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DOUGLAS COUNTY EMPIRE WITHIN ITSELF

Glimpse of the Resources of This Vast Stretch of Valleys Show Big Wealth

As one ordinarily thinks of Douglas county, the great stretch of valley, hills and mountains, with their almost innumerable streams, do not enter into the vision, but rather are inclined to consider only a few of the many factors that go to make up the resources of what is really an empire in itself. Having its eastern boundary at the summit of the Cascade Mountains on the east, Douglas County spreads out like a fan to the south, north and west, and again narrowing down as the coast line is approached, comprising within its confines a greater area than that of Delaware and Rhode Island combined and more territory than is boasted by the state of Connecticut, or 422 square miles of the grandest country to be found on the Pacific coast. The distance from Mount Thielsen, which towers far above all other nearby peaks of the Cascade range, on the extreme eastern border of the county, traveling as the airplane would fly in a northeasterly direction, to where the waters of the Pacific Ocean have the western line, is more than 150 miles. According to government survey, Douglas county is 64 miles across, north and south, at its widest point. These figures will give the reader some conception of the magnificent country that we shall attempt to describe in this word picture of a vast section of Oregon that is too little known to the world, and also by the residents of our own state. It is to create an interest in this practically undeveloped section of Oregon that this story is written, because the few thousand people who live here are entirely insufficient in numbers to properly develop the latent resources that await labor and capital. Rich beyond wildest imagination in timber, minerals, orchard and farming land, which await industrial activities, this part of Oregon is capable of maintaining a population of a million where now are untitled acres and primitive forests, some of the timber lands still remaining unsurveyed.

and thus the county was named in honor of the aborigines. The great area drained by the Umpqua River is an attractive section of country, its varied natural resources appealing to everyone who sees this part of the state, and visitors are charmed with the wild mountain scenery, the verdant forests, the rich valley and hill lands, and even climatic conditions.

A Few Statistics.

While the area of Douglas County exceeds that of the State of Connecticut, only about 25,000 people were found in this vast country when Uncle Sam took the last census. It will be seen by this fact that there is at this time no appreciable crowding but, on the contrary, there is lots of room for other people to make homes and enjoy with those already in the country the blessings and privileges that all here revel in. More than one-fifth of the population lives at the county seat, Roseburg, which is a beautiful little Western city with lots of life and push, charmingly situated at the confluence of Deer creek with the South Umpqua river and nestling at the foot of wooded hills. The town, incorporated in 1872, has a population of approximately 6,000, is only 457 feet above sea level and has a tax valuation of \$3,298,889. The distance from this city to Portland is 200 miles by rail, while San Francisco lies 572 miles to the south. As the airplane flies it is 51 miles to the Pacific ocean. The city has four banks and three fine, modern brick school buildings, the high school being the pride of Southern Oregon. All of the leading secret organizations have lodges here, and the Masonic fraternity and I. O. O. F. own spacious buildings of their own which are a credit to the city and the lodges they represent. There are seven churches. In a dozen years the city has sprung from a frontier town to a modern city with many miles of paved streets, electric lights and an excellent water system, and boasts of many advantages not enjoyed by other localities.

Douglas County boasts the distinction of having within its borders a magnificent river, more than 200 miles in length, whose source is in the snow capped Cascades. It flows in a northeasterly course; never leaving the boundary of the county, and finally emptying into the Pacific. This river is navigable for many miles, and in fact at one time when the stream was only four feet above low water level, a stern wheeler steamerboat successfully made the trip from Gardiner, at the mouth of the river, to Roseburg and return, a distance of nearly 100 miles. The swift current of the river and the many rapids, over which the waters fluster and swirl in endless torrents both winter and summer, makes navigation above Scottsburg an impracticable matter. A great volume of water flows in the channel of the Umpqua, and government engineers have made surveys looking to improvement of the river, removal of obstructions and the building of locks, opening it to navigation at all times. This project was finally abandoned as unwise, not from lack of water, but owing to the wild nature of the river it was deemed unwise to undertake such a stupendous task.

The North Umpqua rises in Diamond Lake, 5122 feet above sea level. This beautiful lake, several miles in length and of immense depth, is created by the eternal snows on Mt. Thielsen, a little to the east, more than 9000 feet high, whence have their source a number of mountain streams which feed the lake with an inexhaustible supply of pure, crystal-clear water, and thence through the channel of the Umpqua flows toward the sea.

The South Umpqua River, almost as large as the North Umpqua, has its source in the southeast part of the county, near the summit of the Cascades, flows in a northerly course until it joins the North Umpqua at a point about seven miles northwest of Roseburg, this city being situated between the two streams and on the bank of the former.

There are ten banks in the county outside of Roseburg, and resources of these institutions total \$2,105,000. There are 139 school districts in the county, with eight union high schools, while the people annually raise for school purposes more than \$215,000. The population of Douglas County is 91 per cent American born, and this fact alone makes it a most desirable locality for people seeking an ideal place for making homes and educating their children.

There are ten newspapers published in the county, one of which, the News-Review, is a daily. Drain, Oakland, Sutherlin, Myrtle Creek, Riddle and Glendale, all of which are in what is called the up-river country, each have a creditable newspaper. At Gardiner and Reedsport, at the mouth of the Umpqua river, excellent publications are issued which adequately represent those prosperous and rapidly growing sections of Oregon and Douglas County.

Public Buildings.

Roseburg is a progressive place, and this fact is best shown in stating that the city has a magnificent federal building that would do credit to a much larger place. This structure is of brick and stone. It houses the Roseburg postoffice, the United States Land Office, the Forestry officials for this part of the national domain, and the county agricultural agents offices. The latter office is also considered a federal department since the government pays a part of the expense of maintaining the service.

Another public building that is a credit to the town, is the Armory, built some years before the war as a home for the Fourth Company of the National Guard. It is a spacious structure, especially designed for the purpose, and has an immense floor space for drill and team work, besides offices and rest rooms. Above the main floor is a balcony capable of seating several hundred spectators. At the time America took up arms, the personnel of the Fourth Company to almost a man volunteered their services to the government in defense of the flag, and many of the men were among the first to be sent overseas.

The Oregon Soldiers' Home is located in this city, and here veterans of the civil and Spanish-American wars may find a home. This institution is situated on a beautiful plot of ground bordering on the river, and there the aged veterans find shelter are given the best of care. A commodious brick hospital building has been erected of late years so that the men may be given scientific care when ill. Trained nurses are in constant attendance, and the entire institution is maintained with the precision of



military discipline. To be eligible to enter to the institution veterans must have been a resident of the state for one year preceding request for admission.

The Southern Pacific Railway Company line crosses the country north and south, and since the rail connections were made with San Francisco and Portland in the early eighties the old time stage coach has disappeared and the huge freight teams have long since been forgotten save by a few of the pioneers who helped to open this verdant paradise to a younger generation. Not only has the creaking of the freighter been relegated to the misty past, but the pack train that at one time in the early history of Douglas County served as the means of transportation in carrying food and supplies to the sparsely settled region of the great Umpqua Basin, is remembered by a still smaller number than those who recall the ox and mule teams and heavily loaded wagons.

These pack trains, consisting of fifteen to a hundred mules, loaded at Scottsburg away back in the

forties and fifties, and then with the old bell mare leading the van wended its way in single file over the uncertain trails along the Umpqua River to the interior camps located on the streams of the valleys, among the foothills, and in some instances far back on the western slope of the Cascade range.

The March of Progress.

Following the completion of the railroad between Portland and San Francisco the natural resources of the county began to develop, although the process was slow, agriculturalists and stockmen not coming in fast enough to make an appreciable showing. These people who were here engaged in stock raising to a great extent, the mild climate and open winters being conducive to cattle and sheep, grazing on the ranges all the winter. For many years a great deal of wool was shipped from this section, but as grain acreage increased the flocks diminished to a considerable extent. Freight rates were high and often cattle and sheep were driven out to markets; in this way the growers saving considerable

Exports of farm and range products were excellent during the earlier period of settlement, but for some reason grain growing fell off materially fifteen to twenty years ago. Old timers allege that in the eighties and nineties crops of oats and wheat were raised to great advantage on farms that afterward were alleged by these early farmers to have been good, 40 bushels of wheat being a common thing. Although the acreage in grain appears to be comparatively small at this time, it is quite probable that fully as much is grown now as in former years, but increasing demand of the home market takes care of all that is produced, and a great deal more, this fact apparently being taken to indicate that less is grown now than formerly. Changing conditions of late years have turned things around considerably so that with the sub-division of many large ranches a few years ago and the planting of the tracts to fruit, other factors in the development of the county commanded attention, and in this way several thousand acres from grain growing and given over

to various sorts of fruit.

The fruit industry brought a new era to Douglas county, and as considerable effort was made a few years ago to herald the possibilities for the orchardist in this county, homeseekers were attracted this way and practically all of the small tracts quickly settled upon by a thrifty class of people from the east and south. This increased population stimulated business to a marked degree, some new towns springing up as a direct result of so many settlers coming in, most of whom had enough money to get started in their undertakings. Not only were new communities built up, but population in the pioneer towns and cities of Douglas county increased materially. Roseburg itself growing from a village of a couple of thousand to its present proportions. Rocked streets and impossible mud in the winter gradually disappeared in the towns, bituminous and concrete paving replacing the primitive thoroughfare of the towns, until at the present time there is perhaps no town in the county but that has kept

Standing Timber of County One of Big Assets Looking To the Future Prosperity

abreast of the progressive era in these matters.

Statistics of the last year indicate that the wheat sown in Douglas county for that season was practically 15,000 acres, two-thirds of which was fall sown. In the same oats were grown and report shows that 1700 acres of barley was sown. Rye is grown in a few localities, the acreage being 326. Corn is a good crop in this county, nearly 5000 acres being grown in 1921. Alfalfa is grown to a limited extent although it does splendidly on river and creek bottom lands, the report showing only a trifle more than 1000 acres being cut in 1921.

Nearly 18,000 acres of hay were cut in 1921, and the acreage for this crop is generally greater in the county than for any one other crop. In addition to the grain and grass hay cut may be added the 1600 acres of alfalfa, which gives a total of about 28,000 acres. The demand for this crop usually exceeds the local supply.

There are over 10,000 acres of orchards in Douglas county, the most of which is in bearing, but it is conceded that young orchards not enumerated will bring the total area planted to trees to a much larger figure. Prunes are the principal fruit grown in the county, the soil and climate here being peculiarly adapted to this fruit, and practically 6,000 acres are devoted to that staple crop. Apples come next with about 3,000 acres in trees, largely in full bearing, while the remaining area devoted to fruit is divided among pears, cherries, peaches and walnuts. All of the small fruits are grown here and yield immense crops, everbearing varieties of raspberries and strawberries continuing to produce until the latter part of November or first of December. This season raspberries were on sale in local stores the first of December.

Some Possibilities.

There are in Douglas county more than 3,000,000 acres of land, including the timber lands, much of which lies on the mountain slopes. The assessment rolls show that only a trifle over 100,000 acres are comprised in the farms, and it also shows that the number of farms totals only 1742. In other words, there are about two and three quarter millions acres in the county undeveloped. A great deal of this land lies on the foot hills and in the valleys, but perhaps the major portion is covered with a dense growth of merchantable timber that awaits the sawmill and transportation to market. There are thousands of acres of land that will make homes for industrious families and provide a good living for them. 2. great many of the big cattle ranches and sheep ranges are susceptible of sub-division, which would also give room for a lot more people to build up attractive and paying properties. This thing has been done with marked success in the Sutherlin and Garden Valley sections, where ten, fifteen and twenty acre farms occupy the country that was only a dozen or fifteen years ago, roamed by sheep and cattle, affording a limited income to one or two men. These same localities are today among the most enterprising and prosperous communities of the entire county. Luxuriant orchards, in the midst of which nestle attractive and comfortable homes, are paying these people a splendid living, and there are hundreds of them. The progressive and modern little town of Sutherlin with a population of seven or eight hundred, is the center of one of these communities built up on a former sheep pasture. Untold acres of unexcelled land also lies idle along the creeks and rivers, and by a system of irrigation that will one day in the near future take definite form can be made to "blossom as the rose."

In fact, irrigation, while not essential to profitable crops here, will add untold wealth to the assets of this county. There are a few farmers and fruit growers already utilizing the water nature so lavishly provides, and to a great advantage, and they do not hesitate to say that two or three applications during the heat of the summer will more than pay for the installation of the water systems they have installed. In most instances these tracts under irrigation pumped from creek or river by a gasoline motor.

Opportunities also await the stockholder, as thousands of acres of open hill land are available for grazing sheep and cattle, and since the winters are so mild, with little or no snow, stock requires scarcely any feeding. In fact, there is hardly one winter in ten that is severe enough to make feeding imperative. The experience of stockmen is that it is well to provide feed for a couple or three weeks, so that in event the weather becomes cold enough to retard grass, or snow lies on for a few days, that they

can pull their sheep and cattle through without losses. Wool is generally a good price, and lamba bring top prices in early summer. Withall, stockraising is an excellent, ranging as high as fifty cents in fall and winter, dropping as low as fifteen cents in summer. This is an industry that will bear closest investigation, and one that holds out flattering inducements to any man or woman who wants to engage in that sort of work. In addition to chickens, the turkey business is an alluring occupation for people who want to devote their time to raising birds for the markets, but one must be adapted to that line of work to succeed, as turkeys are a "peculiar fowl," and in handling them their peculiarities come in for recognition. Flocks, ranging from a few birds to those numbering a thousand are found here, and the birds, when in a prime condition, will usually bring around forty cents per pound, dressed for the Thanksgiving or Christmas markets. The market is established, and annually buyers come in from Seattle, Portland and California points to buy, and car loads are shipped out for the holiday trade.

Mining Activities.

Placer mining in the streams of Douglas county furnished an alluring industry to the very earliest pioneers, and for a few years many of them engaged in that work. A good deal of fine gold was taken out of Cow creek and its tributaries in the southern part of the county, and even at this late date an occasional miner is found working the sandbar of some mountain stream for the gold therein. Along the upper South Umpqua, and in the many little streams flowing into the river from the mouth of Cow creek eastward to away above Tiller, the "colors" may be found most anywhere, although the peak of the placer mining in those localities was passed some years ago. Old miners who have prospected that region are very positive in their belief that in the gigantic sand and wash rock deposits at the confluence of Cow creek with the South Umpqua a short distance from Riddle, that immense wealth in fine gold exists, but the process of moving the gravel and getting down to bed rock is so great that no one has dared undertake the task.

In addition to the placer deposits that have been found and worked, there are a number of gold-bearing ledges that have been located of late years, and these properties give promise of developing into paying properties. In and around Canyonsville, along the creek passing through the town, and on the foothills near gold "pockets" have been discovered that produced fabulous wealth in gold dust, and miners aver that somewhere in the mountain adjacent must be the lead from which all this gold originally came.

The Bohemia mining district, lying in a remote section away in the northeast part of the county, is rich in gold and silver and mining properties there have been operated for many years. Considerable copper is found here, and these deposits are located east of Roseburg and in the Tiller section. The "Nickel Mine," near Riddle, has in the past, attracted much attention and extensive workings were built a one time, but the owners have made no attempt to work the property for a number of years. The clunbar mines east of Yoncalla have also been allowed to lie idle, despite the fact that the property has produced considerable quicksilver. Experts believe that the mine will yet be developed and made to pay handsome dividends.

Attractions for Tourists.

This part of Oregon is an immense out-of-door play ground where Mother Nature has lavished favors that go to make it one of the most delightful sections of the west. Countless streams, fringed with willow, cottonwood, alder and birch, afford delightful camping places, while the fishing for trout and salmon, which abound in season, lure the angler from the east and south. In the spring the Royal Chinook salmon supply the fishermen with all the sport they want, and it is not infrequent that some angler comes in with a fish that weighs 40 or more pounds that he has landed with rod and reel. In fact, larger salmon are taken in this way from the North Umpqua, one weighing 52 pounds being shown here a few months ago. But catches of that size are rare, and it takes more than a novice to successfully land a Royal Chinook weighing 40 pounds and upwards. Following the Chinooks, Steelheads and Silverides are plentiful and in the fall salmon trout, ranging from 10 to 18 inches in length, abound.

If it is big game, the mountains (Continued on page 48.)