

In 1874 a few families under Chief Arlee were persuaded to move. The following year fifteen more families followed. Each year after that a few more moved. Finally in 1891 Chief Charlo with his few remaining families decided there was no use "holding out" longer so they also left the Bitterroot and came to the Flathead valley. Thus the exodus of the Indians from the Bitterroot country was completed.

Meanwhile Montana had first become a territory in 1864, and a state in 1890.

Allotments in severalty was already being made on various reservations throughout the country under the General Allotment Act of 1887. This act provided also that "so called" surplus Indian lands might be sold. Hence, it might be said that even before the Indians had all removed to the Flathead Reservation, laws had been enacted by which part of their new home could also be disposed of.

Such disposal was made a certainty by the act of April 23, 1904. This act authorized the survey and allotment in severalty of the lands within the reservation to the Indians, after which the remaining lands should be opened for settlement and entry by proclamation of the President.

Such a proclamation was duly issued on May 22, 1909. It prescribed the time and manner in which homestead entries might be made by non-Indians.

Then between 1904 and 1910 a series of acts were passed by Congress which set aside and reserved a total of more than 60,000 acres within the reservation for townsites, agency reserves, Bison range, Catholic church, University of Montana, reservoir sites, power reserves, etc., etc. Some of these were paid for. Some were not.

The Indians were also authorized to sell 60 acres of their allotments if they were irrigable, and also were authorized to obtain a patent in fee simple.

Other lands were classified and appraised and sold to the highest bidder, and sections 16 and 36 in certain townships were granted to the state of Montana for school purposes.

Thus between 1904 and 1934 a total of more than 610,000 acres of the Flathead Reservation passed out of Indian ownership. Most of the best land in the valley was gone. The mountain sides and some of the grazing and farm lands remained.

The "Wheeler-Howard Act" was then passed (June 18, 1934), it stopped the allotment system and disposal of Indian lands. In fact under this act 192,424 acres were restored to the Flathead tribe by Executive Order of February 13, 1936. In addition about 20,000 acres of grazing lands in the valley have been purchased and taken in trust for the tribe.

-- Agency Organization and Activities --

At the present time the Flathead-Agency-Headquarters is located on the banks of the Flathead River about two miles northeast of Dixon. It is organized along the following lines: The Superintendent is the responsible officer in charge of all activities. Under him the Chief Clerk is in charge of