

---

SETTLERS IN WIND RIVER VALLEY, WYOMING.

---

MARCH 1, 1888.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

---

Mr. LA FOLLETTE, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 4248.]

*The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4248) for the relief of certain settlers in the Wind River Valley, Wyoming, having carefully considered the same, submit the following report:*

This bill is for the relief of nine settlers who went upon the public lands of the United States in what is known as the Wind River Valley, Wyoming. It is shown that eight of these settlers went upon the lands when they belonged to the United States, and in good faith made improvements and cultivation thereon; that subsequent to their residence, in 1868, by treaty with the Shoshone and Bannock tribes of Indians (15 Stats. at Large, 673) the Government set aside the land upon which these improvements had been made as a part of the reservation for these tribes of Indians.

These claims have been recognized by the Interior Department, and under direction of that Department the agent of the Government appraised the improvements and found them to be of the value of \$9,871.50. It appearing, however, that the improvements of one of the settlers were made wholly or in part after the conclusion of the treaty of the United States, namely, that of William Jones, the Department recommends that he be not paid for his improvements, amounting to \$500. The Interior Department, in different communications, has recommended an appropriation for the amount necessary to pay for the improvements of the eight settlers, namely, \$9,371.50.

In a recent letter the Hon. J. D. C. Atkins, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, says:

I have to say that this office has always recognized that those parties who had settled upon lands that were subsequently included in the Shoshone Reservation have an equitable claim to payment for the improvements, and have taken occasion, when called upon, to recommend payment therefor.

Bills were reported favorably for the relief of these settlers to the House of Representatives in the Forty-sixth, Forty-seventh, Forty-eighth, and Forty-ninth Congresses.

The committee recommend that the bill be amended in line 4 of section 1 by adding between the words "through" and "appraisement" the word "the," and that in line 1, section 2 of the bill, the word "eight" be stricken out and "three" be inserted in lieu thereof, and that after the word "act," in line 7 of said section, there be added the words "*Provided*, That no payment shall be made to any one of said settlers until he shall first have finally removed from said reservation."

For the further information of the House your committee appends herewith the reports of committees previously submitted, and also the appraisal made under instructions of the Indian Office.

[House Report No. 1101, Forty-seventh Congress, first session.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs have had under consideration the bill (H. R. 3511) for the relief of certain settlers in the Wind River Valley, Wyoming Territory, and given careful consideration to all the papers filed, the report of the Indian agent, as to the value and time of the improvements made by settlers, the letters of the Secretary of the Interior, etc.

It is shown that these settlers went upon these lands at a time when they belonged to the United States, and in good faith made their improvements, and that subsequently, in 1868, by a treaty made with the Shoshone and Bannock tribes of Indians, the Government set aside the land on which these improvements has been made as a reservation for these tribes of Indians. It would appear to be but a simple act of justice to compensate these settlers for the improvements which they have made in good faith on the lands which the Government has taken away from them.

Your committee therefore recommend the passage of the bill allowing all these claims, except the claim of William Jones for \$500, which appears to have been made after the treaty of 1868.

[House Report No. 1884, Forty-ninth Congress, first session.]

*The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 2920) for the relief of certain settlers in the Wind River Valley, Wyoming Territory, having carefully considered the same, submit the following report:*

This bill is for the relief of nine settlers who went upon public lands in what is known as the Wind River Valley, Wyoming Territory. It is shown that eight of these settlers went upon these lands when they belonged to the United States, and in good faith made their improvements thereon. That subsequently, in 1868, by treaty with the Shoshone and Bannock tribes of Indians (15 Statutes at Large, 673) the Government set aside the land upon which these improvements had been made as a reservation for these tribes of Indians. One of the settlers, William Jones, made improvements valued at \$500 after the making of said treaty in 1868. The justice of the eight claims, amounting to \$9,371.50, has been recognized by the Interior Department in numerous recommendations for the payment thereof. The Committee on Indian Affairs of the Forty-sixth, Forty-seventh, and Forty-eighth Congresses reported in favor of the payment.

The improvements made by said eight settlers was valued at said sum of \$9,371.50 by an agent of the Interior Department.

The committee recommend that in the first and second lines of section 2 the words "eight hundred and seventy-one" be stricken out, and that the words "three hundred and seventy-one" be inserted in lieu thereof, and when amended that the bill do pass.

*Estimate of improvements made by white men on the Shoshone and Bannock Reservation, prior to treaty, 1868, by James Irwin, United States Indian agent, February 12, 1876.*

Names.	Date of claims.	Dwelling houses.		Other buildings.		Vegetable or root cellar.		Corrals.	
		Materials and dimensions.	Value.		Value.	No.	Value.	No.	Value.
Wm. Boyd.....	Spring, 1868.	1 stone, 14 by 16	\$300	Log, 14 by 16..	\$50	1	\$50	1	\$25
Do.....		1 log, 14 by 16..	150	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Wm. Evans.....	May 8, 1868..	1 adobe, 14 by 16	200	Pole.....	25	1	50	1	50
Do.....		.....	.....	Grain house..	50	.....	.....	.....	.....
James Rogers..	Fall, 1867....	1 adobe, 20 by 27	600	2 log.....	75	2	100	1	50
Wm. Jones.....	Fall, 1869..	1 log, 26 by 14..	100	1 and granary..	50	1	50	1	25
Thos. Cosgrove	Spring, 1868.	1 sod, 18 by 20..	100	1 log.....	50	1	50	.....	.....
D. Williams...	June, 1868..	1 stone, 12 by 16	100	.....	.....	1	50	.....	.....
N. P. Davidson.	May 8, 1868..	1 log, 16 by 20..	200	1 log.....	150	1	50	.....	.....
T. Kutch.....	do.....	1 log, 15 by 30..	250	do.....	75	1	50	.....	.....
Jno. L. Parker.	May 16, 1868.	1 log, 14 by 16..	150	.....	.....	1	50	1	20
Total.....	.....	11	2,450	10	525	10	500	5	170

*Estimate of improvements, etc.—Continued.*

Names.	Date of claims.	Wells.		Land broke.		Post and rail fences.		Dams and ditches.		Total.
		No.	Value.	Acres.	Value.	Rods.	Value.	Rods.	Value.	
Wm. Boyd.....	Spring, 1868.	1	\$25	60	\$300	350	\$442.50	100	\$50	\$1,392.50
Wm. Evans.....	May 8, 1868..	1	25	60	300	350	525.00	100	50	1,275.00
James Rogers..	Fall, 1867 ..	1	-----	88	440	640	864.00	125	125	2,554.00
Wm. Jones.....	Fall, 1869 ..	1	25	20	100	200	100.00	50	50	500.00
Thos. Cosgrove.	Spring, 1868.	1	25	35	175	320	432.00	200	200	1,032.00
D. Williams.....	June, 1868..	1	25	25	125	240	324.00	40	30	654.00
N. P. Davidson.	May 8, 1868..	1	25	30	150	320	432.00	50	100	1,107.00
T. Kutch.....	do .....	1	25	35	175	320	432.00	50	100	1,107.00
Jno. L. Parker.	May 16, 1868	1	25	1	5	-----	-----	-----	-----	250.00
<b>Total.....</b>	-----	<b>8</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>1,770</b>	<b>2,740</b>	<b>3,551.00</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>9,871.50</b>

In accordance with instructions of the honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated March 31, 1875, also January 26, 1876, I have the honor to transmit the above tabular statement of the value of improvements made on this reservation by William Boyd and others, which improvements commenced previous to the treaty of the 3d of July, 1868, by actual settlement. The value of T. Kutch and N. P. Davidson's improvements are considered at the time they were required to leave the reservation.

JAMES IRWIN,  
*United States Indian Agent.*