PROGRESS EDITION—EASTERN OREGON'S LEADING NEWSPAPER—PROGRESS EDITION

BUSINESS SECTION

La Grande Evening Observer

SECTION 4 PAGES 1 to 8

VOLUME XXV. LA GRANDE, OREGON, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST. 31, 1927 NUMBER 15

BUSINESS DISTRICT SHOWS FAVORABLE GROWTH

INCREASE GREAT IN LAST SEVEN YEARS; MANY NEW HOUSES

Estimate Shows That Business District Here Has Been Enlarged Nearly 100 Per Cent Since the Year 1920—Many New Blocks of Fine Buildings Are Constructed

Looking back over the last seven years, one notices a remarkable growth in the La Grande business district—growth which extends in two directions. In one instance the business blocks have become more compact with every bit of space available utilized, and in the other new business blocks have been added to the whole.

Seven years ago the business section, roughly speaking, was practically all along Adams avenue between Fourth street and a point midway between Fir and Greenwood streets, on Fir street from Washington to Monroe and on Depot street from Washington to Jefferson. Since then the section has almost doubled in size, has spread over a much larger territory and a large number of new and attractive business structures have been erected.

New Lighting System

In addfition, the old, dimly lighted streets have given way to one of the most modern systems of illumination—that has wiped away the reputation La Grande once held for its dark streets and has given it, instead, the name of being one of the best lighted cities in the entire Northwestern country.

The story of the transformation, if told in all detail, would take up many columns of newspaper print but in brief with most of the major steps related, it still retains a large amount of interest and indicates a tremendous spirit of optimism and confidence in this city's future on the part of the local merchants and, in an ever growing measure, on the part of out-of-town capital.

In fact, in the last 12 months in particular, the most outstanding changes have been accomplished—including the construction of two hotels, one of six stories and one of seven stories, both rearing their roofs further into the air than the Foley building, which until this time, held the altitude record here with five stories. It has also been in the last year that the modern ornamental street lighting units have been installed.

And, since 1925, several new business blocks have been constructed, including the one between Fir and Greenwood on the north side of Adams avenue, and several in the western part of the city.

Much Remodeling

In addition to the many new buildings which have gone up, numerous repairs and alterations have been made to bfsiness homes already standing, bringing these up to date in every respect and augmenting the general appearance of the business district to a marked degree.

Besides this, several other building projects are being considered. One of these is the contemplated construction of a modern theater on the present site of the Star theater, another is the building of a brick structure on the corner of Fir and Adams, where the Grande Ronde Valley house now stands, and still others are in prospect but have not been announced.

There is hardly a block in the entire business section in which some new building has not been erected in the last few years.

New Brick Buildings

Over on Fir street between the O.-W. main line and Monroe, new buildings include the modern brick home of the La Grande bakery and the new Harris building, constructed of a grayish stone secured near Elgin—the same stone used in building the new Episcopal church on Fourth street.

Coming from the railroad track toward Adams avenue on Fir, one finds more new construction. Julius Roesch has erected a new two-story brick building on the south corner of the Fir-Jefferson intersection. The Orange Blossom confectionery occupies the lower floor and the Hotel Paris with 23 rooms, is located in the second floor. Both are new businesses in La Grande.

Next to this building are two new brick structures, housing grocery stores, butcher shops and similar places of business and next is the Salvation Army hall. Across the street a new brick building has just been completed.

On the corner of Adams and Fir is the new Carr Furniture brick building, which was constructed shortly after fire destroyed the former furniture home a few years ago. Directly across Adams from this building is the M. J. Goss garage, which has been improved considerable of recent years. A large brick annex was constructed at the rear of this building only a short time ago to give more room.

On the other intersection, the Julius Roesch seven-story hotel is being finished (a complete description of this hotel is given elsewhere in this paper).

Going east on Adams on the north side, one finds a new brick business block which has been built up in the last two or three years. First is the Lottes building, directly across from The Observer office, and adjoining it is a large one-story business building erected by Mr. Roesch.

Next is another one-story brick building, erected by George H. Curry last year, and on the corner is a two-story business structure, also of brick, and is being completed by John Melville. The lower story houses the plumbing business and the upper story is apartments.

East of the new Roesch Hotel, on the south side of Adams Avenue, few new buildings have been erected, but several have undergone repairing and been made up-to-date. In the next block east, on the same side of the street, Charles Playle's modern filling station and headquarters is located. The filling station, built a few years ago, has been added to with additional buildings to house a tire supply, wash racks, tire repair department and other branches of the business. Johns Bros. Filling Station and Tire shop is another of the attractive new business places in this vicinity.

The Eastern Edge

This is practically the eastern edge of the business section proper, although several residential grocery stores and butcher shops are located further east on Adams avenue.

Turning west on Adams from the Fir street intersection, one enters the longest established part of the district—where the pioneer business buildings are to be found until one reaches Chestnut street.

Among the newest buildings facing Adams avenue in this section are the Bouvy building, housing the L. & L. drug store, and numerous professional mens' offices, and the Arcade theater. Many places, however, have built new fronts, and in some places almost entirely renovated the building.

These include the Siegrist and J. H. Pearo jewelry stores, C. D. Putman's shop, Clint's Clothiery, the Grande Ronde Meat Company retail shop and grocehy store, Newlin's Book and Stationery store, the Colonial Theater, the Hotel Foley and Glass Drugs (the Sommer building), all these on Adams Avenue between Chestnut and Depot streets.

In the block between Depot and Elm, on Adams, corresponding advancement has been made, although it has been mostly in the nature of repair work and remodeling. No new buildings have gon up here in recent years, this block representing mostly firms which have been established in business homes for many years.

Between Elm and Fir on Adams some new construction has been done in recent years, mostly, however, remodeling and building of fronts. Included in these are: The Star theater, W. H. Bohnenkamp company, and others.

Under Construction

There are few business places

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Complete List Of La Grande's Business Firms

(Editor's Note—The following list of firms doing business in La Grande is the result of an exhaustive survey and is the most complete ever made here. Errors due to obscure business locations or to possible inadvertent oversight may have occurred and The Observer will appreciate receiving any corrections that may be necessary.)

ABSTRACTS
Abstract & Title Co., H. F. Wylde
Union Abstract Co., J. R. Oliver
ACCOUNTANT
Dickson & Gilliam.
ARCHITECT
Charles Miller
ART STORES
Richardson's Art & Gift Shop.
ATTORNEYS
Eugene Ashwell
Hugh Brady.
Cochran and Eberhard.
Robert V. Chrisman
H. E. Dixon
Robert Eakin
Green & Hess
Carl Helm, District Attorney
John Hodgin
R. J. Kitchen
F. S. Ivanhoe
E. R. Ringo
J. D. Slater
AUTO CAMPS
Orchard
Oregon Trail
Pine Cone
Plain View
BAKERIES
Gwilliam's Electric
La Grande Bakery, K. J. McWilliams
BARBERS
Acme
Fir Street
Foley
Meyers & Ellis
Model
Northside.
O. K.
Rex
Royal
Sommer
Service
BANKS
La Grande National
United States National
Equitable Savings
BEAUTY SHOPS
Colonial
Geist Marinello
Emmetta Marinello
Model
Raymand's
Ruth-Elizabeth
BLACKSMITH SHOPS
J. A. Garity
Flemming's Blacksmith Shop
Bob Masterson's Blacksmith Shop.
BOOK STORES
Newlin's Book and Stationery
BRICK PLANTS
La Grande Brick Company
CABINET AND CARPENTER REPAIR SHOPS
C. D. Goodnough
Green's Repair
La Grande Cabinet Shop
La Grande Construction & Supply Co.
CHIROPRACTORS
Dr. Belle Meyers, Chiropractor.
Dr. M. L. Tribe, Chiropractor
Dr. J. F. Woodell, Chiropractor
CONFECTIONERY
Cantrell's C. & M.
Corner Cupboard
Dew Drop Inn
Duffy's Place
Johnson's Confectionery
Karther's Lavender
Orange Blossom
Riverside Confectionery
Sandwich Shoppe
Sanford's
Tiffin
CONSTRUCTION (Cement)
Concrete Pipe Co.
Hartenhower and Spaeth
Chris Hildebrandt
P. J. Lilly
CONSTRUCTION (Highway)
Security Construction Co.
Clyde Seitz
CONTRACTORS (Building)
Blanchard Brothers
John Gettlehuber
William Kelly
W. C. Hanson
E. R. Heasley
George Lyman
Jay Millering
H. P. Nielson
M. A. Suggs
W. Vedder
CONTRACTORS (Plastering)
Harry Hoffman
Ellis Knight
CONTRACTORS (Roofing)
Charles Hildebrandt
CREAMERIES
Blue Mountain
Mount Emily
Union
DENTISTS
Dr. H. S. Brownlon
Dr. Frank Eames
Dr. C. W. Erwin
Dr. George Hoffman
Dr. J. L. McPherson
Dr. R. R. Miller
Dr. A. M. Moore
Dr. E. P. Mossman
Dr. R. F. Murphy
DEPARTMENT STORES
C. J. Breier
Hill's Department
J. C. Penney
N. K. West & Co.
New York Store.
Westenskow's Bargain Store.
DELIVERY
Frank Cheavlinger.
Jones & DeGreeve
Lockwood's.
Helvey Drayage
DRUG STORES
Glass Drugs
L. & L.
Moon
Red Cross
Silverthorn-Wright's
ELECTRIC SHOPS
Eastern Oregon Light & Power
Electric Service Co.
H. & S.
La Grande Electric
Jess Rosenkrantz
FLORISTS
Clark's
Milne's Nursery
Rolen's
FLOURING MILLS
La Grande Flouring Mills
Pioneer Flouring Co.
FOUNDRY AND IRON CONSTRUCTION
La Grande Iron Works
FOX FARMS
Blue Mountain Fur and Feather
Oregon Trail
FURS
Chris Miller
FURNITURE
W. H. Bohnenkamp Co
Carr's
Furniture Exchange.

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LA GRANDE'S INVITING RESIDENTIAL SECTION

Taken from the top of one of the city's splendid business buildings, this view of a portion of La Grande's handsome residential section gives an indication of the beautiful homes that dot the district. In the distant center is the La Grande high school building and immediately to its left is the Central grade school building, which formerly served as a high school until an ever-increasing population necessitated a new structure. To the right of the high school is the L. D. S. tabernacle, a beautiful brick church which has the largest seating capacity of any building in the city. To the left of the high school is the Catholic church, the finest house of worship in La Grande and probably Eastern Oregon. To the left of the church is the Union county court house.

Real Estate Values Are Increasing Steadily in La Grande and Valley

Many Factors Stimulate Land Sales—La Grande Realty Board Takes Active Part

Real estate values in La Grande have been consistently good for many years and local interests are confident that this trend will increase as seasons come and go. Great confidence in this city's future and continual developments and improvements are largely responsible for the excellent land values. Real estate, commanding a good price and moving in a pleasing way, has not undergone a boom period but rather has advanced steadily, basing its increase on actual conditions and sure futures.

Property pride is also strongly manifested in La Grande and a large number of home owners are in evidence—probably a larger majority than most cities can count. This has given the city a stability that has influenced real estate values to a large degree. Public improvements such as paved and macadamed streets, concrete sidewalks, sanitary and storm sewage systems, ornamental street lights, augmentation of the water supply and others have also added to realty values.

The building of two new hotels, one by outside capital, and the selection of this city as a site for the Eastern Oregon Normal school, have resulted in real estate activity and promise additional home buying investments.

Farm Values Increasing

Confidence in city real estate values is reflected in farm lands throughout Union county in spite of the agricultural depression of recent years. Farm sales are made regularly with particular attention toward smaller tracts. It is believed that the interest in fruit, vegetables and dairying, which is growing rapidly, will stimulate valley land sales more and more during coming years and the present excellent crop throughout the valley will also augment land sales, it is predicted.

Good roads, which have been realized during the last nine years throughout Union county, additional marketing facilities, and the certainty that small plots of land with irrigation, can be made doubly profitable, is also reflected in increased land valuation.

Among the business men of La Grande who have taken and are taking a very active interest in the progress and advancement of local conditions, are the realtors—real estate dealers who are banded together as the La Grande Realty board.

Organized only some seven years ago as the Union County Realty board and changed two years later to the La Grande Realty board, this group of men is responsible for many forward steps taken in this city and are continuously working on other projects all with the idea of ultimately improving values and conditions in the Grande Ronde valley.

Took Lead in Hotel Move

The realtors were especially active in the work that preceded the building of the two new hotels here. After the convention of the Northwest Real Estate association here last year when the fact was brought to the front that this city had need of more accommodations, the realtors took the lead in an active campaign to secure new hotel structures.

They first took up the idea of a community hotel and had one of the Hockenberry system's experts here for a public meeting. Other developments followed and with the realtors and other civic organizations, such as the chamber of commerce, cooperating in the work, the situation was finally brought to a point where outside capital was interested to the extent of building the six-story La Grande hotel and Julius Roesch, local capitalist, started his seven story hotel.

Favors Diversified Farming

Another project that the realtors are driving away at, and are making headway in, is a movement for more diversified farming in the Grande Ronde valley. Instead of large farms, their plan is to have smaller farms, more people and each farmer relying not on one crop but upon many different ones.

Linked with this movement are two others—one to secure irrigation and the other to increase interest in fine dairy cattle.

Irrigation is bound to come many citizens believe, it merely being a question of time. Some declare that when the valley land is thoroughly irrigated, the Grande Ronde will rival any valley of its size in the entire country. Several local organizations and individuals are actively campaigning for irrigation.

Better dairying is being wholeheartedly sponsored by the realtors who are convinced that both Union and Wallowa counties are almost ideal for the milk and butter industry. Some progress has been made in this respect and more is expected in the future.

Seek New Industries

Still another goal that the realtors are aiming at is new industries, especially a dehydrating plant, which would utilize fruit and vegetable produce which now is going to waste to a certain extent here. In any fruit orchard a certain percentage of culls are unmarketable unless a drying plant is available to mold them into commercial products.

The realty board, while young in years, is one of the most enthusiastic organizations in the city, and is also largely interested in land value, both in the city and in its immediate vicinity.

Board's Officers

William Miller, present president of the board, was its first leader under the present name. After Mr. Miller's term of office, C. J. Black was elected president and Sherwood Williams was the third realtor to hold this office.

When first started as the La Grande Realty board it had 16 members and now boasts of 46, with a few more expected to join in the near future. The board has weekly noon luncheons when matters of common interest are discussed from all angles and when it molds its opinions into concrete shape.

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WHOLESALE HOUSES IN LA GRANDE DO A LARGE BUSINESS

Products of Local Firms Go Over All the Pacific Northwestern Country—Flour Shipments Are Made to Eastern Cities and to the Orient; City East Oregon Wholesale Center

In its rapid progress toward becoming the leading city of Eastern Oregon, La Grande has also become recognized as the wholesale center of this section of the state, and today boasts a large number of wholesale businesses in which the people of this city may be justly proud.

Not only has La Grande been recognized by nearby cities and towns as a wholesale center, but by cities throughout the entire state of Oregon, which La Grande products reach.

Nor has this recognition been confined to the state of Oregon, a large part of the flour made at the Island City Flour Mills going to California and to eastern cities and also to the Orient.

Ship Flour to Orient

The bulk of the flour last year except that which was shipped to the Orient, was sold in Oregon and California. However, in previous years much has been shipped to Chicago, St. Louis, and other large eastern cities. Last year the market there was poor and practically no flour from here went east. This year, however, prospects are there will be a greater demand and these cities will again receive flour from here.

The Island City Flour Mill is not confined to the Island City flour mill at Island City as it was 21 years ago, when the mill was first started. Since 1896 it has expanded until it now includes besides the mill at Island City, additional mills at Elgin, Union and La Grande, and warehouses at Island City, Alicel, Imbler, and the Conley warehouses.

Uses Local Grain

All grain used by the mill is grown in the Grande Ronde valley, no grain of any kind being shipped in. About 25 men are employed by the mill and the average output for one year is 100,000 barrels of flour.

Another major wholesale business in La Grande, and perhaps the oldest one, is the Grande Ronde Meat company, which supplies much of Oregon east of the Cascade mountains with the exception of Klamath and Lake counties, with cured and fresh meats, lard and other meat products.

All products sent out by the company carry the Mt. Emily brand, which has become recognized all over the state.

One of Best in State

The meat packing plant of the company here, which is in charge of W. P. Mohr ranks with plants of similar companies in larger cities than La Grande, and since it was first started here has made a marked progress.

It was in the year of 1874 that what is now the Grande Ronde Meat Company first originated. It was started by John Caviness and was nothing more than a meat market at the time. The business was transferred by Mr. Caviness to J. A. Russell and William Grandy and a few years later, in the year 1906, was incorporated for $20,000 as the Grande Ronde Meat Company. Today the value of the company is $100,000.

The same year that the company was incorporated the wholesale business was started, and two years later W. P. Mohr came to La Grande and took charge of that part of the business. The next year E. H. Smith also became interested in that company and since that time has been the buyer.

Three years ago J. A. Russell, who was president of the company, retired turning his interest over to F. A. Ealing, who is now the president. Mr. Mohr is vice president, and the other directors are E. H. Smith and Frank Maguire.

Purchases Building

The building which houses the packing plant was purchased by the company five years ago from Julius Roesch. It is a three-story brick structure 120 by 120 feet. On the basement floor of the building is two pickling cellars, a lard cooler and one freezer, in addition to the steam plant. On the main floor there are five coolers, and two freezers in addition to the trimming room and an egg room. On the third floor the sausage room, lard rendering equipment large steam cookers and other equipment, of the most modern kind, for making luncheon meats is found, in addition to two large food choppers, one for chopping lard and the other for chopping meats, each having a capacity to chop 1600 pounds in one hour. All of the equipment is run by electricity.

The refrigeration system of the plant is one of the most complete to be found any where, having two large ammonia compressors of 20-ton and 10-ton capacity.

Houses Ice Plant

The building also houses an ice making plant of 20-ton capacity. This ice plant is the only one of its kind in this section of the state. The ice is made from pure artesian water and for the past two years has been handled by J. W. Rush.

Eggs are also sold wholesale by the company, and a complete egg processing machine is a part of the packing house equipment.

In addition to the packing plant the meat company owns three meat markets here, also stock yards and a slaughter house, which are located outside of the La Grande city limits, covering about four acres of ground. The slaughter house is equipped with the most modern electrical devices available for the work carried on there.

Large Payroll

The company employes 32 men and the annual payroll is more than $65,000.

Probably next in line among La Grande's major wholesal businesses is the creameries, of which the city has three—all equipped with the most modern machinery for turning out milk products.

The oldest creamery in the city is the Blue Mountain, which up until four years ago was owned by the late George Hopkins. The present owner is Roy F. Tyler, who came to La Grande four years ago and purchased Mr. Hopkin's interests.

Mr. Tyler had been in the creamery business several years previous to coming to La Grande, and during his four years here he has made many improvements in the local creamery plant.

Much New Equipment

More than $9,000 worth of new equipment has been added at the plant since he came to La Grande, including a new ice cream machine, bottle washers, bottling and capping equipment of the newest kind and many other new modern things in creamery equipment.

All milk and cream brought into the creamery is pasteurized, machinery of the most modern type being used in this work.

Ice cream and butter are the two principal things turned out by the creamery, although sweet milk, sweet cream and eggs are also handled. These products are sold wholesale and are sent over all this territory, which includes Union and Wallowa counties. Most of the product is sent out from La Grande to the surrounding towns and to Wallowa county points by truck.

Branch Creameries

The company has two branch creameries—one at Enterprise and one at Union—which buy cream and send it to the local creamery, and distribute butter and ice cream made here. The Union branch was established 15 years ago, while Mr. Hopkins was proprietor of the creamery. The Enterprise branch was established just three years ago by Mr. Tyler.

The creamery runs between 60,000 and 70,000 pounds of butter monthly, and during the summer months makes 300 or 400 gallons of ice cream daily, all of which is used in the two counties.

The Blue Mountain Creamery is the only place in the two counties where ice cream is manufactured on a large wholesale basis at the present time. The company employs 14 persons.

Big Increase

There has been a decided increase in the volume of business in the past four years, according to Mr. Tyler, the business at present being about three times greater than it was when he first purchased the creamery.

The Union Creamery company was located in La Grande in 1923, and since that time has made rapid progress. It was at first opened as the Commercial Creamery company, being affiliated with the Commercial Creamery company, of Spokane, Wash., which is still the parent house of the local company. Not long after the creamery was opened here, however, it was reorganized and incorporated as the Union Creamery company.

The creamery is located at 1112 Jefferson avenue, and is one of the most modernly equipped plants of this type in Eastern Oregon. It receives about 600 gallons of cream daily from a larger territory sur-

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IN THE CENTER OF THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

The above pictured business block is located in the central portion of La Grande's business district, about midway between the Hotel Oregonia, pictured in the extreme left, and the La Grande hotel, a six-story structure two blocks west of the building at the right. The Hotel Oregonia, a seven-story structure being erected by Julius Roesch, local capitalist, will probably be opened about the first of the year. The framework was complete and the bricklayers had started work when the picture was taken. Starting from the right is the United States National bank, and then the large N. K. West & Co. department store. Silverthorn-Wright's drug store occupies the lower floor of the next building, and the upper story is devoted to offices. The O. K. Barber shop is next and G. S. Birnie's jewelry store also occupies part of this building. The Toggery, featuring men's wear, is the next business place and Richardson's Art & Gift Shop is situated between it and the New York store, which is located on the corner.

Local Company Manufactures About One Million Bricks Here Each Year

The La Grande brick company, which has been in existence since La Grande's earliest times, is one of the largest and most complete plants of its kind in Eastern Oregon and does a large wholesale and retail business annually.

Located near the O.-W. main line tracks below the Old Oregon Trail highway near Gangloff park, it is in an inconspicuous position but nevertheless plays an important part in the building of the city—supplying practically all of the common brick used in local construction for the past 40 years.

In addition to supplying the heavy demands of La Grande contractors, which have doubled and trebled in the last few years, the brick company also ships its product as far west as Heppner, far east as Baker, and goes into both Wallowa and Grant counties, receiving many order from Enterprise, Prairie City and other towns in the vicinity.

The brick is purely a La Grande product. Wood is obtained from the local mills and clay is secured from large deposits situated near the plant. Not one cent goes out of La Grande for either materials or labor, C. H. Towery, manager, declares. He also points out that the company uses about 500 cords of wood each year.

The daily capacity of the brick company is 20,000 bricks and its annual production is about 1,000,000 bricks. Twenty men are employed when the plant is in full operation and the average value of the year's products is about $20,000.

Mr. Towery has been manager of the company for the last 16 years and is confident that business will continue to increase, with La Grande hitting a full stride and a fuller prosperity becoming more evident annually.