



Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Information Service

For Immediate Release: May 7, 1954

[Print PDF](#)

Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay today announced four personnel changes in the Bureau of Indian Affairs as part of the general reorganization of the agency, which has been proceeding for several months.

The transfers follow:

Raymond H. Bitney, superintendent, Western Washington, Everett, Wash., to same post at Menominee Agency, Neopit, Wisconsin, Effective June 6.

Melvin L. Robertson, superintendent, Northern Idaho, Lapwai, Idaho, replaces Bitney. Effective May 23.

Frell M. Owl, superintendent, Red Lake, Minn., replaces Robertson. Effective May 23.

James Arentson, superintendent, Menominee, transferred to Pipestone Indian School, Pipestone, Minn.

No replacement has yet been named for Mr. Owl.

Mr. Bitney, who has been at Western Washington since 1950, joined the Bureau in 1926 as forest assistant at the Klamath Agency, Oreg., and in 1930 was promoted to the superintendency of Neah Bay Agency, Wash. When this agency was abolished in 1933 he served for six years as superintendent at Red Lake. In 1939 he was transferred to the Taholah Agency, Taholah, Wash. From 1942 to 1946 he was in military service and spent 15 months overseas as Battalion Commander of the 796th Engineer Forestry Battalion. On returning to the Bureau in 1946 he was superintendent two years at Red Lake and two years at Klamath before going to Western Washington in 1950.

Mr. Robertson was born at Kalispell, Mont., in 1900 and has had 26 years of continuous service with the Bureau. From 1928 to 1948 he served in various capacities from timber scaler to forest ranger at the Colville Agency, Nespelem, Wash., and the Klamath Agency. In 1948 he was named assistant to the superintendent of the California Agency at Sacramento, Calif. and later was made district agent at the Hoopa Subagency at Hoopa, Calif. He was appointed superintendent at Northern Idaho in 1950.

Mr. Owl, an eastern Cherokee Indian, also has a long background with the Indian. After joining the Bureau in 1928 he served for 17 years at the Great Lakes Ashland, Wis., as teacher principal, education field agent, community and assistant to the superintendent. In 1945 he became superintendent of the Crow Creek Agency, Fort Thompson, S. Dak., and in 1950 was transferred to Red Lake. He was born at Cherokee, NC, in 1899, attended Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., Hampton Normal Agriculture Institute, Hampton, Va., and received a B.S. degree from Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H., in 1927.

Mr. Arentson, a native of Harlan, Iowa, entered the Bureau in 1946. Prior to that he had 16 years experience with the State board for vocational education, Nashville, Tenn., and as special representative for the United States Office of Education.

<https://www.bia.gov/as-ia/opa/online-press-release/indian-bureau-personnel-shifts-announced>