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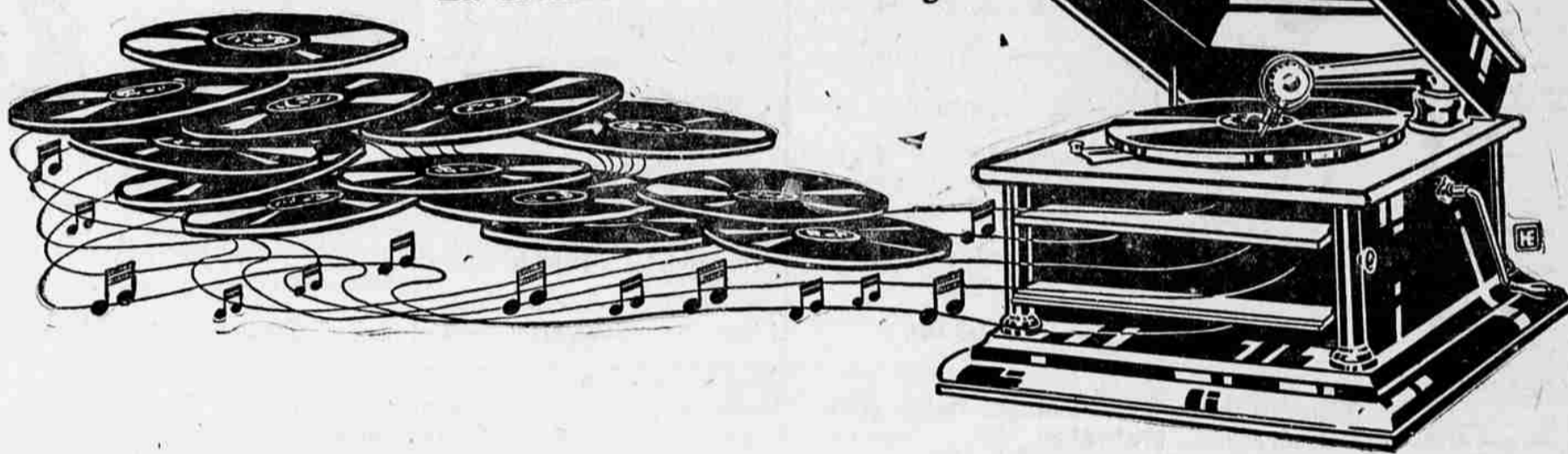
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DEALERS

La Grande

Oregon



PUBLIC LANDS MUCH SOUGHT

U. S. Land Office Here Has Remarkably Busy Year—Progressive Laws Enacted to Enhance Interest of the Homesteader.

By NOLAN SKIFF (Receiver U. S. Land Office)
The volume of business handled by the local United States land office, situated at La Grande, Ore., indicates that the trend of the times is to appropriate and utilize the agricultural possibilities of our country. Vacant public lands in this district, on July 1, 1916, amounted to 583,880 acres of surveyed and 15,988 acres of unsurveyed land. The business handled by the office during the period from November 30, 1915, to November 30, 1916, inclusive, shows a marked increase in the public interest taken in agricultural pursuits. This is probably due largely to the fact that the high prices of farm products, coupled with the enactment of liberal land laws, has induced citizens agriculturally inclined to brave the hardships of pioneer life to reduce to profitable cultivation a portion of the remaining public domain. During the entry year mentioned, the local office has allowed 712 original and additional homestead applications and 31 timber or stone applications, in addition to a number of desert land declarations and public sales authorized by the commissioner of the general land office. The amount of money received in connection with the disposition of public lands for this period is unusually large, amounting to the sum of \$52,775.11. Of this amount \$50,536.85 has been earned and converted into the treasury of the United States. It required 23,229 communications between the land office and its patrons to handle this vast volume of business.

Serial System in Vogue.
The serial register system, which is an official record of all filings, was introduced into the local land offices July 1, 1908. My present term of office commenced June 1, 1913, and up to the present time the serial register has increased 4707 numbers.
The benefits to the community de-

rived from the La Grande land office, from a payroll standpoint, are not great as there are approximately \$8500 disbursed in salaries each fiscal year. However, when we consider that thousands of entrymen visit the local office annually in connection with perfecting their entries, the commercial advantages of having the local land office located in La Grande are manifest. Uncle Sam, in all departments, conducts his great business in an inconspicuous manner, and through the smooth-working machinery of the interior department, an area that was once a vast wilderness has been gradually reclaimed and made into beautiful and profitable homesteads. Some day the expression "old homestead" will have the same subtle meaning that it now has when applied to the farms of Virginia and other parts of the east.

Liberal Laws Passed.
Since the passage of the Act of June 6, 1912, commonly known as the three-year homestead law, congress has passed liberal laws for acquiring title to public lands. The land laws passed to govern the transfer of the public domain to lands in private ownership have assumed vast proportions. Some of the recent acts that most directly affect the interests of the entryman are, of all the land laws most interesting to the public. Under the act of June 6, 1912, after the allowance of a homestead application and the establishment of residence, the entryman is permitted to be absent from the land for one or two continuous periods of not to exceed in the aggregate five months in each year, dating from the establishment of residence. Therefore, an entryman, upon three years' compliance with the law, can submit a satisfactory proof with only 21 months' actual residence to his credit.

Homesteader Protected.
If an entryman cannot actually cultivate the amount required for compliance with the law, owing to the required amount of cultivable land not existing upon his entry, upon a sufficient application and showing of facts, after the examination of a special agent on behalf of the government, the area of cultivation required is reduced.

The Act of September 5, 1914, permits an applicant who has lost, forfeited, or abandoned a former entry to make a second application governed by prescribed regulations. These applications are seldom denied by the department.

The Act of March 3, 1915, allows an additional entry after proof has been made on the original. In this instance, it is required that both the original and the additional must be

contiguous, and both must be designated under the enlarged homestead act (Act of February 19, 1909).

The most liberal law published in recent years by congress is the Act of July 3, 1916, allowing additional entries of noncontiguous lands. This act is a liberal one and has done much to stimulate the acquisition of vacant lands. Immediately upon its passage, thousands who had exhausted their homestead rights under the laws then in existence, hastened to take advantage of this new statutory provision to extend their rights to acquire public lands. This act, we believe, has been responsible for a considerable percentage of the increase in the land office business, in the states where the enlarged homestead law is effective.

Greater Possibilities In Store.
There is at present contemplated legislation before congress to make possible the taking up of 640-acre entries of vacant and unappropriated lands, and should this bill pass within the near future, as it is expected that it will, it would be reasonable to assume that "probably within less than ten years there will be no public land of consequence that will be available for the homesteader," and the work started by William Penn, in 1681, after 245 years of legislation to meet the needs that have constantly arisen in the undertaking, the great work of disposing of the government-owned public lands of the United States will be completed and the public domain will have passed to private ownership.

Mr. Business Man.
Busy these days, of course. Don't waste any time thinking about what you are going to give your wife for Christmas. Step in Monday and select a beautiful blooming plant for her Christmas table, and it's off your mind. All reasonably priced. La Grande Seed and Floral Co. 12-15-22

Notice to Stockholders.
Notice is hereby given to the stockholders of the United States National Bank of La Grande, that the annual meeting of the stockholders of the said bank, will be held at their banking house in La Grande, Oregon, on Tuesday, January 9, 1917, between the hours of 10 a. m. and 4 p. m. for the purpose of electing a board of directors for the ensuing year, and transacting any other business that may come before the meeting.

Dated at La Grande, Oregon, this 5th day of December, 1916.
T. J. SCROGGIN,
Cashier.

—Adv. 12-6 to 1-8.

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Nothing finer has ever been shown in La Grande. All the latest designs. Single pieces and in suits. Adams, William and Mary, Jacobean. Windsor Chairs.

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Start the year right with a few sections and watch your book case grow. We handle the Globe-Wernicke sections in many designs.

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