

Cranbrook, B. C.
April 18th, 1945

Major D. M. MacKay, Indian Commissioner for B.C., P.O.
Box 70, Vancouver, B. C.

I beg to enclose herewith lease in ^{duplicate} triplicate covering 66 acres of land on Lower Kootenay I. R. No. 4 and 50 acres on L.K.I.C. known as Hicks Island duly signed by Chief Frank Basil, the Indian Agent and the lessor Mr. Arthur Peterson. The 66 acre parcel has been under yearly lease to the Poole Construction Co. since 1938 on a half share basis, but there was evidently an arrangement between lessor and Indian Agent Irwin whereby the lessor was paid plowing and preparing the land for crop although there was nothing in the lease to that effect. Our voucher book indicates that vouchers were forwarded to the Department in 1938, 39, 41, and 42 in favour of the Poole Construction Co. for this work and Mr. Berg, Manager of the Company informed me his Company had received payment for this service up until 1944.

Inquiry was made in Creston from real estate dealers as to the customary rental for lands in the district and I was informed that one-third to the lessee delivered in either elevator or granary was customary for grain crops and one-fourth for crops sown for peas, when lessor furnished seed and did all the work. I think this arrangement would be more satisfactory than leasing on one-half share basis and lessee paying for plowing etc. The Poole Construction Co. are about to sell their holdings in the district and for this reason do not care to continue leasing the property. This land has been farmed continuously since 1938 and is getting poluted with thistles and weeds of various kinds and it is necessary that something be done to meet this menace, hence the clause that one-half the area be sown to peas. A pea crop, in my opinion, is equally as good as summer fallow for destroying weeds and at the same time puts elements into the soil which tend to build it up.

The reason for share of the crop to lessee being one-fourth for land seeded to peas instead of one-third when seeded to grain is due to the heavy cost of seed, it costing \$12.00 per acre to seed land to peas.

Mr. Peterson leased 50 acres on Lower Kootenay No. E.C. known as Hicks Island in 1944 and is apparently a satisfactory tenant, I would recommend approval of these leases and as the tenant wants to start work on the land as soon as possible, I would kindly ask that if approved by you that the leases be forwarded to Ottawa by Air Mail for final approval.

(Over)