

Crow Act of 1920

June 4, 1920. [S. 2890.] 41 Stat., 751.

Chap. 224—An Act To provide for the allotment of lands of the Crow Tribe, for the distribution of tribal funds, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he hereby is, authorized and directed to cause to be allotted the surveyed lands and such unsurveyed lands as the commission hereinafter provided for may find to be suitable for allotment, within the Crow Indian Reservation in Montana (not including the Big Horn and Pryor Mountains, the boundaries whereof to be determined by said commission with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior) and not herein reserved as hereinafter provided, among the members of the Crow Tribe, as follows namely, one hundred and sixty acres to the heirs of every enrolled member, entitled to allotment, who died unallotted after December 31, 1905, and before the passage of this Act; next, one hundred and sixty acres to every allotted member living at the date of the passage of this Act, who may then be the head of a family and has not received allotment as such head of a family; and thereafter to prorate the remaining unallotted allotable lands and allot them so that every enrolled member living on the date of the passage of this Act and entitled to allotment shall receive in the aggregate an equal share of the allotable tribal lands for his total allotment of land of the Crow Tribe. Allotments made hereunder shall vest title in the allottee subject only to existing tribal leases, which leases in no event shall be renewed or extended by the Secretary of the Interior after the passage of this Act, and shall as hereinafter provided be evidenced by patents in fee to competent Indians, except as to homesteads as hereinafter provided, but by trust patent to minors and incompetent Indians, the force and legal effect of the trust patents to be as is prescribed by the General Allotment Act of February 8, 1887 (Twenty-fourth Statutes, page 388). Priority of selection, up to three hundred and twenty acres, is hereby given to the members of the tribe who have as yet received no allotment on the Crow Reservation, and thereafter all members enrolled for allotment hereunder shall in all respects be entitled to equal rights and privileges, as far as possible, in regard to the time, manner, and amount of their respective selections: *Provided*, That Crow Indians who are found to be competent may elect, in writing, to have their allotments, except as herein provided, patented to them in fee. Otherwise trust patents shall be issued to them. No patent in fee shall be issued for homestead lands of a husband unless the wife joins in the application, who shall be examined separately and apart from her husband and a certificate of the officer taking her acknowledgment shall fully set forth compliance with this requirement.

Sec. 2. No conveyance of land by any Crow Indian shall be authorized or approved by the Secretary of the Interior to any person, company, or corporation who owns at least six hundred and forty acres of agricultural or one thousand two hundred and eighty acres of grazing land within the present boundaries of the Crow Indian Reservation, nor to any person who, with the land to be acquired by such conveyance, would become the owner of more than one thousand two hundred and eighty acres of agricultural or one thousand nine hundred and twenty acres of grazing land within said reservation. Any conveyance by any such Indian made either directly or indirectly to any such person, company, or corporation of any land within said reservation as the same now exists, whether held by trust patent or by patent in fee shall be void and the grantee accepting the same shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment not more than six months or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The classification of the lands of such reservation for the purpose of allotment and the allotment thereof shall be made as provided in the Act of Congress approved June 25, 1910 (Thirty-sixth Statutes at Large, page 859), which classification with any heretofore made by authority of law as to lands heretofore allotted shall be conclusive, for the purposes of this section, as to the character of the land involved.

Sec. 3. That the Secretary of the Interior shall, as speedily as possible, after passage of this Act, prepare a complete roll of the members of the Crow Tribe who died unallotted after December 31, 1905, and before the passage of this Act; also, a complete roll of the allotted members of the Crow Tribe who six months after the date hereof are living and are heads of families but have not received full allotments as such; also, a complete roll of the unallotted members of the tribe living six months after the approval of this Act who are entitled to allotments. Such rolls when completed shall be deemed the final allotment rolls of the Crow Tribe, on which allotment of all tribal lands and distribution of all tribal funds existing at said date shall be made. The rolls shall show the English, as well as the Indian, name of the allottee; the age, if living; the sex, whether declared competent or incompetent; the description or descriptions of the allotments; and any other fact deemed by the Secretary of the Interior necessary or proper.

Said rolls shall be completed within one year after approval of this Act, and allotments shall be completed within one year and six months from the date of the approval of this Act.

Sec. 4. That any names found to be on the tribal rolls fraudulently, may, at any time within one year from the passage of this Act, be stricken therefrom by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, after giving all parties in interest a full opportunity to be heard in regard thereto; and any allotment made to such fraudulent allottee shall be canceled and shall then be subject to disposition under the provision of this Act: *Provided*, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to deprive any such persons of the protection in the premises provided under existing law.

Sec. 5. That such of the unallotted lands as are now used for agency, school, cemetery, or religious purposes shall remain reserved from allotment so long as such agency, school, cemetery, or religious institutions, respectively, are maintained for the benefit of the tribe: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Interior, upon the request of the tribal council, is hereby authorized and directed to cause to be issued a patent in fee to the duly authorized missionary board or other proper authority of any religious organization heretofore engaged in mission or school work on the reservation for such lands thereon as have been heretofore set aside and are now occupied by such organizations for missionary or school purposes: *Provided further*, That not more than six hundred and forty acres may be reserved for administrative purposes at the Crow Agency, and six tracts of not exceeding eighty acres each, in different districts on the reservation, may be reserved from the tribal funds if no tribal lands are available, and all such lands shall be definitely described and made a matter of record by the Indian Office.

Sec. 6. That any and all minerals, including oil and gas, on any of the lands to be allotted hereunder are reserved for the benefit of the members of the tribe in common and may be leased for mining purposes, upon the request of the tribal council under such rules, regulations, and conditions as the Secretary of the Interior may prescribe, but no lease shall be made for a longer period than ten years, but the lessees shall have the right to renewal thereof for a further period of ten years upon such terms and conditions as the Secretary of the Interior may prescribe: *Provided, however*, That allotments hereunder may be made of lands classified as valuable chiefly for coal or other minerals which may be patented as herein provided with a reservation, set forth in the patent, of the coal, oil, gas, or other mineral deposits for the benefit of the Crow Tribe: *And provided further*, That at the expiration of fifty years from the date of approval of this Act unless otherwise ordered by Congress the coal, oil, gas, or other mineral deposits upon or beneath the surface of said allotted lands shall become the property of the individual allottee or his heirs.

Sec. 7. That there is hereby appropriated the sum of \$50,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, from any funds in the Treasury of the United States to the credit of the Crow Tribe of Indians not otherwise appropriated, for the purpose of making the surveys and allotments and for other expenses provided for herein.

Sec. 8. That any allotment, or part of allotment, provided for under this Act, irrigable from any irrigation system now existing or hereafter constructed by the Government on the said reservation, shall bear its pro rata share, computed on a per acre basis, of the cost of constructing such system: *Provided*, That no additional irrigation system shall be established or constructed by the Government for the irrigation of Indian lands on the Crow Reservation until the consent of the tribal council thereto has been duly obtained. All charges against allotments authorized by this section shall be reimbursed in not less than twenty annual payments, and the Secretary of the Interior may fix such operation and maintenance charges against such allotments as may be reasonable and just, to be paid as provided in rules and regulations to be prescribed by him. Unless otherwise paid, these latter charges may be paid from or made a charge upon his individual share of the tribal fund, when said fund is available for distribution; and if any allottee shall receive patent in fee to his allotment before the amount so charged against his land has been paid, such unpaid amount shall become and be a lien upon his allotment, of which a record shall be kept in the office of the superintendent of the reservation at the agency; and should any Indian sell any part of his allotment, with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, the amount of such unpaid charges against the land so sold shall remain a first lien thereon, and may be enforced by the Secretary of the Interior by foreclosure as a mortgage. All expenditures for irrigation work on the Crow Reservation, Montana, heretofore or hereafter made, are hereby declared to be reimbursable under such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior may prescribe and shall constitute a lien against the land benefited, regardless of ownership, and including all lands which have heretofore been sold or patented. All patents or other instruments of conveyance hereafter issued for lands under any irrigation project on the said Crow Indian Reservation, whether to individual Indians or to purchasers of Indian land, shall recite a lien for repayment of the irrigation charges, if any, remaining unpaid at the time of the issuance of such patent or other instrument of conveyance, and such lien may be enforced or, upon payment of the delinquent charges, may be released by the Secretary of the Interior. In the case of lands under any project purchased in the bona fide belief on the part of the purchaser that by his purchase he acquired a right to have water from the system for the irrigation of the land purchased by him in the same manner as the Indian owner, the Secretary may, after notice to the Indians interested, determine the value of the land at the time of the purchase from the Indian, and give

to the purchaser or his assigns credit on the charge for construction against the land to the amount of the difference between the price paid and the value as so determined, and shall withhold for the benefit of the tribe from the Indian or Indians of whom the purchase was made, an equal amount from any funds which may be due or distributable to them hereunder. Delivery of water to such land may be refused, within the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior, until all dues are paid: *Provided*, That no right to water or to the use of any irrigation ditch or other structure on said reservation shall vest until the owner of the land to be irrigated shall comply with such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior may prescribe, and he is hereby authorized to prescribe such rules and regulations as may be deemed reasonable and proper for making effective the foregoing provisions: *Provided, however*, That in no case shall any allottee be required to pay either construction, operation, or maintenance charges for such irrigation privileges, or any of them, until water has been actually delivered to his allotment: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of the Interior shall cause to be made immediately, if not already made, an itemized statement showing in detail the cost of the construction of the several irrigation systems now existing on the Crow Indian Reservation separately, the same to be placed at the Crow Agency, and with the Government farmers of each of the districts of the reservation, for the information of the Indians affected by this section.

Sec. 9. That lands within said reservation, whether allotted, unallotted, or otherwise disposed of, shall be subject to all laws of the United States prohibiting the introduction of intoxicating liquors into the Indian country until otherwise provided by Congress.

Sec. 10. That any unallotted lands on the Crow Reservation chiefly valuable for the development of water power shall be reserved from allotment or other disposition hereunder, for the benefit of the Crow Tribe of Indians.

Sec. 11. That so much of article 2 of the Act of April 27, 1904, entitled "An Act to ratify and amend an agreement with the Indians of the Crow Reservation in Montana, and making appropriations to carry the same into effect" (Thirty-third Statutes, page 353), as relates to the disposition of the trust funds of the tribe at the expiration of the fifteen-year period named in the Act, to the purchase of cattle, to the distribution of cattle among the Indians of the reservation, to the purchase of jackasses, stallions, and ewes, to the building of fences, the erection of schoolhouses and hospitals, the purchase of additional cattle or sheep, the construction of ditches, dams, and canals, and to the establishment of a trust fund for the benefit of the Crow Indians thereunder, be, and the same is hereby, repealed, effective from and after June 30, 1920: *Provided*, That all unexpended balances of trust funds arising under said agreement shall thereupon be consolidated into one fund to the credit of the tribe, the same to bear interest at the rate of 4 per centum per annum: *Provided further*, That there shall be reserved and set aside from such consolidated fund, or any other funds to the credit of the tribe, a sufficient sum to pay the administrative expenses of the agency for a period of five years; \$100,000 for the support of the agency boarding school; \$50,000 for the support of the agency hospital, and not to exceed \$4,000 of this amount shall be expended in any one year for the support of said hospital; and \$50,000 for a revolving fund to be used for the purchase of seed, animals, machinery, tools, implements, and other equipment for sale to individual members of the tribe, under conditions to be prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior for its repayment to the tribe on or before June 30, 1925: *Provided further*, That the expenditure of the sums so reserved are hereby specifically authorized, except those for administrative expenses of the agency, which shall be subject to annual appropriations by Congress: *Provided further*, That after said sums have been reserved and set aside, together with a sufficient amount to pay all other expenses authorized by this Act, the balance of such consolidated fund, and all other funds to the credit of the tribe or placed to its credit thereafter, shall be distributed per capita to the Indians entitled: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized to permit competent Indians who have received patents in fee and other Indians who have demonstrated their ability to properly care for live stock to withdraw their pro rata share of cattle out of the tribal herd within one year after the approval of this Act, under such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior may prescribe and on condition that said Indians shall execute a stipulation relinquishing all their right, title, and interest in said tribal herd thereafter: *Provided further*, That any Indian who has received his share of live stock in accordance with the above provision and who has also demonstrated his ability to properly care for and handle live stock may also be permitted to withdraw the pro rata shares of his wife and minor children under the same rules and regulations as applied to the live stock already issued to him and on condition that such cattle be branded with the individual brands of his wife and minor children, which shall be recorded in the names of the respective members of his family. It shall be the duty of the superintendent of the Crow Reservation to observe closely the manner in which such stock are handled and cared for, and in case of failure or neglect to properly care for the same the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to take charge of such shares and sell them for the benefit of the individual owners, to whose credit the proceeds of the sale shall be placed, or return them to the tribal herd or handle them with tribal cattle for the minor or incompetent owners and charge a fee to cover the cost of caring for such live stock.

Sec. 12. That upon the approval of this Act the Secretary of the Interior shall forthwith appoint a commission consisting of three persons to complete the enrollment of the members of the tribe as herein provided for, and to

divide them into two classes, competents and incompetents, said commission to be constituted as follows: Two of said commissioners shall be enrolled members of the Crow Indian Tribe and shall be selected by a majority vote of three delegates from each of the districts on the Crow Reservation; and one commissioner shall be a representative of the Department of the Interior, to be selected by the Secretary of the Interior. Said commission shall be governed by regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior, and the classification of the members of the tribe hereunder shall be subject to his approval. That within thirty days after their appointment said commissioners shall meet at some point within the Crow Indian Reservation and organize by the election of one of their number as chairman. That said commissioners shall then proceed personally to classify the members as above indicated. They shall be paid a salary of not to exceed \$10 per day each, and necessary expenses while actually employed in the work of making this classification, exclusive of subsistence, to be approved by the Secretary of the Interior, such classification to be completed within six months from the date of organizing the commission.

Sec. 13. That every member of the Crow Tribe shall designate as a homestead six hundred and forty acres, already allotted or to be allotted hereunder, which homestead shall remain inalienable for a period of twenty-five years from the date or issuance of patent therefor, or until the death of the allottee: *Provided*, That the trust period on such homestead allotments of incompetent Indians may be extended in accordance with the provisions of existing law: *Provided further*, That any Crow Indian allottee may sell not to exceed three hundred and twenty acres of his homestead, upon his application in writing and with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, under such rules and regulations as he may prescribe: *And provided further*, That said land to be sold by said Indian allottee shall not exceed more than one-half of his irrigable nor more than one-half of his agricultural land and shall not include the improvements consisting of his home.

Sec. 14. That exchanges of allotments by and among the members of the tribe may be made under the supervision of the Secretary of the Interior with a view to enabling allottees to group their allotted lands on the Crow Reservation, but always with due regard for the value of the lands involved. And in cases where patents have already been issued for such allotments proper conveyance shall be made back to the United States by the allottee, whereupon the land shall become subject to disposition in the same manner as other lands under the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 15. That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby, authorized to sell allotted and inherited Indian land held in trust by the United States on the Crow Reservation, Montana, with the consent of the Indian allottee or the heirs, respectively, to any soldier, seaman, or marine who served under the President of the United States for ninety days during the late war against the Imperial German Government, or in any war in which the United States was engaged with a foreign power, or in the Civil War, who will actually settle on said land, on annual payments covering a period not to exceed twenty years, as may be agreed upon under such rules, regulations, and conditions as the said Secretary of the Interior may prescribe and in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 16. That there is hereby granted to the State of Montana for common-school purposes sections sixteen and thirty-six, within the territory described herein, or such parts of said sections as may be nonmineral or nontimbered, and for which the said State has not heretofore received indemnity lands under existing laws; and in case either of said sections or parts thereof is lost to the State by reason of allotment or otherwise, the governor of said State, with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, is hereby authorized to select other unoccupied, unreserved, nonmineral, nontimbered lands within said reservation, not exceeding two sections in any one township. The United States shall pay the Indians for the lands so granted \$5 per acre, and sufficient money is hereby appropriated out of the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated to pay for said school lands granted to the said State: *Provided*, That the mineral rights in said school lands are hereby reserved for the benefit of the Crow Tribe of Indians as herein authorized: *Provided further*, That the Crow Indian children shall be permitted to attend the public schools of said State on the same condition as the children of white citizens of said State.

Sec. 17. That the Secretary of the Interior (with the approval of the Crow Tribal Council) is authorized to set aside for administrative purposes (at the Crow Agency and at Pryor subagency) such tracts for town-site purposes as in his opinion may be required for the public interests, not to exceed eighty acres at each town site, and he may cause the same to be surveyed into lots and blocks and disposed of under such regulations as he may prescribe; and he is authorized also to set apart and reserve for school, park, and other public purposes not more than ten acres in said town sites; and patents shall be issued for the lands so set apart and reserved for school, park, and other purposes to the municipality or school district legally charged with the care and custody of lands donated for such purposes: *Provided, however*, That the present park at Crow Agency shall not be included in such town site or be subject to such disposition. The purchase price of all town lots sold in town sites shall be paid at such time as the Secretary of the Interior may direct and placed to the credit of the Crow Tribe of Indians.

Sec. 18. That the sum of \$10,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, of the tribal funds of the Crow Indians of the State of Montana, is hereby appropriated to pay the expenses of the general council, or councils, or business committee, in looking after the affairs of said tribe, including the actual and necessary expenses and per diems paid

its legislative committee when visiting Washington on tribal business at the request of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs or a committee of Congress, said sum and the actual and necessary expenses to be approved by and certified by the Secretary of the Interior, and when so approved and certified to be paid: *Provided*, That not to exceed \$2,500 shall be expended in any one fiscal year.

Approved, June 4, 1920.