

## WATERVILLE, WASHINGTON.

Of late the eyes of capitalists and home seekers have been turned toward that surpassingly rich portion of Washington known as the Big Bend country, and its thriving metropolis, the city of Waterville. The attention this section is receiving at the present time is due to the projection of two lines of railroad which will tap the country and furnish facilities for marketing the products of its fertile fields.

A short distance below the mouth of the Spokane river the Columbia river makes a detour to the west and describes a curve semi-circular in shape, resuming at a distance below Priest's rapids its former course in a southwesterly direction. It is this fact which has given the country embraced within the great bend its name.

Waterville, the capital of Douglas county, and the most important city in that entire region, was founded less than three years ago, and despite the difficulties it has had to contend with, each year has witnessed a material advance in its wealth and prosperity. It now has a population of 700, while its promises for future growth are, indeed, flattering.

The site chosen is a most beautiful one, and at the same time the city is so situated geographically that it is the natural source of supply for a wide section of country surrounding it. Waterville occupies a pleasant position on gently sloping ground at the head of Corbaley canyon, eight miles east of the Columbia river from the point where it receives the waters of the Entiat river. To the south, distant only a few miles, lie the Badger mountains, clothed with forests of pine which furnish necessary fuel. Not only do these mountains yield wealth in the form of timber, but, when once this is removed, they will supply thousands with good farming lands, for the soil is rich and arable and can be successfully tilled even to the summit.

Douglas county is sixty miles wide by 100 miles in length and contains 3,840,000 acres. The northern portion is well adapted for agricultural purposes, and no section of the wonderful west can show better results than have been obtained here. The soil is of that character which becomes richer with cultivation, and under the hands of intelligent farmers its yield is most abundant. The principal crops are grains of various kinds, flax, millet and vegetables. The southern portion of the county is suitable for grazing purposes. The Northern Pacific Railroad Company owns 500,000 acres of land in the southern portion of the county, while the remainder is owned by the government, except that already filed upon by actual settlers. Probably 1,000,000 acres still remain open for entry. Nine-tenths of the business transacted at the North Yakima land office the past year came from Douglas county, and congress, at its present session, passed an act establishing a land office at Waterville.

So vast an extent of rich country could not long remain without attracting the attention of shrewd men who could see the resources and future possibilities of this inland empire. Among the first of these men was Major A. B. Rogers, who visited that section in behalf of the Great Northern Railway in 1886, and through whose efforts mainly the town of Waterville was established.

By those acquainted with the situation of affairs in railway circles it is said that two railroads will be built into Waterville within the year. The Central Washington Railway—a branch of the Northern Pacific road—has been completed into the Big Bend country as far as Almira, and the grading work finished as far as the Grand coulee. Work will be actively prosecuted during the present season with a view to its early completion. T. F. Oakes, president of the Northern Pacific Railway Company, in an article published the first of the year said: "Our construction work during the past year has consisted of push-

ing forward our Central Washington branch through the Big Bend country as far as Almira, a new town near the Grand coulee. We expect to carry this line on during the coming year to Waterville, and shall probably build a branch down the Columbia to a point favorable for carrying the freight of the Okanogan mining valleys. Eventually we shall, no doubt, go across the Columbia west of Waterville and join this new road to our main line at some point in the Yakima valley."

The Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern road has its line built and in operation as far west as Davenport. The survey has been made west through Waterville and the roadbed is graded as far west as the Grand coulee. Indications point to the completion of this road at an early date. It will require the building of only 150 miles of road to complete the line from Spokane Falls to Seattle, a line from the latter place to Cady's pass being now under construction.

The completion of these roads will not only give Waterville and the surrounding country a market for their products, but will open up a large section of mining country in the Conconully district and render it tributary thereto.

## NEW BUILDINGS IN SPOKANE.

The Moore building, in Spokane Falls, is one of the fine structures that are taking the places of those destroyed by the great fire last August. It is in a central location, on Howard street between Riverside avenue and Main street. F. Rockwood Moore is the owner. It occupies a frontage of seventy-seven feet and is one hundred feet deep. It is built of brick, of a massive style of architecture, and cost about \$85,000. The roof is just one hundred feet above the pavement.

The building erected by Theodore Cushing, and occupied by the Washington National and Savings banks, is at the northwest corner of Sprague and Howard streets. It is four stories in height, with an ornamental tower, and it presents a very attractive appearance. It is built of brick, is forty feet on Howard by sixty on Sprague, and cost about \$60,000. The interior finishing and furnishing is of the handsomest and most substantial kind.

While an artesian well was being bored at Pullman, Wash., a short time ago, a stratum of coal was struck at a depth of 112 feet. The samples which the water threw to the surface of the ground were tested and found to be an excellent quality of bituminous coal. The stratum is about eight feet thick. Preparations are being made for mining the coal which is an important acquisition to that country. That section needs fuel, and if the recent find should prove to be accessible and in such quantity as the indications lead one to believe, it will add inestimably to the wealth of that country.

The town of Thompson Falls, Mon., is in a fine mineral region and has a grand water power and extensive lumber interests. Recently some outside parties staked off 100 acres for a placer claim, including the townsite in it. There is not much probability, however, that the original locators at Thompson Falls will be dispossessed.

The Madison street cable railroad running from Seattle to Lake Washington has been completed.

Charles R. Bell will establish an ice factory at Aberdeen, Washington.

The Tacoma smelter and refinery expects to begin operations about July 1.