

Reservation Plan (continued)

One of the proponents in Congress for the opening up of the Grand Ronde Reservation was the Honorable Thomas H. Tongue of Hillsboro, Oregon. Frank C. Armstrong, Special Agent at the Grand Ronde Agency, also urged sale of the unallotted lands even though there were no provisions to secure land for minor children born subsequent to the initial allotting process and adult mixed blood Indians living on the reservation had not received lands. Armstrong held that the rolls were closed and should not be reopened except for three individuals.

Armstrong reported that the Indians could manage very nicely on the allotted lands if several conditions were met. He recommended that authority be given for old and infirm allottees without direct heirs to transfer their land to younger Indians who would buy them, giving these old people a life interest and occupancy which would support them during their lives. He also suggested that the Indians be allowed to cut and sell timber on their lands.

On all their allotments there is sufficient wood and timber to do them for future time. Some of them have much more timber than they can ever use. These under the supervision of the agent, should be allowed to cut and sell some of this timber, thereby clearing their ground which would be then good for farming or grazing; now it cannot be used for either. They could have these logs sawed at the mill and sell the lumber, for which they have a market. This would give them some money and the use of the land, whereas now they cannot utilize it and the timber is going to decay.

Armstrong urged the sale of surplus lands noting that on the north side of the Reservation there were about 13,000 acres used principally by stock men for grazing and about 20 sections of good timber land on the southern part of the Reservation. He noted that the Indians derived no revenue from the grazing lands because the stock men paid no fees and that the timber land had saleable lumber.

According to the Agent, the Indians were anxious that the unallotted land be sold. He urged that the sale price be turned over to the Indians in a lump sum so that they could purchase stock and improve their farms. He claimed that this request was unanimously made by them, but no supporting petitions or letters are found in the Agency records. Following Armstrong's report, Inspector James McLaughlin was detailed to conclude an agreement with the Indians for the sale of the unallotted lands of the Grand Ronde Reservation.

The 1901 Land Cession

James McLaughlin was a United States Indian Inspector who negotiated a series of agreements with Indians for sale of so-called "surplus" lands, or lands remaining after allotment at the turn of the century. In a