

## LEWIS COUNTY, W. T.

THE County of Lewis occupies a central position in Western Washington, between Puget Sound and the Columbia River, on the natural line of travel between those regions. To the north are Thurston and Pierce counties, bordering on the Sound. On the east lie the Cascade Mountains. South are Clarke, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties, and on the west Pacific and Chehalis counties intervene between it and the Pacific Ocean. It is about ninety miles long from east to west and twenty-eight miles wide, and has an area of 2,340 square miles of mountain, hill and valley land, the entire surface being in its natural state covered with a dense growth of timber. Its watercourses are Cowlitz River and Chehalis River and its tributaries, the largest of which are the Newaukum and Skookum Chuck. The Cowlitz rises at the base of the giant snow peak, Mount Rainier, or Tacoma, and flows across the eastern portion of Lewis into Cowlitz County, and thence south to the Columbia. The Chehalis rises in the southwestern portion of Lewis County, on the northeastern slope of the Boisfort Mountains, which lie to the west of Cowlitz River, and flows eastward for thirty miles and then northwestward for forty miles, when it enters Chehalis County and continues on a westerly course to the ocean at Gray's Harbor. The Newaukum, in two branches, and Skookum Chuck flow down from the lower spurs of the Cascades and unite with the Chehalis near the centre of Lewis County.

A large portion of the county is composed of the most fertile valley land. The Chehalis Valley, extending along both sides of the stream, is from five to fifteen miles in width, and what may be done with the thousands of unoccupied acres is indicated by the splendid farms to be seen throughout the valley. The Cowlitz Valley is broad and contains some of the best farms in Western Washington. The valley of the Newaukum is also wide and contains a large acreage of excellent agricultural land. The Skookum Chuck, Tilton, Lincoln, Hanaford, Silver, Boisfort and other large tributaries of the Cowlitz and Chehalis, all have along their courses much excellent bottom land. Fully one-half the rich bottom lands on Cowlitz River are yet unoccupied, and may be taken up under the Government land laws or purchased of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company. Along the Chehalis there is also much bottom land yet open to settlement. The soil of the river bottoms is a rich sandy loam, and produces a continuous succession of grain, grasses, vegetables and fruits. Fields of wheat may be seen averaging forty, and even fifty, bushels to the acre, oats that yield from fifty to one hundred bushels, peas from thirty to fifty bushels, and timothy and clover from three to four tons. All kinds of vegetables attain the largest size. The farmers do not make a specialty of any one particular crop, but raise a general diversity of products—grain, grass, horses, cattle and hogs—and make considerable butter and cheese, all receiving due attention, and yielding their regular quota to the farmer's income. The three large flouring mills in the county make a home market at a fair price for all the wheat raised.

Hay is shipped to Portland and to different points on the Sound, and logging camps also consume large quantities of hay, chopped barley and oats. There are some excellent dairies in Chehalis Valley, and a first class article of cheese is made at the Willoway Farm, five miles up the valley from Chehalis. Several hundred head of fat hogs are shipped from Chehalis during the season, and several hundred more are put up at the packing house at that point. The farmers generally raise fine work horses, weighing from 1,200 to 1,500 pounds, many of them being one-quarter to one-half Clydesdale, and which are eagerly bought up by city dealers for draying and other heavy work. Several teams have been sold during the past summer at prices ranging from \$450 to \$600. There are also plenty of good horses of all work, capable of doing good work on the farm and showing a fair rate of speed on the road. Since the general advance in the price of beef, and the increased demand for working oxen in the logging camps, cattle have received considerable attention. The grade is principally Short-horn, which make good work oxen and excellent beef, especially when stall fed. Potatoes are raised extensively as a field crop, and are shipped to all points between Victoria and San Francisco. Tobacco is raised to a small extent, and thrives. Several farmers have engaged in hop culture recently, and have met with the highest success in getting their fields well started. The soil, climate, etc., are as favorable here as in those portions of the Territory where hop culture has reached its highest development, and in a few years this industry will no doubt be one of the most important and productive in the county. The settled portions of these valley lands cannot fail to create a favorable impression on the visitor. Their neat and substantial farm houses, large barns, growing orchards, good stock and well tilled fields show a spirit of enterprise and thrift to be seen only where the men own the farms they cultivate. A majority of the farmers have taken them as homesteads, and gradually made improvements—hewing down the forest, clearing off a few acres each year, digging out the stumps at one time, making one small field and then another—until now they have farms in which they feel an honest pride, and whose fertility ensures them comfort, independence and leisure to adorn their homes and beautify their surroundings. Although some parts of the county are settled up and well improved, more than half is yet open for new-comers. As good land can be taken up to-day as any of that which is now so successfully cultivated, and can be brought into cultivation at much less cost. The heavy growth of timber, which cost the early settler so much toil and labor, and deterred many from the prairie States from attempting to make a home, can now be made a source of profit by selling the logs to the saw mills. The uplands are not equal to the bottom lands in fertility, but produce good crops of clover and the different grasses and fair crops of grain, and are especially adapted for orchards and dairying, and are now being settled in locations near to market. The productive qualities of the soil, which varies from a stiff clay to a fine black loam, improve under cultivation, and