

Information for Homeseekers.

DEAR SIR: From you who are expecting to attempt to secure homes in the new Reservations soon to be opened for settlement in this Territory, we invite careful attention to the following facts: There are many things which it is a great benefit to know and without a knowledge of which you are likely to incur many unnecessary expenses.

LANDS TO BE OPENED.

There are four Reservations yet to be opened, they comprise in all nearly ten million acres of land, a portion of which is mineral land, but the most of it excellent farming land. Of these Reservations, the Cherokee Strip being the largest of all, necessarily attracts the most attention. It contains about six million acres and will furnish homes for over five hundred thousand people. Most of it is rolling prairie, the eastern part being reasonably well watered and better timbered than the western part. The Cherokee Strip lies north of the present Territory of Oklahoma and south of the State of Kansas and is about 60 miles wide and 125 miles long. The Kickapoo Reservation which is the smallest of the four, lies within the present boundaries of Oklahoma. It contains about two hundred thousand acres which is very rich and for the most part heavily timbered and well watered. The WICHITA Reservation consists of about seven hundred and fifty thousand acres and it is said by those who are familiar with it to "be as fine if not finer than anything else in the Territory." The Kiowa, Comanche and Apache Reservations contain about three million acres of land. Some of this land is mountainous and is said to contain very rich deposits of gold and silver and other metals. This Reservation is perhaps the least desirable of the four, but it contains a great deal of as fine farming land as can be found anywhere. This Reservation, owing to the existing treaties under which it is leased for grazing purposes, cannot be opened until some time in the year 1894. Anyone who cannot prepare to come when the former Reservations are opened this year can find homes in this Reservation. It makes very little difference to anyone in which one of these Reservations he secures a home, for they are all good.

In the CHEROKEE STRIP, WHEAT, CORN, OATS, RYE, BARLEY, BUCKWHEAT, MILLET and other small grains can be grown successfully. Irish and sweet potatoes AND ALL KINDS OF GARDEN VEGETABLES, ALSO APPLES, PEACHES, PEARS, CHERRIES, PLUMS, BLACKBERRIES, CURRANTS, and in fact all the small fruits can be grown luxuriantly; but cotton and tobacco cannot be raised so successfully in the Strip, but will grow excellently and be a certain crop in the Kickapoo, Wichita, Kiowa and Comanche Reservations. Watermelons will be a paying crop in any of these lands. The raising of PEANUTS will also be an important crop. At present prices a man who secures a farm that will raise peanuts can make from two to four times as much money as he can from either cotton, wheat or corn. In fact a man cannot make a mistake anywhere. Farming land in this country is worth on an average at least \$10.00 an acre and when a man secures 160 acres he can safely say that he is worth at least \$1600.00 more than he was before he secured it, and in my judgment no man can afford to miss this opportunity to make \$1600.00. The attention of those who may be inclined to doubt my statement is called to the following facts: Perhaps the majority of the colored people who are farming for themselves are doing so on land that is owned by someone else, for the use of which they are paying from \$5.00 to \$10.00 an acre each year, according to the location and desirability of the land. In coming to this country and securing a piece of land for yourself, you become your own landlord, and if the man who is now renting comes here determined to save and lay aside each year JUST THE MONEY THAT HE NOW PAYS OUT FOR RENT, LET US SEE WHAT THE RESULT WILL BE. From the best information we can gather from a half dozen southern States, the average price which the colored man is now paying for rented land is \$7.00 an acre. Suppose that he is renting 80 acres, he comes here and

secures from the government 160 acres, he goes to work and cultivates that, each year he will save \$500.00 that he now has to pay out for rent. This in a period of ten years, if the savings were judiciously invested, would amount to something like EIGHT THOUSAND DOLLARS. Besides this he has 80 acres more land which he can lease to some one else and the income from that in ten years could not be less than \$2,000, making a total of about \$10,000 in the ten years and the increase of value on 160 acres will be \$2,000 or \$3,000, so that on an average you can see that it is not exaggeration to say that almost any man who secures one of these homesteads and goes to work determined to save and lay aside just the money that he now pays out for rent that he can in ten years by saving what he can make out of the additional 80 acres and the rent, have in cash and property \$15000.00, counting what the increase of value on the farm would be. In addition to that he can live better at the same time than he is doing now, because in this estimate we have figured to allow a man to spend as much money as he now earns and at the same time make the saving which we have estimated above. For instance, if you have left now after paying your living expenses and your rent \$200.00 you can under our estimate made above, spend that much more money on your family and still save at the end of ten years the amount estimated above. We think the above estimate will be sufficient to show any man that will look the matter over carefully that the possibilities of this country are unsurpassed. We have made in this an average estimate simply showing what a man can do if he will. Some will not reach it and others will exceed it.

COST OF LIVING.

As the cost of living depends entirely upon the number of persons in the family all that can be done is to give the prices on the necessaries of life and by comparing them with the prices you are now paying for the same things you can surely tell whether the cost of living would be increased or diminished. Following are the prices on the articles named at this time: Flour from \$1.35 to \$1.50 a hundred; Cornmeal best quality, 60 cents a bushel; Coffee, 18 to 25 cents per pound; Sugar, granulated, 18 to 20 pounds for \$1.00, brown sugar 20 to 25 pounds for \$1.00; Bacon, 8 to 10 cents a pound; Fresh pork, 7 cents for ordinary cuts and 12 1/2 for choicest cuts; Fresh beef, same price; Sweet potatoes 40 to 50 cents per bushel, and other things in about the same proportion. Clothing and dry goods can be had in such a variety of quality and prices that it would be almost impossible to give you any accurate idea of what it would cost a man to clothe his family. However, a good common suit of clothes for a man can be had for \$7.50 and upwards. Calico, 5 cents a yard. Muslin, 6 to 10 cents per yard.

Fuel costs as follows: Cord wood, \$2.00 and \$2.50 per cord; Soft coal, \$6.00 per ton; wood plentiful.

In regard to prices of live stock, the following is as nearly correct as can be given at this time. Prices vary with the seasons of the year, and with the times. Ponies are very cheap and can be bought all the way from \$10.00 to \$25.00 and good work horses from \$50.00 to \$75.00 each. Mules about the same price. Good work cattle, which are more suitable for breaking up a new farm than either horses or mules, can be bought all the way from \$40.00 to \$60.00 a pair, and will do more work with less expense than either horses or mules. Cows about \$20.00 each. Chickens 20 cents each. Very few hogs for sale.

In buying feed for stock corn costs about 30 cents a bushel and oats about the same price. Hay from \$4.00 to \$5.00 a ton.

Parties thinking of coming here must remember that the conditions here are different from those existing anywhere else. Everything here is sold on a cash basis. The credit system, which is common to the south, is unknown here. Everything that a man has to buy he has to pay cash for and **NO MAN SHOULD ATTEMPT TO COME HERE UNLESS HE HAS MONEY ENOUGH TO PAY ALL THE NECESSARY EXPENSES OF HIMSELF AND FAMILY UNTIL HE CAN RAISE A CROP.** This is one of the most important things for a man to know, for if he comes unprepared to do this he will surely suffer. There are no large farms or plantations giving employment to a large number of men as there are in the south. It will not do to come here expecting to obtain employment, for a majority of the people here being their own landlords, are doing only such an amount of work as they can do without hiring, thereby cutting down expenses to the lowest possible point. **THESE THINGS ARE TO BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED, FOR ON THE OBSERVANCE OF THESE DEPENDS YOUR ABILITY TO MAKING SUCCESS IN THIS COUNTRY.**

COME PREPARED OR NOT AT ALL.

Those who are not prepared to come and bring money enough to comply with the conditions stated

should not attempt to do so, and it is to the interest of every one who is prepared to come to discourage by every means in his power those who are not prepared for making the attempt.

CLIMATE.

The climate is about like that of Memphis, Tennessee, Northern Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, Central Arkansas and Southern North Carolina.

TRANSPORTATION.

The idea that the government of the United States or the people of this Territory are going to furnish free transportation to everyone who wants to come here seems to be prevalent throughout the South. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Nothing of the kind ever has or ever will be done. Everyone who comes here must pay his own transportation, and what this will cost depends entirely upon the place he comes from and the place he goes to. Information on that will have to be furnished to each individual according to the needs in the case. Where only a few families come from a place it will be impossible to get any reduction of rates. This matter of rates is a serious expense to be considered by the people who are coming here. There were a great number of cases when the last opening took place where the people from various places were compelled to pay twice as much freight as they should have paid and in some instances paid much higher for tickets than they should have paid. We recall one place in particular where a man hired a car in which to ship his stock and household goods. The agent of the railroad company where he loaded his car informed him that the cost would be about \$50.00, which he paid in advance. When he arrived here he found that he still had about \$100.00 to pay before he could get his goods out of the car. If he had known before he started what the cost would have been he would have saved on it at least \$50.00, because he would have sold his stock and household goods and bought new ones here for less money than the freight cost him. But it seems that the agent in giving him a freight rate only gave him a rate for that one road and not what it would cost him to get here. Cases of this kind were very common, but as a rule not so bad as this particular one. Where freight rates are so high it is very foolish to think of shipping anything. Many parties write and complain that they cannot sell their stuff as no one will buy it after it becomes known that they intend to leave the country. In cases of this kind we could not or would not advise people to sacrifice too much but would advise them to wait longer rather than attempt to come now. Many parties from Texas, Arkansas, Northern Louisiana and Mississippi, and in some instances from western Tennessee, who have good teams and wagons have saved a great deal of money by packing what things they wanted to bring and bringing their families across the country by team. By that way the cost of coming was nothing. It simply being the time, which made very little difference to them. As a rule that is the best way to do, because by doing that you can save the money that you would have to pay the railroad companies for freight and *I would advise that in every case where it is possible, you would come overland driving your teams and bringing such things as you can in this way. Cattle and extra stock can be brought through without extra expense.* Remember that fully one-half of the white men who do come to this country do this very thing. It saves their money to use after they get here.

WHEN AND HOW TO COME.

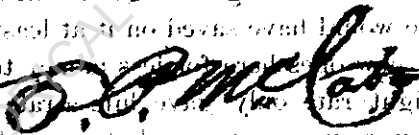
On the day set for opening the lands all those who wish to secure homes will be gathered along the border of the lands to be opened and at the hour designated in the proclamation, which will probably be 12 o'clock noon, the people will be allowed to go upon the land and select such land as will suit them. If you have found a piece of land that suits you, you must proceed at once to make some permanent improvement which will show to any one that that particular piece of land is taken and occupied as a homestead. For instance, begin at once to build a house for yourself and family, as that is the best evidence that you can have or else begin to break land preparatory to putting in a crop, as that is sufficient evidence. If you have made these improvements you will then proceed to the United States Land Office to make what is called your homestead filing. That is, you will file with the officers a statement which you will have to swear to. This statement will describe the piece of land taken by you so that the same may be recorded on the records. The cost of making this filing is \$14.00, that is all you will be required to pay until you prove up and get a deed for your land. As congress will pass a special act governing each of these reservations, it is not known just yet what the additional requirements will be. Probably the man will be required to live upon the land and cultivate it, and he may in addition to that be compelled to pay \$200 for each quarter section. There will be a strong effort

made to do away with this last payment, and to have the law so framed that a man will not be required to pay anything except the cost of his filing and his final proof. The cost of filing, as stated above, is \$14.00 and the final proof about \$6.00, but no definite information can be given on this point until congress takes action in the matter. I would advise all to come by wagon rather than by cars, as it costs less and will be money saved.

There is nothing hard about the operation of getting land. All that the government requires is that the land should be taken for a home for yourself and for no other purpose and the terms of the law be complied with in good faith. No man or woman who is not 21 years of age or over is allowed to take a homestead. The cost of the necessary buildings on your land will depend entirely upon circumstances. In many places there will be sufficient timber growing upon the land to provide the necessary buildings and in other places it will be necessary to buy building material. At present the native lumber sells for framing purposes for \$12.50 to \$14.00 per thousand and pine from \$15.00 to \$17.50 per thousand, while pine for siding and flooring sells for from \$17.00 to \$20.00 a thousand and shingles for \$2.00 to \$3.50. The above comprises all the information that can be furnished at this time, but as soon as congress takes action in the Strip matter you will be notified through all the newspapers over the country.

Of the above enumerated Reservations the Cherokee and Kickapoo will open upon proclamation being issued by the President of the United States and which will give at least twenty days notice, thus enabling a person to reach the land prior to the opening thereof. So watch for the President's Proclamation in the largest daily newspaper you can secure near you.

Yours very truly,



WILLIAM H. HOWLAND

...the law... the government... the land... the necessary buildings... the cost of the necessary buildings... the native lumber... the President of the United States... the largest daily newspaper... the law... the government... the land... the necessary buildings... the cost of the necessary buildings... the native lumber... the President of the United States... the largest daily newspaper... the law... the government... the land... the necessary buildings... the cost of the necessary buildings... the native lumber... the President of the United States... the largest daily newspaper...