

Mr. DAVISON. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Gideon W. Davison. I reside on a farm 4 miles north of Riverton, Wyo. I have spent my entire life in agriculture in the Riverton area and on the Riverton reclamation project. My father homesteaded 160 acres in the Missouri Valley in 1906. That was the time of the opening of the reservation, and we started irrigating this land in 1932, from water from the Midvale Irrigation District.

My biographical sketch appears on pages 14 and 15 of "Those Remarkable Men of Midvale." This was a publication distributed to members of this committee in 1966.

My brother Willis and I are partners in a livestock and farming operation. We bought 320 acres in Hidden Valley while it was still in sagebrush. We pump irrigated this land from the Big Wind River in 1946, 2 years before we received water from the Midvale Irrigation District. In addition my brother and I are agricultural lessees of 1,034.99 acres of land from the Bureau of Reclamation in the Cottonwood Bench area of the Riverton reclamation project. This is our 12th year for this lease.

The Riverton reclamation project includes more land than the Midvale Irrigation District and the old Third Division Irrigation District. All of the land east of the third division to the Boysen Reservoir is included in the project and is generally known as the Cottonwood Bench and Muddy Ridge areas.

I am the president of the Cottonwood Bench Association. This association is a group of 17 Midvale farmers who hold temporary agricultural permits in the Cottonwood Bench area of the project. This area includes 6,078.47 acres. There are 2,796 irrigable acres and 3,282.47 acres of dry land. I would like to introduce a map of the Cottonwood Bench leases at this time and a schedule showing the names of the 17 permittees, the acreage in each permit, and the amounts paid as rentals for these permits in 1967. My brother and I have units 17 and 18 leased as shown on the map and schedule.

Senator HANSEN. Without objection, it will be received.

Mr. DAVISON. When the Bureau experienced difficulties with the third division, they ceased development of the Cottonwood Bench area. At this point, however, they had completed the entire irrigation system, except for some drainage work, so that the lands were ready for agricultural production. In 1955 the Bureau leased this area to local Midvale water users for two successive 5-year periods. The leases were due to expire December 31, 1965, and the Bureau, because of the uncertainty of the future of the project and the need for drainage, indicated to the lessees that these agricultural leases would not be renewed.

The lessees held a meeting in Riverton, Wyo., on January 15, 1965, and formed the Cottonwood Bench Improvement Association for the immediate purpose of having their leases renewed beyond December 31, 1965, and ultimately to purchase these leased areas from the Government.

The association's first objection has been realized. The Bureau has issued temporary agricultural permits to the association members for 1966 and 1967 and we have been offered renewals for 1968.