

# Tells Of Conditions In Malheur--Past Present, Future

**PORTLAND NEWSPAPER MAN ANALYZES THE  
ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF  
VALLEY**

**Shows That in Only A Few Years A Wonderful Change  
For he Better Has Taken Place in Malheur County—  
And Brings Out the Fact That There is Still A Big  
Work to be Accomplished.**

(By A. H. Harris of the Portland Telegram.)

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Farm Loans Money at Fair Rate of Interest.
- Reduction in Current Interest Rates.
- Markets for High Grade Fruits and Vegetables.
- Fifteen Hundred Dairy Cows in Charge of Practical Dairymen.
- Experienced Irrigation Farmers with some Means.
- Cannery to give Market for Surplus Fruits and Vegetables.
- Closer Organization among Producers.
- Determined Effort to Kill Out Fire Blight.

An intensely interesting and illuminating example of the passing of the old conceptions and methods of farming and the coming of new conditions and higher ideals in rural life is to be found at Ontario, on the upper Snake River, in extreme Eastern Oregon. Here in years gone by the cowboy and the range stockman held undisputed sway; here the man who dreamed of irrigation and prosperity was considerable unreliable in the head and too much of a tenderfoot to make good under pioneer conditions. Yet, within a few years—a very short space of time—the irrigation ditch has taken the place of the cow-trail and the alfalfa field and orchard have left little of the old days except the story of the sagebrush plain and the coyote haunt. The evolution has been too slow, it is true, but it has been sure, and sane a result. Years more will be required—years of toil and struggle—before the job can be called complete or even satisfactory. That the effort has been and will prove to be worth while is maintained by everyone who has aided in the work of permanent development, high as has been the price paid in flesh and blood and cash.

The upper stretches of Snake River lie in a great ancient volcanic sagebrush and greasewood and bunch-grass were and are the usual products. With plenty of water available but very deep, generally. Under water the soil becomes wonderfully productive; under natural conditions

the settler who would till the soil and prolonged hardship. For many years Ontario was a trading post for stockmen and all the foundations for the early fortunes, now so prominent in the life of the community, were laid through herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. So it is that all the traditions of Ontario are based on the range and the cowboy, on sheep and wool and cattle and horses.

The time came when the man who would live near Ontario could not get range for his herd or his flock should he to build up such an enterprise, so he turned to the cultivation of the soil, not because he wanted to or because he saw a fortune in land development. He found the altitude along the Snake River about 2,000 feet, ideal for the production of farm crops, but he also found the rainfall deficient, so short in fact that ordinary crops could not mature in the light, ashy soil. So he undertook to put a lead strap on Snake river— for even to this day no effort to harness the stream has been made— and the first irrigation ditch was the result. The ditch carried enough water to irrigate a good sized garden patch but it demonstrates the supremacy of the land under water as against the range under cattle and sheep. Irrigation became necessary and profitable on the river benches and the higher lands their herds and flocks.

New conditions and unexpected evolutions came rapidly into the life of the people residing at and near Ontario as the stock business retreated into the interior and the irrigation ditch came to live and labor on the land. The first need was men experienced in irrigation, the next money to aid in bringing water and developing the land, the third markets for the products of the soil. Electric power came after some delay, giving lights and energy for use in every community as it developed.

It did not require the wisdom of a philosopher to set down some of the advantages of the coming irrigated section. Ontario was a long distance from market centers, Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Butte and Omaha. Transportation charges would necessarily be high if not prohibitive. The breaking down of the stockman's conceptions of the agricultural possibilities of the district would be slow and discouraging. The country would have to be tried out, and failure followed failure, experiment following experiment, would likely befall the man who would till the soil. As big as the job was it was undertaken and the struggle has been carried on year after year.

But the disadvantages of the district were more or less offset by the natural productiveness of the soil, the ease with which the land could be subdued and placed under cultivation and the abundant supply of water for irrigation and for domestic use. The country naturally appealed to the good roads enthusiast because highways could be built and maintained at nominal cost, comparatively. This fact offered timely encouragement to the community spirit which must be the basis of success in irrigation districts. The summers were hot, it is true, the growing seasons were long and the winters short and mild, two the material advantages of importance to one slight disadvantage save in a corn-growing section.

With this brief resume of conditions as they appeared 12 or 15 years ago it should be easier for the citizen who has not had opportunity to study conditions in extreme eastern Oregon to understand how and why Snake river people are facing a period of reorganization and reconstruction such as seldom has been faced by the residents of Oregon. And they are facing the future and its problems hopefully, even optimistically.

At the dawn of the irrigation age—when the demand for government construction or at least government aid was voiced strongly for irrigation projects—land along the Snake river could be bought at very low prices. Early buyers gained choice tracts by paying a few dollars per acre for the land, and later arrivals paid as high as \$25.00 to \$50.00 per acre for the same land. The values soared and prices went kiting for several years, ending in more or less speculation, in which a number of real estate dealers were active and piled up snug fortunes. At the same time the men on the land were really proving the district as well adapted to the production of alfalfa and fruit. Orchards were planted everywhere and dreams of easy money and even independence were the lot of every man who had bought 10 to 50 acres of the newly-discovered Garden of Eden. Everything was going delightfully when the bottom dropped out of the western fruit business two or three years ago. The shock which paralyzed well known fruit districts had the effect along Snake river of forcing a new deal in soil cultivation and production methods. The day of exclusive fruit growing had closed.

After the shock of disaster had passed every thoughtful man near Ontario concluded again with the old philosopher that it is an error to keep all one's eggs in one basket. The conclusion produced results, for soon the leading farmers built silos, began growing corn and bought dairy cows. Corn growing was an experiment from which many shrank, but Oregon Agricultural college workers and the businessmen of Ontario urged and even cajoled many tillers of the soil into trying it and the result production of forage was little less than wonderful. The success of corn-growing gave four crops worth while, alfalfa, apples, corn, milk. Then dawned the day of the dairy cow—the full blood Holstein—in the valley of the Snake. Market for the cream was readily found in Portland, Walla Walla, Seattle, Everett, Boise, Spokane, Salt Lake City and Ogden.

Not many years ago the man who lived on the land near Ontario bought eastern-packed bacon, hams and lard for family consumption. Dairy cows were not to be found on farms and the "family" cow scarcely supplied the table of the farmer with milk and butter. Now there are thousands of hogs ranging on alfalfa field and dairy cows with records of 50 to 60 pounds of milk daily are not rare. Cream can be sent to Everett, Wash., a distance of 640 miles, direct by express, for 9½ cents per gallon. Hogs are shipped to Omaha to supply the packing houses which formerly sold eastern meats on the local market. And now corn is to be grown to finish hogs for market in true Missouri fashion.

Yes, corn has come to stay in the Snake river valley. Last year the experiment of corn production was tried out in scores of places and the

crop paid, paid well. This year not less than 6,000 acres of land was planted to corn, with the most magnificent crop prospect imaginable at this time. Last year the record yield was 121 bushels of shelled corn per acre; this year the record will likely be raised. This record is not so remarkable when it is considered with the fact that nearly double the usual quantity of seed is planted in Ontario fields. The soil is productive enough to mature every stalk that can be properly cultivated. More than 1,500 tons of silage will be stored in 15 or 16 silos near Ontario this fall.

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## YOU CAN'T SHOOT DUCKS AND GEESE BEFORE OCTOBER 1

Same confusion among the sportsmen of the state has arisen regarding the open season for ducks, by reason of the fact that the state and federal laws conflict in the matter. The state law says that the season opens September 1st., but the federal law is that the season does not begin until October 1st. Louis Hurtle, to clear the matter up wrote to the state game warden asking him what law would be followed and he received the following reply from Carl D. Shosmaker, state game warden: "Replying to your letter of August 24th., we beg to advise you that the open season for ducks and geese in Eastern Oregon begins on October 1st., and continues until January 15th. This comes under the Federal Law which annuls the State Law regarding the same. It might be advisable to give this information to your local paper and have it given as wide publicity as possible. The bag limit for ducks and geese is thirty in any seven consecutive days. We are inclosing herewith a few copies of the outline of the game laws. Just as soon as others are off the press we shall mail you several copies."

## Summer Excursions East Via Union Pacific System

Very low rates to Denver, Colorado Springs, Kansas City, St. Louis, Memphis, Omaha, Chicago, Minneapolis, St. Paul and many other points from all points on the Oregon Short Line. SALE DATES, May 15, 19, 22, 26, 29; June 2, 5, 9, 12, 16, 19, 23, 26, 30; July 7, 14, 21, 28; August 4, 11, 18, 25; Sept. 1, 8, 15.

Remember the Union Pacific System is the Direct Route to all points east. Through Cars.

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Consult any O. S. L. Agent for rates and further details.

## QUIET WEDDING OCCURS SATURDAY

Miss Sarah Rawles and Mr. Even McCormick were quietly married last Saturday evening at 8 o'clock at the Methodist parsonage by Rev. C. C. Pratt. Mrs. McCormick is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Rawls of this city and has made her home here for several years. Mr. McCormick has been employed at the bakery here for several months. The young couple have gone to housekeeping here and have the best wishes of the community.

## WELL KNOWN YOUNG COUPLE MARRIED

The marriage of Miss Fern Calvert of this city and Mr. Harold Shake of Payette was solemnized at the home of the brides parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Calvert, Tuesday evening, August 24th., Rev. C. C. Pratt officiating. Mr. Shake is the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Calvert, and Mr. Shake is the son of D. Shake of Payette. Both young people are well known here. Mr. Shake will leave in two weeks for O. A. C. where he will continue his study in his pharmacy department and his bride will join him about holiday time.

## Some Interesting Scenes at Malheur County Fair Last Year



## New Fall Shoes Are Here

An Elegant Line of Ladies, Durable School Shoes for Girls, Strong Shoes to Stand Hard Knocks, for Boys. I Will Wait on You Personally, for Shoes, and See That You Get the Proper Fit and That the Boys and Girls Get the Shoes for the Most Service.

BUY MY BOYS AND GIRLS SCHOOL SHOES AND GET BETTER SHOES FOR LESS MONEY.

**Lampkin's  
CASH STORE**