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Boundary Between Nebraska and South Dakota

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 3, 1892.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. PETTIGREW, from the Committee on Public Lands, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany S. 695.]

The Committee on Public Lands, to whom was referred the bill (S. 695) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to survey and mark the boundary between the State of Nebraska and that portion of the State of South Dakota which is embraced in the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Indian reservations, have had the same under consideration and report the same with an amendment.

The urgent necessity for the survey of this boundary is shown by the letters of the Commissioner of the General Land Office and Secretary of the Interior, which are hereto appended.

Your committee recommend that the bill be amended by striking out the word "ascertained" in line 4 of the bill, and to also amend the title so as to read as follows: "A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to survey and mark the boundary between the State of Nebraska and the State of South Dakota which lies west of the Missouri River."

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 26, 1892.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by your reference for views, of a copy of S. 695 "To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to survey and mark the boundary between the State of Nebraska and that portion of the State of South Dakota which is embraced in the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Indian reservations."

In reply I inclose herewith a copy of the report on the bill by the Commissioner of the General Land Office dated the 22d instant.

It will be observed that the Commissioner refers to an item included in the annual estimates of his office for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1893, for the survey of that part of the boundary line between the Missouri and Keya Paha rivers, and suggests an amendment of the title of the bill, the passage of which he recommends.

I concur in his recommendation.

Very respectfully,

JOHN W. NOBLE,
Secretary.

Hon. J. N. DOLPH,
Chairman Committee on Public Lands, Senate.

2 BOUNDARY LINE BETWEEN NEBRASKA AND SOUTH DAKOTA.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, GENERAL LAND OFFICE,
Washington, D. C., January 22, 1892.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by reference from the Department, for report in duplicate, of a copy of Senate bill No. 695, dated December 14, 1891, entitled "A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to survey and mark the boundary between the State of Nebraska and that portion of the State of South Dakota which is embraced in the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Indian reservations."

The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to cause to be surveyed, ascertained, and distinctly marked by suitable and permanent monuments that portion of the boundary line between the State of Nebraska and the State of South Dakota which lies west of the Missouri River, and appropriates for that purpose the sum of \$20,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary.

In response to the direction of the Department to report upon the subject-matter of said bill, I have to state as follows:

That portion of said boundary line extending westward from the Keya Paha River to the northwest corner of Nebraska (southwest corner of South Dakota), was surveyed by Chauncey Wiltse, United States astronomer and surveyor, in the year 1874, under contract with this office bearing date June 24, 1873.

In said survey the initial point on the Keya Paha River was marked by a stone shaft 5 feet 6 inches long and 12 inches square, with a conical mound of earth surrounding the same. From the Keya Paha River to the northwest corner of Nebraska, the line was marked by mileposts 7 feet long and 6 inches square, suitably inscribed, with mound of earth and pits. The posts used were cedar, willow, pine, cottonwood, and ash.

An examination of the record shows that when the public land surveys in Nebraska were closed upon the eastern portion of the Wiltse line in 1875 and 1877, the boundary monuments were found and proper connections were made therewith; but further westward in 1882 and 1883, upon attempting to close the public land surveys upon the boundary, it was found that many of the corner posts had been burned, the mounds partially destroyed, and pits filled up. Toward the western end of the line the United States deputy surveyors found many of the boundary corners obliterated, and it became necessary for them to reestablish the same before their work could be properly closed on the State line. In re-marking the boundary the deputy surveyors used stones of small size (less than 1 cubic foot).

It is more than probable that many of the boundary corners upon the eastern portion of the Wiltse line which were found intact within three or four years from the date of their establishment, have since been obliterated either by the action of the elements, accidents, or design. The fact of the destruction, by Indians, of the evidences of both Indian and public land surveys, has been reported to this office from time to time, and it is not improbable that many of the corner monuments on the boundary line may have been thus obliterated, and in my opinion the entire boundary line should be surveyed and marked by conspicuous stone monuments.

The appropriation of the amount named in Senate bill No. 695, would cover the cost of reestablishing that portion of the line between Nebraska and South Dakota, west of the Keya Paha, and of surveying and marking that portion between the Missouri and Keya Paha rivers by stone monuments, which will form a permanent and conspicuous boundary between said States, and mark the southern limit of the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Indian reservations.

Owing to the nonsurvey of that part of the State line lying between the Missouri and Keya Paha rivers, this office has been unable to contract for the survey of that part of the Sioux ceded lands embraced in fractional townships 35 north, ranges 12 to 20 west of the sixth principal meridian, Nebraska, or of the ceded lands adjoining the boundary and lying east of the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota.

In this connection it is deemed proper to state that included in the annual estimates of this office for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1893, is an estimate for the survey of that part of said boundary line lying between the Missouri and Keya Paha rivers.

In conclusion I would, for the reasons above stated, respectfully recommend the passage of the bill, suggesting, however, that the title be amended to agree with lines 6 and 7 of section 1 of the bill.

Senate bill No. 695 is herewith returned.

Very respectfully,

THOS. H. CARTER,
Commissioner.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.