



# LEASING OF STATE LANDS FOR MINERALS

## HISTORY TAKEN FROM RECORDS

### CHAPTER III.

As I proceed with the history of mineral leasing of school lands in Nebraska, I will call attention to some things that must be given close attention in order to get an accurate and just view of the situation.

First, the reader must be careful to distinguish between facts, as published in these articles and otherwise given out, and fiction that is being frequently repeated and to some extent published in newspapers. I have no intention of naming many, if any, persons who have repeated inaccurate stories. I prefer being charitable and assuming that untrue statements are given currency thru lack of information rather than because of a desire to deceive.

Notwithstanding the many and conflicting stories that are being told in some quarters, the careful reader will distinguish between unreliable rumors and the facts herein stated. I wish here to call attention again to the fact that the rules for mineral leasing that were adopted by the Board of Educational Lands and Funds were not all compiled at one time, but were developed to meet the needs of the situation as there became a demand for leases at this time; but these rules were never changed to show partiality to any person or set of persons.

The more one studies this matter and learns the facts in the case, the more strongly he becomes convinced that the mineral leases given at any time to any persons would have been granted just the same to other persons had they been the applicants instead of the ones who did apply.

Before quoting further from the records in the office of the commissioner of public lands and buildings, I wish to call attention to the two classes of persons who have endeavored, or have planned, to take potash or other minerals from state school lands as a business proposition:

1. A few persons have endeavored to remove such deposits for their own profit without any remuneration to the state therefor.

I am informed that this has already been done to some extent.

As an example of this class of persons is a man who, since the decision of the district court of Lancaster county enjoining the State Board of Educational Lands and Funds from issuing mineral leases on certain school lands, told me that he intends to pump the potash water from certain school land, that the injunction from the Lancaster county district court will prevent the state board from stopping him before he removes the potash, that there will then be only fresh water in the lakes and that the state can have that.

Whether the statement made by this man was only an idle threat, or whether he was really planning to do what he said, it illustrates clearly the disposition to take state property, in the form of mineral deposits, without dividing the proceeds with the school fund of the state.

2. A number of persons have asked for the privilege of taking mineral, such as potash, oil, etc., from school lands, offering to pay the state therefor as a royalty a part of the mineral produced, a few offering to pay a cash bonus in addition to the royalty.

To this class belong those persons who applied for and received mineral leases on school lands before the recent special session of the legislature at which a law was passed specifically authorizing the board of Educational Lands and Funds to grant such leases, said mineral leases which were issued prior to that time having been invalidated by the decision of the supreme court of Nebraska.

After listening to the many different things that have been said, I have been unable to find one scintilla of evidence that a single one of the 229 persons to whom were granted the mineral leases invalidated by the supreme court decision above referred to, ever had any intention or desire to remove a dollar's worth of mineral from school land without paying the state for the privilege.

The following is an extract from the minutes of a meeting of the state board held May 2, 1917, a list of the

sections referred to will be given in the next chapter of this story:

Pursuant to call of the chairman, the Board of Educational Lands and Funds met in the office of the governor with all members present.

Mr. Claude Quigley, of Valentine, appeared in behalf of the Braska Refining & Pipe Line company of Valentine to secure the right to prospect for potash upon land owned by the state.

Moved by Mr. Reed, seconded by Mr. Pool, that the following resolution be adopted:

"Whereas, It is not definitely known that there is within the state of Nebraska any land which contains oil or gas, but it is known that potash can be obtained in certain parts of Nebraska in paying quantities, and

"Whereas, There is certain school land in the state of Nebraska yet owned by the state which is not known to possess any minerals of any kind or character, and

"Whereas, A certain company to be organized and incorporated within the state of Nebraska, consisting of W. S. Ridgell, K. A. McRae, Frank M. Broome, Clyde A. Rossier and James C. Quigley, is desirous of entering into a compact with the state of Nebraska by and thru the Board of Educational Lands and Funds to prospect certain land hereinafter subscribed for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not there is any mineral within said land, which may be extracted or taken from the land or any part thereof in paying quantities, and

"Whereas, It is the desire of this board to encourage and cause the development of all the natural resources of the state of Nebraska, and especially mineral, oil, gas, potash and coal, that the general public may be greatly benefited, thereby, therefore be it

"Resolved, That the tentative offer on the part of said company hereinafter referred to be accepted and a permit and lease be entered into granting and allowing said company to prospect, as in its judgment it may deem best, for such minerals as may be found therein upon the land hereinafter described, for a period of five years, with privilege of renewing the lease, on not to exceed one section each to the members comprising said company, the tentative offer being one dollar (\$1.00) per section, and in addition thereto one-eighth of all mineral delivered in pipe lines or tanks, or other receptacles suitable for containing same of all potash, oil, gas or other minerals produced, saved and sold from the above described premises, and provided that such company shall begin operations within 90 days and prosecute the work with due diligence.

All members voting in the affirmative, motion prevailed.

**Relax If You Would Sleep.**  
The philosopher Hegel finished his principal work on the eve of the battle of Jena, amidst the thunder of cannon. Noise, instead of interfering with conscious thinking, produces an incentive to thought. If you keep too vigorous an attention on your ideas, after you compose yourself for sleep; if you maintain an emotional element or any feelings with them, you will be awake or have only fitful sleep.

**Beyond All Price.**  
Gifts from the hand are silver and gold, but the heart gives that which neither silver nor gold can buy. To be full of goodness, full of cheerfulness, full of sympathy, full of helpful hope, causes one to carry with him blessings of which he is himself as unconscious as a lamp is of its own shining. Such a one moves on human life as stars move on dark seas to bewildered mariners.

**Lights and the Color Scheme.**  
Did you ever wish that you could get electric light bulbs to match the color scheme of your room? If so, you may be glad to know, if you have not already discovered the trick for your self, that you may color them at home to suit your own taste. It is very simple. Just buy some water-color paints a soft brush, and set to work. You may paint them any shade that you desire, and get a lovely effect of soft light through the painted glass. For instance, if your living room is done in shades of brown and yellow, you can get a beautiful sunshiny light through bulbs painted a delicate yellow.—Christian Science Monitor.

### WANTED TO KEEP OLD RUSSIA

**Desire of Caucasian Princess Was for Independence Without Blemishes of Industrialism.**

I met a Caucasian princess here in Petrograd, Ernest Poole writes in the Saturday Evening Post. She sat next to me one day in the small press gallery of the hall in which the duma used to meet. Now in its place was the council. The woman by my side, I learned, was here as a correspondent for a social revolutionist paper down in the Caucasus.

I had been in the Caucasus years before, and we spoke of the old town where she had been born, high up in the heart of the mountains. The Russians call the women there "the diamonds of Russia," and this woman was one of these. I was curious to learn what had drawn her to a scene like this, so many thousand miles from home. She explained that her husband had been killed in the first year of the war and that after that she had thrown herself into war activities.

"We don't want to desert the Russian cause. We are all in favor of pushing the war through to the end," she told me. "And at the same time we are doing our part in the work of the revolution. The president of the council here, and half the other leaders, too, are Caucasians. We are doing our share. But at the same time we want to be free from too much rule by Petrograd."

"What do you mean by autonomy? How free do you want to be?" I asked.

"Tell me about your United States. You have states, and a nation, too," she said.

I tried to explain the relations between our states and the federal government.

"We wish more than that," she said; "we want more independence."

I replied that in America we were moving just the other way—toward more centralized government—and I tried to explain how the growth of railroads, factories, mills and huge interstate corporations was forcing us to grant more and more control to the men in Washington.

"But," she rejoined, "we don't want an ugly land of mills. We want our Russia to stay as it is—I mean with its beautiful fields and its forests, its rivers and its mountains. You have seen the Caucasus and I know you will feel what I mean."

### Among the War Sacrifices.

There are many varieties of human beings in New York city, mostly beyond the draft age, who, if Uncle Sam had to depend upon them for assistance, would never have to take an obesity cure. They all, however, believe themselves patriotic because they are stinting on their hobbies. For instance, there is the pallid young man with the chicken breast, who is doing his bit by cutting down his smoking to ten packs of cigarettes a day. He can't wear khaki because they can't make a uniform small enough to fit him. Then there is the stanch patriot who gives everything—his good will and moral support. He has a pocket on every pocket and he helps the Red Cross and other charities by bestowing an encouraging smile on the solicitors. He is tighter than a clam with lockjaw. The last, but not the least, is the fickle young girl who just can't knit and who can't bear to look at Red Cross and recruiting posters because they remind her of the struggle on the other side. "Goodness, a girl must have some pleasure these times," she says. To forget the war she cabarets every night with the chicken-breasted young man who aids the cause of democracy by conserving on cigarettes.

### Sparrow Pies.

Jacob Riis describes in one of his delightful essays how the good old housekeeper in his Danish home used to climb to the eaves to rob the sparrows' nests for a delectable pie. Now Mr. James Hunt of Philadelphia, who is crusading against the English sparrow, advocates the pie as the true destiny of the sparrow. He furnished the sparrows for such a pie opened in Washington recently at a luncheon served by the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

The guests declared that the pie was good, and the flavor of the sparrow was superior to chicken and equal to partridge. Washington boys found this out long ago in their secret sparrow roasts, where dozens of these tidbits were spitted on wires before the blaze and devoured by these food pirates.

Cleaning a sparrow is a simple matter of cutting the breast away from all other parts and skinning. Special traps are used for catching sparrows. These are set near favorite rookeries and dozens of sparrows are caught at a time.

THE HERALD FOR PRINTING.

### Discovery of Easter Island.

Easter Island was discovered nearly 200 years ago by the Dutch Admiral Poggewen, who cast anchor there on an Easter Sunday, whence it derived its name. He found it more largely populated than it is now. But he and his crew must have seen and marveled at its bold rock sculpture, its terraces and walls, its picture writings. Many of these, indeed, rival the world-famous relics of Mexico and Peru, while they are strangely akin to them in conception and design.

### Two Things Worth Having.

Growing plants are healthful in two ways. First, they absorb carbon dioxide given off by the lungs of persons in the house, and give off pure oxygen to the air. Second, the evaporation of moisture from the foliage and from the porous flower pots is one of the best ways to prevent the harmful drying out of air artificially warmed. You can't have too many plants or too many children in the house.

### Father of Punctuation.

The present system of punctuation, now used in all modern languages with but insignificant variations, was introduced in the first half of the fifteenth century by a Venetian printer named Aldus Manutius. He is the real father of punctuation marks—of the full stop, comma, semicolon, colon, question and exclamation marks, apostrophe and inverted commas. Manutius' system was adopted later by all printers until it finally established itself throughout Europe.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

### Moon Superstition.

Among the Hindus and Egyptians the mouse was carried to the moon. De Gubernatis says: "The pagan sun-god crushes under his foot the mouse of the night. When the cat's away the mice will play. The shadows of night lance when the moon is absent."

### Habit to Be Avoided.

The habit of unkind criticism or praiseworthy criticism, if you prefer the word, grows by leaps and bounds if permitted to flourish at all. We have ideas in which we take a certain amount of pride, and those who do not live by them fall under the ban of our displeasure. We have no reason for believing that our ways are better, we merely assume it, and expect others to take the same line of thought. You see we demand freedom of action that we are not willing to accord to others.—Exchange.

### Rich Anthracite Deposits.

At least twenty-one workable beds of anthracite have been identified in the state of Pennsylvania. Their maximum depth below the surface approximates 2,500 feet, and they contain at best from sixty to seventy feet of coal. However, in the "southern" field some of the beds are estimated to reach levels 4,000 feet below the surface.

### Airplane Developed by War.

When the war began the highest type of airplane could not be depended upon to do much more than 50 miles an hour. Today the speedier war planes make 120 miles an hour in long flights. Where the best machines formerly carried two men, or their equivalent in weight, the larger machines of the present will safely carry a ton or more of cargo.

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## I Know the Voice

**WHICH TELLS THE SUFFERINGS FROM A SORE TOOTH**  
I have to see or read for the first time the works of any noted writer of the middle ages, anything that pertains to Dentistry. There could not have been the demand upon them then as in being made today.

**THE SCIENCE OF MEDICINE AND DENTAL SURGERY**  
Which has shown such wonderful progress in such a comparatively short time, has been compulsory—so to speak. Again

**NECESSITY WAS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION**  
For twenty years—every hour of every day, I have heard someone say, "Why does not some one invent something to relieve pain in a safe and easy manner?" The cry for this great necessity has dwelt on my mind so long, that I finally solved the problem and have put it into use. Through Sturgis & Sturgis, Attorneys, I filed for a patent on this most wonderful method to relieve pain.

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