

Letter from Wade Parks to Gov. S.V. Stewart, August 15, 1917

Thompson Falls, Montana
August 15, 1917

Hon. Sam V. Stewart, Governor
Hon. Sam C. Ford, Attorney General
Helena, Montana

Dear Governor and [Attorney] General:

. . . I have interviewed Mr. W.B. Russell, a lumber operative of Plains, [and] Mr. Russell says that the I.W.W. men who are on strike at Plains, many of whom were formerly employed by him, are all good men and law abiding. He has no kick to put in about them and hoped to again employ them.

I also talked to Company representatives from the west end of the county who state to me that the *I.W.W.s are all quiet and law abiding*. I have interviewed several of the laborers myself and find no sprit of lawlessness. . . . A group of them have rented a house at Plains and will per-

mit no liquor of any kind on the premises; they have taken cards of the organization from men who became unruly, and drunk — so I have been told. They patronize the local grocery stores and pay cash. . . . I have a number of reports that the *I.W.W. men made excellent farm hands*. One large rancher reported that they had the best haying crew they ever employed and they were mostly of the striking I.W.W.s.

The sentiment about Plains and other portions of the county seems to be that the I.W.W. here is not of the lawless brand that is being advertised in the daily papers.

Wade R. Parks
Sanders County Attorney

Source: *Montana Governor's Records, 1889–1962. Manuscript Collection 35* [box 240 folder 4]. Montana Historical Society Research Center. Archives. Excerpted in *Not In Precious Metals Alone: A Manuscript History of Montana* (Helena, 1976): 251–52.