

Officials Beam, Crowds Cheer State Pioneers

Alaska Colonists Find Seattle a Perfect but Strenuous Host as Rail Journey Ends

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Seattle, Wash.—Are these pioneers or conquering heroes? Were their fathers and their fathers' fathers welcomed into Wisconsin and Michigan—or any other land calling them pioneers—by a state governor? Were any other pioneers ever overwhelmed by greeters, feted, cheered, shown moving pictures and introduced over the radio?

These questions are pertinent. These things have happened to the streamlined pioneers of 1935, the 600 Wisconsin and Michigan persons now in Seattle while en route to new homes in a government sponsored colony in Alaska.

Governor Begins It

...bration as they...
By the grace of sturdy consti-
tions hardened on the sterile land
left far behind—in sentimental Seat-
tle Thursday afternoon.

"Friends from the far east," said slim, nervous Gov. Clarence D. Martin. That started the hoop-de-do. The end seems at the moment as distant as Alaska's Matanuska valley, where pleasure must give way to toil.

First into Seattle came the colonist contingent out of St. Paul, looking spiffy as a Sunday congregation despite four days on a day coach train. Two hours later came the contingent out of Superior. Theirs was the reception that made 1,000 or more onlookers green as the Puget sound waters with jealousy.

To begin with, there was this state's governor, tall, willing and punctual, and this city's mayor, plump, solicitous and bewildered, as weren't we all?

Then jammed into every depot corner, like Alaska's salmon in a tin can, was the envious multitude.

Find Old Friends

They crushed around the "pioneers" and stumbled along behind while the heroes lugged baggage and offspring to the Frye hotel, leased by the Washington state emergency relief administration for their two-day stay here.

Among the crowd, friends and relatives of the pioneers sought for familiar faces. Many a hug and kiss of greeting was exchanged, as many a hug and kiss of farewell had been exchanged back home.

Through it all Gov. Martin patiently did himself proud. He pronounced that one-minute salutation about friends from the far east—

"We are your nearest neighbors and will buy your products. We admire you," etc.—and then undertook personal greetings to adults and infants, doing most everything but kissing the latter.

"Glad to see you," he would say, shaking hands. "Happy to see you. Pleased to see you."

"Ah, here's a baby. How old is this one? Hmm, that's fine. Well, you're just as tall as I am. You ought to make good in Alaska. You're equipped for it."

"Ah, here's another baby." (A split second later.) "Say, is this the same one I had my picture taken with before?" (It was.) "Huh, thought so, it's about the same size."

"Baby" Is a Dog

Parents carried many of the infants in baskets. Once the quick-eyed governor spied a father with such a basket. "Oh, father has one too," he beamed, lifting the covering. "Haw, haw, haw," laughed a strapping youth. The laugh was well done. What father had was a dog, blank-

eted deceptively in his market basket. But it was all in fun, and he hadn't really meant to fool a personage. The genial governor took the joke on himself and it helped to elevate the high regard the colonists

programs, during which your correspondent interviewed six of them.

The colonists are supplied with ribbons labeled "Matanuska Pioneers," which give them free transportation on street cars. They used these to follow Friday's schedule, which called for sightseeing trips, a picnic, a free jaunt through the zoo, vaudeville entertainment and another radio program.

As the train neared the coast, crowds of curious gathered at the

neering of their own. Our pioneers prefer 500 to bridge.

Shake Hands With Waiters

Mothers en route appreciated what the dining car stewards did for them. Any hour of the day or night they could bounce into the diners and get milk or hot water for their infants. Some shook hands heartily with the negro waiters after their last meal.

Wisconsin and Michigan can be proud of their colonists.