

HARDING CUTS SHORT VISIT TO FAR NORTH; GOES BACK TO COAST

Abandons at Last Moment Plan
for Ride on Richardson Trail,
His Wife Being Worn Out.

VISITS AGRICULTURE SCHOOL

He Is Informed That Fairbanks
Institution Is the Furthest
North in the World.

FINDS TOWN PROSPEROUS

It Has One Automobile for Every
Four Persons and Does Not Bother
With Small Change.

Special to The New York Times.

FAIRBANKS, Alaska, July 16.—Just before the time set for the departure of President Harding over Richardson Trail it was announced that he would take a short spin over the trail in an automobile and, returning to Fairbanks, leave on his special train this afternoon for Seward, where he will embark on the transport Henderson. The reason given for abandoning his plans was the danger of the river steamer General Jacobs going aground on the projected Tanana River trip between McCarty and Nenana. The President intends going on the Henderson to Valdez and Cordova. At Cordova he will go by train for a trip over a portion of the Copper River Railroad into another part of the interior before sailing on the Henderson for Sitka.

When the President arrived at Fairbanks at 9 o'clock yesterday evening the sun was blazing over the low hills in the nearby distance. He received a cordial welcome from most of the town's population as he went through the streets at the head of an automobile parade. Before going to bed in the Nordale Hotel in the bright light of midnight, he visited a truck farm on the outskirts of the town, where he was shown that hardy vegetables can be grown in this northern region, and he inspected the new Government Agricultural College and School of Mines and the Experiment Station of the Department of Agriculture. He was told that the agriculture institution was further north than any other college in the world.

Fairbanks is proud of its ability to maintain a prosperous community so near the Arctic Circle. One out of every four persons in the town owns an automobile. Small coins are not in circulation here. It costs twenty-five cents for a shoe shine or for a newspaper. Many of the houses are built of logs, some of them of attractive design. The town is situated on a broad flat plateau, different from the country through which the Presidential train passed in its journey into the interior of Alaska.

This morning the President had a chance to rest before the public celebration in his honor. He and the members of his party were entertained at luncheon and the President delivered a speech.

Mrs. Harding Is Worn Out.

At Fairbanks, for the first time since the Presidential party left Washington on June 20, Mrs. Harding did not appear with him in the usual processional progress through the streets. She was greatly fatigued when the Presidential train reached Fairbanks and on the urgent advice of her physicians, Brigadier General Sayer and Lieutenant Commander Boone, went immediately to the Nordale Hotel and retired, having been worn out by the hospitalities of which she has been the recipient.

Governor Bone, who is a former president of the Gridiron Club, Washington, held the furthest north reunion at 12 o'clock last night at the Nenana Club, with eight members of the Gridiron Club who are accompanying President Harding as newspaper correspondents.

The President was yesterday the chief actor in an interesting ceremony which marked the official completion of the government railroad from Seward to Fairbanks, a distance of 471 miles. The ceremony took place at the northern end of the high steel railway bridge over the Tanana River near Nenana. It consisted of the President driving a gold spike into a railroad tie at the bridge.

With Mrs. Harding beside him and surrounded by members of his party and people from Nenana, with a group of Eskimos and Indians viewing the scene from a hillside close by, while a battery of moving picture machines clicked off reels, the President lightly tapped the gold spike twice with a silver sledge hammer. Then Governor Bone quickly withdrew the spike and replaced it with one of ordinary steel, for the gold affair is valuable and the intention is to place it on exhibition in the territorial museum at Juneau. This costly symbol was given by the people of Anchorage to Colonel Frederick Mears, the army builder of the railroad, whose recent transfer from Alaska on the completion of the railroad construction, has caused much surprise in the territory.

President Harding lifted the silver sledge higher for a more substantial blow on the steel spike. He missed it. A second attempt also went wild, the hammer striking the rail of the track. Then with determination in his eye the President took good aim. This time he drove the spike nearly to its head. Another blow finished the job.

A brass band for Nenana then struck up the Star Spangled Banner. Above the notes of the band and the clicking of the movie cameras rose the voice of a movie operator: "A little cheering back there." The crowd shouted and waved

Continued on Page Six.

HARDING CUTS SHORT VISIT TO FAR NORTH

Continued from Page 1, Column 1.

hats and handkerchiefs, thus furnishing the proper setting for the reel production of the scene.

Colonel James G. Steese, Chairman of the Government railroad, opened the ceremonies at the bridge by reading the history of the railroad construction. He was followed by Secretary Work who referred to the occasion as a happy incident of the President's travels and paid tribute to Colonel Mears.

President Harding in a speech paid tribute to those "who contributed of their genius and courage." Of Colonel Mears he spoke as "the outstanding genius of it all." Admitting he opposed the Alaska railroad project when first proposed, he expressed satisfaction that the Government had carried the scheme to completion. In concluding he said:

"In my humble judgment the qualities of pioneers in co-operation with those of transportation will do more to work out the development of this wonderland than anything which the great Government of the United States can do."

On yesterday's journey northward to Fairbanks the train stopped at the entrance to McKinley National Park to allow the President to greet the chief ranger and Superintendent, Harry Karstens, the man who climbed to the top of Mount McKinley's icy slopes ten years ago.

Rivalry Between Factions.

Secretary Work and Secretary Hoover left the Presidential party at Fairbanks to return to Anchorage and Seward for the purpose of holding hearings on Alaskan problems. It is apparent that considerable feeling has been aroused in this section of the territory over certain conditions. John Ballian of Seward is expected to make charges to Secretary Work that the Government is building up Anchorage at Seward's expense, with hints or charges that this is in accord with the interests of the Guggenheims in their control of the Copper River Road.

The seaport of the Copper River railroad is Cordova and an effort will be made at the hearings to show that in the alleged favoring of Anchorage where the Government Railroad and Road Commission and other Governmental agencies have headquarters the Government is preventing the building up of Seward. Government officials

contradict this contention. They say the selection of Anchorage was dictated by the judgment that it is the best railroad centre.

Ballian was formerly interested in the Northern Alaska Railroad, which ran north from Seward toward Anchorage. This was purchased by the Guggenheim interests and sold to the Government as the nucleus of the Government railroad recently completed to Fairbanks.

Evidence is at hand everywhere in this northern region that the rivalry between the different sections is intense. Allegations of questionable practices are heard. A Fairbanks newspaper charges Canadian railroad interests with attempting to prevent tourist traffic over the United States Government railroad. These charges are the outgrowth of the fact that before the railroad was built to Fairbanks, the Canadian Pacific Railroad carried tourists to Skagway, thence across White Pass to Yukon and that the Canadian Railroad is now doing everything to prevent tourists taking this portion of the route because it would enable them to return by way of the United States Railroad.

Feeling of the character described and other considerations play a large part in causing the Washington Administration to put into effect a plan already described in previous despatches to give a greater measure of authority to Governor Bone and the Federal officials resident in Alaska to enable them to decide important questions without reference to Washington.