

distance they are navigable for small steamers. Sea going ships ascend the Wishkah about half a mile, and the Hoquiam a less distance. On the south side of the harbor the John's river and Redmond creek are the chief streams, neither of which is navigable. The tide lands about the harbor and streams flowing into it aggregate nearly fifty thousand acres, and the rich grasses which grow there possess a peculiar value for fattening stock. All the streams have the choicest agricultural lands along their banks, and take their rise in the timbered hills of the interior, furnishing the only feasible transportation way from the forests. They made the settlement of the country possible, and as yet supply the only means of communication between the settler of the interior and his market and the outside world. These are not rapid flowing streams, and their banks are not overflowed during the summer season, which is quite exceptional with the streams of Washington territory. Thus the richest lands along the immediate banks of the rivers can be tilled successfully, and they produce prodigious crops.

The Gray's harbor country is one of the many undeveloped sections of the Pacific slope, but the somewhat remarkable growth that has taken place there during the past two or three years promises to soon bring out the industrial powers of the country and push it into due prominence. Five years ago there was not a town on the harbor, nor even a trading post of any consequence. Along the principal streams there were a few settlers who had no other means of ingress or egress than the water and pack trail afforded. They were entirely isolated from the commercial and social world. Twenty-five, and even thirty, years ago the pioneers of the Gray's harbor country made their way on foot from Olympia to the rivers flowing to the harbor, and floated down in their canoes to spots along the shores most suitable for dwelling places. They were not restricted in their choice of location, and selected those best situated with reference to the primitive means of travel at their command. Some of the early settlers had families, more had none; altogether they were few, and the long distances between ranches made neighboring, in most instances, entirely out of the question. The soil produced hay, grain, fruits and vegetables in abundance, the streams teemed with fish and the woods with all kinds of game. Very few, indeed, of the necessaries of life were not obtained from the fields, forests and streams about the settler's wild abode, and while it would seem that such circumstances did not offer a very wide field for enterprise, still homes were built and the thick growth of timber pushed back from the margins of the streams, to permit the cultivation of the rich soil; and when the newer immigration wave

reached those far limits, it found a number of ranchers living comfortably on improved estates. These pioneers were repaid for their years of privation and struggle by being able to improve their advantages when real growth began, and their accurate knowledge of the country and its capabilities, as well as their improved lands, stood them well in hand.

Some six or eight years ago the attention of lumbermen was attracted to the Gray's harbor region, and operations were at once commenced for the establishment of saw mills to prepare for market the timber of that locality. With these movements, a rapid growth began. The principal town on the harbor, Aberdeen, was platted on the tide land at the mouth of the Wishkah river, and only four years ago last February the first house within the present corporate limits was built. Now it is a flourishing town of a thousand inhabitants, and is growing rapidly. It has four saw mills, the aggregate daily output of which is two hundred thousand feet of lumber, a ship yard, three salmon canneries, and the only foundry and machine shop on the harbor, or at any point nearer than Olympia. For a town of the age of Aberdeen, and so far removed from the usual transportation lines, this is a remarkably good showing. There are, also, a bank, a good local newspaper, the *Aberdeen Herald*, two good hotels, a creditable public school building, two churches and several benevolent societies in a flourishing condition, and many of the business blocks and residences compare favorably with those in cities much larger and older than Aberdeen. It has a water works system, supplied from springs back in the hills, and an effective volunteer fire department has been organized. Most of the residents of Aberdeen came from Michigan. Three of the saw mills are owned and operated by Michigan men, who induced many workmen from those eastern pineries to come to Gray's harbor with them and engage in the lumber business. Wisconsin and Iowa have also contributed to the population of the town. Last winter Aberdeen was organized as a village corporation, by authority of the territorial legislature, and it has its own officers and administers its own government in an enterprising and efficient manner.

The principal part of the town site of Aberdeen is tide land, on the west side of the Wishkah river, at its mouth. Before the town had provided guards against them, spring tides would sometimes invade it and make it rather unpleasant. The grade is now established above high water mark, the sidewalks are built to conform to the grade and the streets are being suitably filled up. At spring tide the difference between high and low water is about fourteen feet, and protection from the water is a necessity to towns having a good location for shipping on the harbor.