIELD:

Salary \$75 per month. Mr. Litchfield is 25 years of age, six feet two inches in height and weighs 165 lbs., and is well qualified to stand the severest exposure. He is unmarried and



lives with his parents within two miles of Elk City. Mr. Litchfield writes fairly well, expresses himself clearly, but lacks education and teaches himself with difficulty. He is a good horseman and hard worker, and being quick to comprehend, he fully realizes the necessity of a forest ranger's treating all the reserve users with consideration and courtesy, tho he is a little inclined to involve himself in petty quarrels by taking an active part in general gossip. Mr. Litchfield is an experienced miner, and worked in the mines of the Elk City district, earning \$3.50 per day, prior to entering the Service, and he has taken up a ranch in the Elk City township that was eliminated. This claim, which I understand, was located prior to his entering the service, will be perfected as soon as the plat of the township that was surveyed last summer is recorded for filing.

Mr. Litchfield's record of past work is good and he is well spoken of by the Supervisor and the rangers who have had charge of the division upon which he has worked. The general opinion is that Mr. Litchfield will be at a disadvantage in handling men, on account of his age and boyish ways. This I think is true, but I believe that a more responsible position should be given him so he may have chance to develop. He has the ability, and if he will make the effort, he will be a valuable man to the Service. It has been suggested to Mr. Day that he put Mr. Litchfield in charge of the Southern division, with headquarters at Elk City. It is further recommended that Mr. Litchfield be promoted to Deputy Forest Ranger, at \$1,000 per annum.

ASSISTANT RANGER SHELTON J. McPHERSON: Salary \$900 per annum. Mr. McPherson is 45 years of age, married, and lives

--18--

with his wife and four children at Clearwater, Idaho. His physical condition is good and he is well able to perform the duties of a ranger.

Before entering the service, he worked his ranch near Clearwater on Clear Creek. He has worked around sawmills, is a good blacksmith and carpenter, and has handled beef cattle in connection with his ranch.

Mr. McPherson owns a quarter section on Clear Creek, and owns a small bunch of horses, which he uses in connection with his work of ranger. His standing in the community is excellent and he is well respected by his neighbors and the reserve users with whom I talked. He has no bad habits as far as I could learn.

Since Mr. McPherson entered the service in the spring of 1904 he has been assigned to patrol work and trail construction. Last year Mr. Day put him in charge of the grazing on the Western portion of the Southern division where much trouble was experienced thru the fact that a large number of stock was run in without apparent owners. Mr. McPherson showed much ability, tact, and consideration in clearing this trouble up. He made several mistakes in making out the necessary forms, but this was due to the fact that the Supervisor had failed to give him proper instructions.

Mr. McPherson is well liked by the reserve officers with whom he is considerate and helpful in all his dealings. He has excellent ability to handle men, and it is thought would be able to act as Assistant to the Supervisor in office and administrative work if he is given proper training and a chance to develop.

--10--

It has been suggested to the Supervisor that he take such promising men into his office on every opportunity and give them the needed chance to learn the business and improve.

Mr. McPherson can be used to great advantage in handling gangs of men at trail, cabin or pasture construction. I recommend that he be promoted to Forest Ranger, at \$1,100 per year, to take effect, January 1, 1907.

ASSISTANT FOREST RANGER JAMES S. GARRISON: Salary \$75 per month. Mr. Garrison is a single man, 27 years old, who came to this section from Western Nebraska. He is of medium height, slight and of rather wiry build. He is rather silent and spontaneous in his actions. He evidently lacks good judgment and clear comprehension of the "Use Book" regulations. Mr. Garrison has a common school education but has made little use of it. He writes poorly and does not express himself clearly. So far he has been kept at patrol and trail construction under the direction of the other rangers. Supervisor Day thinks that Mr. Garrison will become in time a good ranger. He has been in the Service one year, and in that time, the manual labor he has performed has been very good, but I would not recommend him for promotion until he shows a decided inclination and ability to improve.

--oOo--