

Yukon Order of Pioneers Shed Light on History

Article Published in the Daily Alaska Empire, Friday April 18, 1918

The Grand Lodge officers of the Yukon Order of Pioneers dispute the contention that the Alaska Pioneers is an out-growth of the Yukon Order of Pioneers. They claim that the records of the grand lodge remain with the grand lodge at Dawson where they have been ever since a convention of the Yukon Order of Pioneers established the grand lodge in that city in 1898. The letter, received by the Empire under the seal of the grand lodge of the Yukon Order of Pioneers from F.W. Clements, grand secretary, and the copy of the first minutes of the organizational meeting of the order, held at Forty mile, December 1, 1894, that are published herewith are self-explanatory.

The minutes of the first meeting of the Yukon Order of Pioneers in that long ago time, when the first steps were being taken in the settlement of the great Yukon River watershed and the names that are attached to it will prove might interesting reading to those who love the great Northland.

The letter and records referred to are as follows:

Letter from Yukon Order of Pioneers

DAWSON, March 31. To the Editor: In your edition published under date of March 14 last you have published some statements that are misleading and are liable to create a false impression of the Yukon Order of Pioneers.

Under instructions from the officers of the Grand Lodge, I have been instructed to furnish you with the correct facts and to kindly request you publish them, so as to offset any injury that your article may have caused.

This order was organized at Forty-mile Y.T., Dec 1st, 1894 and it has been an active organization ever since that date. At this first meeting some seventy charter members signed the roll and we are pleased to state that some of these charter members are active workers in the Dawson Lodge.

In the year 1896 and before the Klondike discovery startled the world the Grand Lodge followed the stampede from Forty-mile to Circle City, Alaska. Then came the rush back up the river to Dawson in the fall of 98 and the Dawson Lodge was started. It was here that the pioneers purchased property and built their hall. In 1898 the convention of the Yukon Order of Pioneers was held at Dawson and the Grand ZLodge books, banner and funds were permanently located here.

We have many members here now who attended that convention and they state that so many of the delegates from Circle City has in the mean time affiliated with the Dawson lodge that they themselves voted to move the Grand Lodge to Dawson and at Dawson it has remained ever since that convention;

Your statement that the original books were carried to the golden sands of Seward Peninsula is not so, some of the books of Rampart Lodge we have reason to believe got carried to Nome.

I am enclosing to you a copy of the first minutes of the order, taken from the books that are the original ones, and in which we have the signatures of every man who helped in this organization.

The only defect that I can see in these minutes is that the secretary Frank Bowker, overlooked recording that he was duly elected permanent secretary.

We have also been invited to join the Pioneers of Alaska, but our pride in being the first pioneers in the valley of the Yukon with such trail-blazers for charter members as Jack (L.N.) McQuesten, Frank W. Hart, Arthur Harper, Rudolph Newman and Al Mayo makes any possibility entirely out of the question.

We embrace the whole watershed of the Yukon River, we are the last of the pioneers on this continent, beyond the Occident and the Orient meets:

Permit me to be,

F.W. CLEMENTS

Grand Secretary

First Yukon Order Of Pioneers Meeting Minutes

First meeting of Yukon Order of Pioneers Organized at Forty-mile, Y.T., Dec 1st 1894.

Proposed by C. Levantie, seconded by R. English that J.T. Snow be temporary chairman and F. Bowker be secretary. Carried.

Proposed by F. Dinsmore that the chairman shall state the object of the meeting. Carried

The chairman then proceeded to explain the object of the meeting.

Nomination b C. Levantie, seconded by R English that Mr. L. N. McQuesten be president. Carried.

Nomination for vice-president. Proposed that F. Dinsmore be vice president. Carried unanimously.

Moved by P Wiburg and seconded by R. English that Wm. McPhee be treasurer. Carried

Proposed by Levantie and seconded by G.T. Snow that G. T. Cooper be guard. Carried.

Proposed by Lee Ragen, seconded by Hamilton that Frank Buteau be warden. Carried

Proposed that Levantie, Pete Nelson and T. Obrien be appointed a committee of finance. Appointed by chair.

Proposed the G. Snow, Frank Bowker and Peter Wiburg be a committee on constitution and by-laws. Appointed by chair.

Mr. H. English is appoint additional to the committee on by-laws

Proposed by C. Levantie, seconded by Hamilton that 1888 and previously be the latest date at which a man shall be entitled to be a Pioneer. Carried Unanimously.

Proposed by P. Wiburg, seconded by Cooper that the next meeting be at Snow's Opera House. Carried Unanimously.

Moved and seconded by Snow and English that the meeting adjourn until Friday, Dec 7th, 1894. Carried.

Names of Members of Yukon Order of Pioneers Who Signed at this Meeting

L.N. McQuesten.....	1873
Frank Dinsmore.....	1882
Frederick W. Harte.....	1873
Wm. H. McPhee.....	1888
Charles Levantie.....	1888
F. G. Bowker.....	1888
Joe A. Cooper.....	1887
Pete A. Wiburg.....	1885

Robt. J. English.....	1886
Peter Nelson.....	1886
N. Picotte	1886
Fred Mennier.....	1887
Henry Willett.....	1888
W.R. Lloyd.....	1888
Wm. Hayes.....	1883
John O. Donald.....	1888
Albert Fortier.....	1888
Henry Carter.....	1887
Henry Rivers.....	1887
R. Lowerie.....	1887
G. H. Matlock.....	1887
Fred Hutchinson.....	1886
Frank Buteau.....	1886
George T. Snow.....	1888
Joe Beaudreau.....	1888
Thos. Blake.....	1887
Ed Miller.....	1887
Ed Grignon.....	1887
S. S. Mitchell.....	1886
Matt Hall.....	1887
Lee Hagen.....	1886
H. Smith.....	1887
John Marks.....	1882
Wm. Stewart.....	1887
John Nelson.....	1886
Joe Navaroo.....	1888
J. A. Campbell.....	1887
Frank Seagrin.....	1888
Howard Hamilton.....	1886
George McCue.....	1887
Peter Brannon.....	1887
Ben J. Atwater.....	1886
T. O'Brien.....	1887
Joseph H. Guzerlais.....	1886
Victor Roux.....	1888
J. Babtiste Leautaue.....	1886
Napoleon Huot.....	1887
Henry Seymore.....	1888
Isaac Powers.....	1885
Louis Lavois.....	1888

Fred Bouliais.....	1888
Ellis Lewis.....	1886
Rudolph Newman.....	1873
G. C. Battles.....	1887
P. I.McDonald.....	1886
A. H. Mayo.....	1873
Bernard Hill.....	1886
Hans Scals.....	1888
J. D. Kennedy.....	1887
James Bender.....	1887
Samuel Matthews.....	1888
Wm. Cauthier.....	1888
Arthur Harper.....	1873
E. M. Sullivan.....	1887
J. C. Stearns.....	1887
A. S. Blanchard.....	1887
N. McArthur.....	1888
Thos. Young.....	1888

Certified to be copy taken from the books.

F. W. CLEMENTS
Grand Secretary