

CR 164

BACKGROUND Land - I.M.B.O.
Lytton Rancheria

5

LYTTON RANCHERIA
Assignments
August 6, 1953

FOREWARD

Assignments on the Lytton Rancheria were an administrative problem for a long time. The land was purchased about 1925. It was not used by any Indians until 1937, when Superintendent Nash gave Bert Steele permission to use the lower end of Tract #2 of the purchase. Rehabilitation funds were used to purchase building materials, and Bert Steele, built a cabin thereon, for his use. Two combination irrigation and domestic water systems were developed on the Rancheria; one of them near the site of Steele's cabin, and one on the upper end of the purchase on Tract #2.

Somewhere about this time John W. (Wesley) Myers was permitted to use Tract #2, 5 acres in size.

Then troubles developed. Indians on Dry Creek, Geyserville, and Alexander Valley, by petition, arguments, and fights, protested the permitting of these lands to Steele and Myers, neither one of them being Indians of those groups. Also Steele, protested Myers use of the 5 acres, even though he was a brother-in-law of Myers.

The use of the land by Myers and Steele was clarified by Mr. Nash, through the Central Office. (Office letter of April 8, 1939 - File Reference 17384-39. Lytton Files). Steele and Myers dissension continued. At one time Myers was going to move. Finally Superintendent Nash verbally told Steele he had all the land he (Steele) was going to get. This was stated before the undersigned.

Myers built his own home with his own funds. But the land where he lived was of gravelly texture, and limited in use. And just below (north) of the 5 acre tract was unused land of better texture. Myers verbally requested the use of more of this land, giving his reason that he would purchase calves and grow them out to feeder age and sell them and by so doing increase his income. About November 20, 1944, the undersigned went to Lytton as instructed by Superintendent Rockwell, and by use of a tape measure attempted to divide the entire tract in two equal sized pieces of lands. A penned sketch of this attempted division is also in the Lytton Files. It was Superintendent Rockwell's intention to assign the lands as divided to Myers and Steele. But within a week Steele was dead, so for a while the assignments were stymied. Myers did not wait for a formal assignment, but immediately fenced his proposed portion, and did purchase or otherwise acquired dairy calves to utilize the land. He was also raising chickens, and was farming some of the land for grain, for feed.

The Lytton files show that he made application for this tract April 8, 1944 (Application prepared in this office). The assignment was approved by Superintendent Rockwell, but date of approval was not shown.

SB

The Steele family was still living in the buildings on the lower end of the tract, but not using the lands.

Edward Steele, son, who was in the Armed Forces when the land was divided, then applied for the land, with the understanding he would maintain a home there for his mother and sisters. This was approved by Superintendent Rockwell, August 16, 1944. But Edward Steele, who had been disabled in World War II, and in the undersigned's opinion was mentally disturbed by the World War II experiences did not comply with his agreement, so by petition of the Steele family including Edward Steele, it was reassigned to Daniel T. Steele, and his mother Mary Steele. Date of petition March 23, 1950. This assignment was approved by L. F. Berger, Acting Area Director, approval undated, but letter of transmittal dated May 24, 1950.

Please bear in mind this division was made by use of a tape measure only, so the land will have to be surveyed accurately and plotted according to a survey.

PRESENT RECOGNIZED ASSIGNEES:

John Wesley Myers and wife, Dolores Santos Myers
Mary Steele, and son, Daniel T. Steele

Harold Woodhead