

Retired Minister Is Noted Figure With Irrigation Congress

SMITH RIVER—It was not until he was about to be retired that people of this area knew that in their midst had lived for four ears, one of the United States greatest authorities on irrigation and reclamation, their pastor, Rev. E. C. Hicks.

At the turn of the century, when he came to the eastern part of Montana as school teacher Mr. Hicks quickly saw there was a future in that area, provided there were railroads and irrigation. In 1904, as editor of the Fairview Times, he launched a campaign for irrigation and achieved his goal. It was along about 1908 when the water was turned into some of the canals, and suddenly, in 1913, the landowners realized they could not meet the demands of the department of interior ruling for payment. The project seemed to be doomed, actually before it had really gotten a start.

Mr. Hicks spent, in 1913, about six weeks in Washington, going from one office to another, from one department to another. Being an officer in one bank and a stockholder in two, he knew of the financial situation of almost everyone in the area controlled by the project. He was able by careful study, and by "sharp" reasoning, effectively to make new arrangements, that of obtaining use of the land on a rental basis until the railroad was built. The project then went ahead and took care of itself.

In 1915, he made his second trip to Washington and again in 1917, to clear up a sad mistake caused by the public land office which had put a number of people into, by granting mineral rights to land for one person and permitting homesteaders on the same land through the homestead provision.

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Through his position as secretary of the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation project for a couple decades, the National Irrigation Congress sent him to Salt Lake City, there to head the important legislative committee which drafted almost all of the present reclamation and irrigation laws of the nation today.

National figures came to know him as a man of purpose, a man who knew what he was after, and usually obtained his goal.

At Fairview, Mr. Hicks helped organize two banks, was an officer in one, and stockholder in both. He kept abreast of times through his many public contacts such as editor of the Times until he sold it; through being a probation officer, and his civic endeavors.

Dry years which broke hundreds in eastern Montana, also broke banks holding mortgages. Mr. Hicks became a financial victim along with all other stockholders, but he was used to aid

in re-financing and re-organizing irrigation project at Fallon, in Prairie County, Mont.

It was at this place that he became a minister, later to be moved to Broadwater, not far from Billings. Here he remained about seven years, being transferred to Tigard, Oregon, where he remained for several years, to be sent to Albany, later to Monmouth, and Dayton, where he was retired as a minister of the Evangelical church.

Almost the very week of his retirement, he lost his companion of about 40 years. Heart-sore and lost, he moved with his son-in-law and daughter to a tract of land on Alder road, near Crescent City, where they spent the summer.

The superintendent of the Methodist church, in Dec. 1945, placed him as supply at Smith River, where he immediately began building. The annex to the local church, is another of his efforts. Unable to take care of

Klamath as well as Smith River, he was replaced by a younger man. He is moving to a tract of land on the old railroad grade, on the ocean, near the Winchuck river, there to retire after almost 77 years of useful life.

OPHIR NOTES

By Marian Miller

Harvey James, Tommy Nash, and Jerry Jacobs spent the 4th holidays visiting Jerry's parents at San Jose, Calif.

Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Bettis and two older boys left by plane for Detroit, Mich., from where they plan to purchase a new DeSoto and drive back.

George Miller has returned to Ophir after spending several days at Myrtle Point, visiting.

Mrs. Oliver Ramalia, son Lowell and daughter, Mrs. Dale Moore, and Mrs. Moore's infant daughter, Dawn, have recently returned from Seattle where the group had been visiting.

Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Whittaker, son Bob, and daughter Betty, moved last Saturday to their new home at Siletz, Ore. Their older son Dick is remaining in Curry county. He is employed by the forest service at Agness.

Mrs. Rose Weaver of Seattle spent the holidays visiting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Gray.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Whitworth and family have moved from the Shepherd cabins to the apartment above the old Grange hall.

Mr. and Mrs. George Long of Portland are visiting at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Eldon Miller.

Tom Morgan who has been attending O. I. T. at Klamath Falls is spending his month's vacation here in Ophir.

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Magerle and daughter Suzanne Lee of Prospect spent July 4 holidays visiting Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Slaughter here.

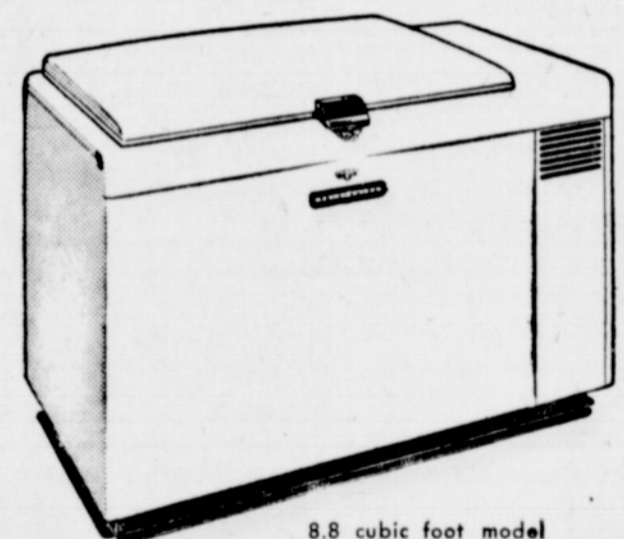
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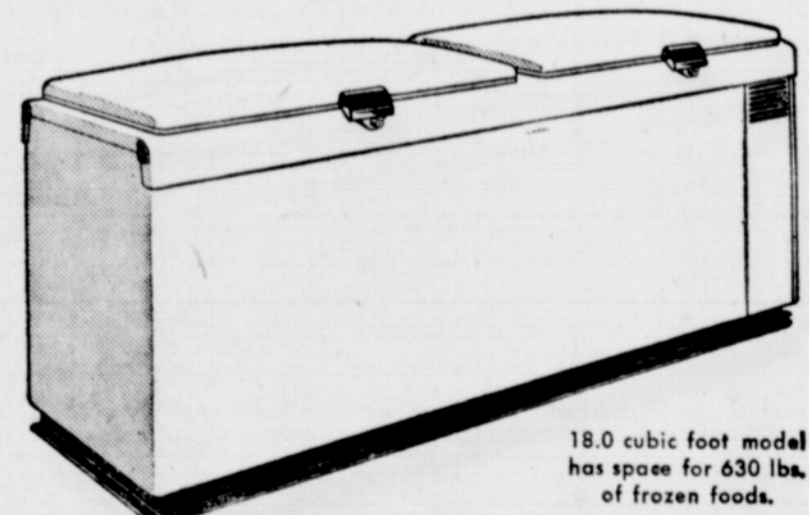
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