

12-10-1828

Memorial of James M. Bradford and others.

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Recommended Citation

H.R. Doc. No. 13, 20th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1828)

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HUNTERS OF OREGON.

MEMORIAL

OF

JAMES M. BRADFORD AND OTHERS.

Dec. 10, 1828.—Read, and committed to the Committee of the Whole House to which, is committed the *bill* (H. R. No. 12) to authorize the occupation of the Oregon River.

At a meeting of the associates for the purpose of hunting, trapping, trading, &c. with the Indians west of the Rocky Mountains, at the Court House in St. Francisville, on Saturday the 18th of October, 1828, the following proceedings took place :

On motion, James M. Bradford was appointed President of the said meeting, and Henry M. Dobbs, Jr. Secretary of the same.

The articles of compact and union were read, amended, and adopted, as follows :

Articles of Compact and Union between those who have subscribed their names hereunto. for the purpose of hunting and trapping, trading with the natives, and a permanent settlement on the Columbia or Oregon river, within the limits of the United States.

Every associate shall furnish himself with a good gun, with two locks, one hundred flints, twenty-five pounds of powder, and one hundred pounds of lead. He shall, moreover, keep a good powder horn or flask, which will contain at least one pound of powder; a double shot-bag, a butcher knife, and shingling hatchet or tomahawk.

As soon as the associates rendezvous at St. Louis, they shall be formed into messes : these messes shall provide themselves with one beaver trap, one camp kettle, one frying pan, one felling axe, one spade, one weeding or hilling hoe, and one mattock. Every member of each mess shall have and keep, one tin cup, one spoon, and one knife and fork. Every mess shall moreover carry with it, one quart of wheat, one quart of oats, one quart of rye, one quart of Indian corn, one quart of peas, one quart of beans, one pint of assorted garden seeds, and one pint of assorted melon and cucumber seeds; also, half a pint of pumpkin or cushaw seed, the same quantities of squash and cymblin seed; a pint of flax, and quart of hemp seed; a gill of timothy seed, and the same quantities of blue grass and clover seed; together with half a gill of turnip seed; all of which shall be kept in a good state of preservation.

In addition to the tools to be furnished by the messes, the associates shall carry, to be the common property of the whole, one cross-cut saw, one whip saw, six hand-saws, six dozen gimblets, six two inch, six one inch, six three quarter, and six half inch augers; two braces, and double set of bits, one jack and one fore plane, with one dozen bits for each; six gouges, assorted sizes; six mortising chisels; one dozen assorted car-

penter's chisels, six broad axes, six fros, six drawing knives, six foot adzes, one dozen hoes, two sets of plough irons, a set of cooper's tools, a set of gunsmith's tools, one dozen cross-cut saw files, one dozen whip-saw files, six dozen hand saw and other small three-square files, one dozen claw hammers, one seine for catching salmon, and one small seine.

The associates shall purchase, as common stock, horses, or mules, sufficient to transport the common stock of merchandise, and implements, and ammunition, for the association.

The superior officers of the association shall consist of one Director General, and two associates, to be called the second and third Director. In every thing that relates to the safety and welfare of the company, these officers shall hold consultation; and in all embarrassing matters, the cause of embarrassment shall be submitted to the assembled associates. When these officers are together, all orders shall emanate from the Director General; and, in his absence, from the second Director, and, lastly, from the third.

Implicit obedience must be paid to all orders issued in conformity to the provisions of these articles of compact, under penalty of such punishment as the assembled associates may think proper to inflict.

The Director General shall be civil and military commander-in-chief. He shall arrange and class fatigue and hunting parties, weekly at least, and as much oftener as he may deem necessary. These duties devolving upon the second and third Directors as herein before set forth.

The associates shall be formed into companies of not less than twenty men, and may extend to one hundred; these companies shall be commanded each by one captain, and having, as subalterns, one first and one second lieutenant, with the customary number of non-commissioned officers; the whole to be elected by the company, and for whom commissions shall be solicited in the militia of the United States. As soon as a company shall be reduced to less than twenty men, it shall be dissolved and incorporated into other companies.

Companies and company officers shall be obedient at all times to orders issued from the Directors, in these articles of compact and union before provided for.

On the march from the frontier of the State of Missouri to the place of final location, the associates shall be governed by the rules and articles of war of the Army of the United States: which said rules and articles of war shall always govern the associates, should they be unfortunately involved in war.

As soon as the associates form a settlement, and secure it from an enemy, they shall be governed in their civil transactions by the civil code of Louisiana, and all crimes shall be punished by the criminal laws of the same State: provided, that, instead of imprisonment, offenders may be compelled to labor for the good of the whole associates, except the offender.

As soon as the permanent establishment is made, the associates shall elect a presiding Judge, and two Associate Judges, who shall preside in all civil and criminal trials; and the parties litigant and on trial shall, in all cases, be entitled to a jury of twelve of the associates, impartially selected.

These laws and regulations shall be observed and continue, until the

United States shall establish a Government in the region about to be occupied by the associates, and until such Government goes into operation.

As soon after the associates shall make a permanent settlement as may be, they shall erect a house in which to worship the living God; and on every Sabbath, (until a clergyman can be employed) it shall be the duty of one of the Directors, or some person by them appointed for that purpose, to read to the assembled associates the morning and evening service of the Protestant Episcopal Church, together with select chapters of the holy writings, or approved prayers and sermons of other churches. As soon as a clergyman is employed, this duty on any other individual shall cease.

Should any member of the association fall sick, or meet with any casualty or fortuitous injury, he shall, on no account, be neglected; but he shall be protected, nursed, and restored to health, if possible, as though he were a brother; nor shall any one be urged to travel when his health will not permit. If, in the Providence of God, any of the associates should die, they shall be buried in as decent and Christian-like manner as the circumstances of the party will permit.

It shall be a primary duty of each and every member of the association, as well as those employed by them, to cultivate peace and harmony with the native tribes, through which they may pass, or with whom they may settle; but should hostilities unfortunately occur, resistance must have no bounds, and the associates are to stick together to the last extremity.

In all intercourse with the natives, they are to be treated with kindness, and nothing received from them for which payment is not instantly made.

Each associate shall put into a common fund one hundred and fifty dollars, to be laid out in horses or mules, and merchandise to trade with the Indians. The merchandise purchased by this common fund shall be intrusted to one or more of the associates, as storekeeper or storekeepers, trader or traders, to be laid out to the best advantage, in the purchase of furs, peltries, and other articles of Indian commerce. These furs, peltries, &c. shall be taken care of by the associates, transported at joint expense, and when sold, the proceeds equally divided between the associates, their heirs, legatees, or representatives.

As the labors of each of the associates are for the benefit of all, the hunters and trappers shall contribute the proceeds of their hunting to the common stock; and so shall those who cultivate the soil offer the whole proceeds of their labors to the common stock; and if more provisions are raised than will supply the associates, the surplus shall be disposed of to the best advantage, for the whole association.

The associates may employ as many hunters, trappers, pack horse drivers, guides, and laborers, as to them may seem meet, and the expense shall be defrayed from the common fund.

If, after advancing the one hundred and fifty dollars contribution to the common fund, any member of the association may wish to withdraw, he may do so; but in that case, all he has advanced shall be forfeited to the common fund, for the benefit of the whole association.

A petition and memorial to Congress was then read and amended, the blanks filled up, and adopted, as follows:

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled:

The petition and memorial of James M. Bradford, Anthony Keasbey, Henry M. Dobbs, Jr. John A. Hoyer, George Graham, John Selser, Thomas S. Shelmire, James F. Johnson, Jno. S. M. Donald, David Hamilton, Thomas Marston Cornelius, William G. Briant, Joseph A. Kirkland, Pryor Sandeford, John Mountjoy, Richard Kirkland, Oscar Barbee, Richard W. S. Parker, Robert Haile, William Thompson, Ignatius T. Cavins, Samuel T. Leavy, Henry Savary, Samuel Richardson, John Mocaby,

RESPECTFULLY SHOWS :

That they have associated together, for the purpose of removing, and permanently settling on the waters of the Columbia or Oregon River, within the limits of the United States, with a view to hunt, trap, and trade with the natives. As soon as the association was concluded on, the associates made their intentions known to the President of the United States by letter, approved by them, and signed by James M. Bradford.

In making this application to the National Legislature, your petitioners and memorialists ask leave to lay before that body some of the advantages which they believe will result to the Nation from their intended enterprize.

They intend to keep constantly on the Columbia river at least one hundred men, well armed, and under strict discipline.

To erect a fort at such point as security and interest may direct.

To establish a well organized civil society, to be governed by "Articles of Compact and Union" hereunto annexed.

To cultivate the soil, and ascertain to what species of culture it is best adapted.

To introduce and multiply domestic animals of every description.

To cultivate peace and good will with the natives, and win, as far as practicable, their friendship to the People and Government of the United States, by explaining to them the strength, power, and policy of the Nation.

To explore, particularly and minutely, the whole region within the limits of the United States, west of the Rocky Mountains, to take geographical notes, and make accurate maps and charts of the country and river, with the soundings at the mouth.

To examine for minerals and salt springs, and send to the Government specimens of all ores which may be discovered.

In their trade and intercourse with the natives, the associates will endeavor to divert the fur trade into the hands of the citizens of the United States.

To take possession, and fortify some position at or near the mouth of the Columbia, which will be convenient for the national and mercantile marine to refit and refresh.

Your petitioners and memorialists are aware of the many arguments made use of, against settling and encouraging emigration to the Columbia River. They are also aware with how little favor any thing like monopoly is looked upon by Congress. But when they consider that they ask no pecuniary aid from the Nation; when they are willing themselves to

bear the whole expense of Government, they are encouraged to ask from Congress, as follows :

1. That a law may pass, giving to your petitioners and memorialists, and their associates, the privilege of extinguishing, by purchase, the Indian title to one hundred miles square of land, (or such other quantity as Congress, in its wisdom, may see fit,) together, or in three several places, on tide water of the Columbia River, or on the sea-coast, contiguous thereto, to which said land the United States will relinquish to the associates their title.*

2. That they shall be allowed the privilege of hunting and trapping, and trading with the natives, beyond the Rocky Mountains, as long as they conform to the laws and regulations of the United States, on that subject.

3. That the associates shall be supplied with the necessary artillery, and other munitions of war, for a fort to be erected at any given point, near the mouth of the Columbia; and that the associates shall be supplied with arms and ammunition, for defence, by the United States, who shall also pay for, or supply, transportation for the same. For hunting, the associates will furnish their own arms and ammunition.

4. That, after the associates take possession of suitable positions on the Columbia, the United States will make no other grants to their prejudice.

5. That the United States will commission such persons as the associates may recommend as their officers, in the militia of the United States. And that a law may pass, approving of the "articles of compact and union" of the associates, appointing suitable civil officers, which will be designated, and fully authorizing the enforcement of all the provisions of said "articles of compact and union."

6. If the United States wish to appoint an Indian Agent for the tribes west of the Rocky Mountains, and any of the associates are found to possess the requisite character and qualifications, it is desired that the selection should be made from among them.

7. If, at any time, the United States shall desire to take the fur trade into their own hands, the associates, if worthy, will desire employment.

8. As soon as the associates are able to supply troops or armed vessels, employed in that region, with provisions, of as good a quality, and on as reasonable terms, as they can be furnished there from other quarters, the associates desire to have the contract for furnishing such supplies.

If Congress disapprove of the "articles of compact and union" adopted by them, as far as relates to government, then the associates desire such other form as the wisdom of Congress may suggest.

By leaving the frontiers of Missouri, in April next, with one hundred or one hundred and twenty-five effective men, and sufficient horses and mules for transporting baggage, the associates hope to reach the point of ultimate destination by the close of August, in time to provide comfortable winter quarters.

It is the intention of the associates to have a vessel despatched from some one of the cities of the Atlantic States, early in the Autumn of 1829,

* The reason why the Associates desire to have the liberty of extinguishing the Indian title, in three several places, is the importance of holding three points, viz : the head of tide water, the mouth of the Columbia, and a central point between these extremes.

with such supplies as their establishment may require, and send, on her return, the furs, peltries, and other articles they may have collected.

Relying, with confidence, on the wisdom and good will of Congress, the associates respectfully submit to their consideration this petition and memorial, and solicit for it a favorable reception.

On motion, *Ordered*, That fair transcripts of the "Articles of Compact and Union," and of the petition and memorial to Congress, this day adopted, be made out, and signed by the President of this meeting, and attested by the Secretary. That one of said papers, and of these proceedings, be transmitted to the Hon. H. H. Gurley, a Representative, and the other to the Hon. J. S. Johnson, a Senator, in Congress, from the State of Louisiana, with a request to those gentlemen that they will lay the same before the Sénate and House of Representatives in Congress, and give to the petition and memorial such support as their judgment may approve.

JAMES M. BRADFORD, *President.*

Attest : HENRY M. DOBBS, Jr. *Secretary.*