

Jan 22/47

At that time it was realized here that there was no copy of the original sale contract, and this you forwarded under yours of the 9th instant. The Coppock agreement confirms the contention of Mr. Coppock at the interview that the grazing privileges must be paid for so long as the vendor had the property under lease. He stated that as the Estate was not using all the grazing nor all of the hay and fodder on the ranch, various ranchers had approached him to rent grazing privileges for their herds at 50¢ per head per month. Their requests, of course, were turned down as the contract gave us the first refusal. As grazing and certain fodder were required to maintain the Stony cattle, it was necessary to complete a deal with Mr. Coppock. To confirm the deal, which was made verbally, and in answer to Mr. Coppock's letter of the 8th, he was written on the 16th. A copy of this letter is attached hereto.

By this time the cattle had grazed off two sections of grass land, and a considerable amount of the hay and straw purchased from the Estate had been used up. Representative Indian owners were brought to a meeting and the whole situation explained to them. They were made to understand that they had a financial responsibility, and could not expect all the feed, grazing and supervision to be done for them gratis. They were told that they would have to pay in kind or in cash. Their decision to retain their hay stacks until later in the year, when this feed might be still needed, and to use all the feed available on the ranch in the meantime, was logical and good business. They agreed that if their feed had to augment the feed that was purchased, they would pay for the feed and grazing on a per capita basis. The cattle were then turned on to other grazing land of the ranch.

A count of all cattle grazing at the ranch was taken on the 17th and 18th and this totalled 919 head, but included a few calves at foot. It was then agreed by Mr. Coppock and the writer that payment be made for 900, as per copy of the attached letter of the 22nd instant.

The herd is under the supervision of a qualified young stockman, and so far as can be estimated at this time, there will be sufficient feed on the Reserve and ranches to carry the cattle safely through this winter. In so far as grazing is concerned it might appear that a great deal of this grass will be eaten off by April when the existing lease terminates and possession is taken on behalf of the Stonys. Growth in this part is rapid, and there was really an excessive accumulation of old bottom on this range, which is better off to allow fresh growth which will be better feeding.

It cannot be estimated now what it will be necessary to pay the Coppock Estate for grazing and feeding, but it is safe to surmise that there will be very little, if any, left of the rental credit.


G. K. Gooderham,
Inspector of Indian Agencies,
Alberta Inspectorate.

GHG:RM
enc.