

ALASKA PIONEERS GIVEN PARTY HERE

Cold, wintry weather, with the thermometers registering close to the freezing mark, failed to chill the hopes of the nine Oneida county families and two Forest county families who entrained here early Tuesday morning for the first lap of the journey to the fertile Matanusky Valley in Alaska. The Oneida county unit, the largest from Wisconsin totaling 54 with the family of Mr. and Mrs. William Bouwens and their 11 children included, were given a farewell party and a royal sendoff at the Soo passenger station.

Sleepy children, who catnapped but did their best to enjoy the evening, and their parents, tired but showing grim determination in anticipation of what they are to find in the new colonization project, enjoyed a farewell party given by the Abner Dahlberg post of the American Legion at the Memorial building Monday evening before being hurried to the station to await the arrival of the special train.

Alaska pioneers and their many friends joined in community singing lead by Oscar Nelson, and listened to band music by the Legion-City band to start the farewell party program. Addresses were given by Commander Howard Hackett, of the Abner Dahlberg post. Thomas Crawford, head of the County FERA office here; Mrs. Mary Gamble, Washington D. C., a representative of the Federal Rural Rehabilitation organization; Dr. Gale W. Huber, chairman of the County board; A. M. Jacobson District Rural Advisor and Hugh Corbett, secretary of the local Chamber of Commerce.

Yearly memberships in the local American Legion post were presented by County chairman L. A. Moore to the four ex-service men who were leaving with the group to the new frontier. The families were then introduced to the large crowd by Thomas Crawford

Mrs. Mary Nin Gamble, who arrived in this city Saturday to arrange details for the trip, was the personal representative of Col. Lawrence Westbrook, head of the Federal Rural Rehabilitation. She accompanied the families from this city and will continue with the entire contingent of Michigan and Wisconsin families to their destination before returning to her duties in Washington, D. C.

According to Mrs. Gamble, two other special trains were scheduled to meet the local special at St. Paul before continuing on to Seattle, Wash. At Seattle, plans were being made for a picnic, sightseeing trip and rest period before the 135 families were to board the army transport St. Mihiel, which will carry them to Seward, Alaska. Another 150-mile rail trip inland will be made before the party reaches its destination, the town of Palmer.

Following the party program, Monday night, the pioneers and their friends were treated to a lunch by the Legionnaires after which a dancing party was held in their honor with Vi Knutson and a few members of the Legion-City band furnishing the music. The party broke up about 1 A. M. and was then escorted to the passenger depot by pick-up members of the Legion drum corp, lead by L. A. Moore.

Many Oneida county residents and

friends of the departing families accompanied the pioneers to the train to bid them goodbyes, good lucks and best wishes.

Names of Oneida county families who left for Alaska were:

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Erickson and two children of Rhinelander.

Mr. and Mrs. William Bouwens and 11 children of Rhinelander.

Mr. and Mrs. Victor Johnson of Harshaw.

Mr. and Mrs. Martin Soik and one child of Minocqua

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Roughan and five children of Monico.

Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Worden and five children of Three Lakes.

Mr. and Mrs. Otis Brown and three children of Pelican Lake.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen Sexton and five children of Pelican Lake.

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Griese and three children of Stella.

The two Forest county families who entertained here were:

Lester Monroe, Hiles.

Lawrence Arndt, Nelma