

Crook County Journal

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Crook County--- Its Resources

The Northern Pacific Railway has issued a fine pamphlet descriptive of Central Oregon. The half-tones are especially good and there are plenty of them. They depict farm scenes and show off our resources to good advantage. These illustrations cannot help but impress upon the minds of home-seekers the truth of the statements made in the descriptive matter. It says of Crook county:

The earliest development of new, extensive territory in Central Oregon will be experienced in Crook County, which occupies an area of about 8,000 square miles—larger than several of our states individually—almost exactly in the center of the state. The railroad emerges from the canyon of Willow Creek, a tributary of the Deschutes, in the northern extremity of Crook County.

Crook County is greatly diversified in its resources, and it is already in process of transformation from a stockman's country to a farming community. Yet this transformation has but just begun. Grain, vegetables and fruits have as yet been raised solely for local consumption. Grain, in large part, has been hauled to the small mills, ground into flour, and shipped further into the interior for use by other stock-raising communities, or has been cut for use as hay. In the northern part of the county a large area of land is already under cultivation, but there was not, until the coming of the railway making outside markets available, any real incentive to extensive farming or careful cultivation of the soil. Enterprising farmers have found however that their land is capable of yielding as high as 50 bushels of wheat to the acre under a proper system of cultivation. An average yield at the present time is from 17 to 25 bushels with careful methods of farming.

The main cultivated grain area of Crook County lies to the east of the Deschutes River, and north of the Crooked River, which flows into the Deschutes from the east. In this district are located the Agency Plains, comprising about 175,000 acres; the Hay Creek district, with 80,000 acres; the Blizzard Ridge district, with 75,000 acres, and the Culver, Lamonta—together generally spoken of as the "Haystack" country—Opal Prairie and numerous other small districts. Mecca, Vanora, and Madras will be the railway shipping points for the Big Agency Plains and Hay Creek country, and Metolius, Culver and Opal City will be the outlets for Little Agency Plains, Opal Prairie, and the Lamonta county.

The rainfall, about 15 inches annually, is sufficient for successful dry farming, but a large area can be irrigated and ultimately will be devoted to intensified farming. Under dry farming methods in this locality, where good farming is practiced, rye produces 10 to 20 bushels, barley 25 to 50 bushels, wheat 20 to 45 bushels, an acre. Potatoes do particularly well as to quality and they produced from 50 to 150 bushels an acre. Corn does well where properly handled, bringing 100 bushels an acre. Dry land alfalfa produces 3 crops a season and will average 6 tons an acre or more. Successful results are obtained by summer fallowing one-half of one's farm regularly.



News Snapshots Of the Week

Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian explorer, cabled that he had succeeded in reaching the south pole on Dec. 14. Word also came that Captain Scott of Great Britain had reached the pole with the expedition which sailed on the Terra Nova. Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence were jailed as the result of the suffragette riots in London. Miss Christabel Pankhurst escaped and eluded the police. The mutineers in Peking, China, continued their butchery, killing thousands, and Ambassador Calhoun asked the state department to send troops. Miss Annie Yeamans, the famous musical comedy actress, died, aged seventy-six. A plot to dethrone the new king of Siam was discovered and frustrated. The Countess of Warwick came to America to deliver a series of lectures.

Fruit growing has been undertaken in a small way in northern Crook County, and the district has been found to be suited to horticulture for domestic purposes. Certain specially favorable, but limited, localities have thus proved very profitable in fruit production, but no just claim can, at this stage, be made that the region as a whole will prove a valuable fruit country from a commercial standpoint.

West of the Deschutes the country rapidly merges into the great pine timber area of the eastern slope of the Cascade Mountains. This is true of the entire length of the country west of the Deschutes.

South of Crooked River, along the Deschutes, is a large Carey Act irrigation project, where the Central Oregon Irrigation Company has a partly completed system planned to water 215,000 acres of land.

Alfalfa, clover, and root crops particularly, thrive on the irrigated lands, and it will be primarily a dairy district, although small fruits produce abundantly. Winter apples also seem to do well and many orchards are being planted. Sugar beets are said to be a good crop here, being of extra fine quality with a high percentage of sugar. They yield ten tons and upward to the acre.

These projects are unlike any others in America in several respects. Water is taken from the Deschutes River above the town of Bend, the temporary terminus of the Oregon Trunk Railway. The Deschutes is an ideal stream for irrigation. From Bend the country slopes gently to the Crooked River and through much of the country the irrigation canals appear to be rapidly flowing brooks. The water is melted snow from the Cascade Mountains and it is delivered at the remotest limits of the canals as limpid and pure as it is in the original mountain streams. There is here nothing of the flat, barren waste appearance seen in the usual partially developed irrigation district.

The country is dotted with juniper trees, and most of them can be pulled over by a stout team of horses. The sale of juniper for fuel generally brings in enough to cover the cost of clearing the land. The juniper is also valuable for lead pencil wood.

The original cost of water rights in the irrigation project is fixed by the state, which makes no charge for the land itself. In the earlier segregation the water right is \$40 an acre for irrigable land and \$2.50 an acre for land not susceptible of cultivation. Improved lands in private owner-

ship have been selling at from \$50 to \$100 an acre, and it is claimed are low priced at \$100 to \$150 an acre.

Payment for water rights on these irrigated lands may be made one-fourth down and the remainder in five equal payments, due in one, two, three, four and five years, at six per cent interest. Three years are allowed after making application and first payment, within which to cultivate and live upon the land. The settler may live upon it ninety days and place one-eighth of the irrigable area under cultivation, or he may live upon it seven days and place one-fourth of the irrigable area under cultivation and build a fence, and a house having not less than 200 square feet floor area. Correspondence is invited by the Central Oregon Irrigation Company, successors to the Deschutes Irrigation and Power Company, with offices in Redmond, Oregon, or 415 Railway Exchange Building, Portland. The company will furnish application blanks to be filled out for application to the state for this land. When a settler has selected the land he desires and has made this application, arrangement must be made with the company for a perpetual water-right contract.

Over four hundred miles of canals and laterals, costing to exceed \$1,000,000, have already been constructed. In this immediate locality are the towns of Redmond, Bend, and Laidlaw, all thriving and giving evidence of a good future. The entire section is being rapidly supplied with schools and churches and stores. Electric power and light plants are projected to utilize the water-power, and development is rapidly progressing in every way.

It is a wonderful dairying and stock country, raising the finest of sheep and cattle. The climate is ideal, the rainfall being 13 to 15 inches annually, with over 300 days of sunshine. The winters are not severe, January and February usually bringing a small amount of snow, but, as a rule, work can be carried on throughout the entire year. Large quantities of wool are shipped from this region and large wool warehouses have been constructed at Madras and Metolius on the railway to store the wool each year prior to its shipment.

West of the Deschutes River, around Sisters and Cline Falls, another company has secured a Carey Act segregation of about 30,000 acres, with the town of Laidlaw as the center. A farmers' cooperative irrigation system is also working about 15,000 acres from Squaw Creek, which flows into the Deschutes from the west a short distance south of the mouth of Crooked River. In this vicinity—

Redmond-Sisters—barley, oats, wheat and root crops are raised, while clover and alfalfa are extensively grown and produce fine crops of good quality. With the opening of outside markets by the railway this entire region is bound to become a noted dairy district and the dairy herds are already being greatly improved.

The eastern slope of the Cascades is heavily timbered, and this timber can only be conveyed to the markets of the world by way of the natural routes down the various mountain streams to the Oregon Trunk Railway. An immense amount of labor will eventually be employed in working up this timber, and this labor must draw its supplies from and through the district mentioned. In the region about Bend and Sisters there are now at least seven saw mills at work, with others expected to be constructed in the immediate future.

The timbered regions of the government reserves abound with all kinds of game, large and small. The streams are filled with the finest trout, making it an ideal district for hunting and fishing.

Another enterprise of vast importance in the development of Central Oregon is that of the Oregon and Western Colonization Company, of Saint Paul, which company has obtained what was known as the military-road-grant lands, comprising some 800,000 acres, and is putting the land on the market in small tracts upon easy payments. The land comprises a belt some twelve miles wide, and extends from the Willamette Valley on the west, eastward, almost entirely across the state. The more important towns within this tract are Sisters, Prineville, Paulina, Riley, Burns, Narrows, Vale, Ontario. The Colonization Company, whose main headquarters are at Saint Paul, Minn., with a branch office in the Railway Exchange Building, Portland, Oregon, will gladly furnish illustrated literature telling about this land.

At Bend, which lies 156 miles south of the Columbia River, the pine timber belt covering the eastern foothills of the Cascade Mountains, already mentioned, reaches down to plains and railway, and there the juniper of the plains largely disappears, the merchantable pine timber taking its place as one journey southward.

The Deschutes River in this district not only supplies water for irrigation but develops enormous potential water-power. In its course to the Columbia River it is estimated that it will generate more than 1,000,000 horse-power. Water-power electric plants have already been established at Bend

and at Cline Falls, near Redmond, and numerous filings on power sites have been made with the object of supplying cheap power for dairy and farm machinery as the country develops.

Crooked River at the point where it is crossed by the Oregon Trunk Railway is a narrow chasm about 340 feet wide, and with perpendicular walls of lava rock. The canyon is spanned by a heavy and very fine steel cantilever bridge, the rails of which are 320 feet above the bed of the stream. The river and canyon form a natural dividing line between northern and southern Crook county. Before the river is compressed into its narrow canyon, however, it drains a fertile valley, some thirteen miles long by three to ten miles wide, including both low lying alfalfa lands and the higher orchard lands.

Important tributaries of Crooked River are McKay, Ochoco, Bear and Camp creeks. The two principal ones are the McKay and Ochoco, which drain small valleys and provide valuable reservoir sites for irrigation. What the U. S. Reclamation Service is said to consider one of the best reservoir sites in the entire country is found on the Crooked River east of Prineville. Numerous small irrigation enterprises are now in existence, and there are many well cultivated farms in the valleys. It is claimed that there are 30,000 acres that can be irrigated from the Crooked River and affluents. In the vicinity of Prineville there are considerable areas now irrigated—from 8,000 to 10,000 acres—and fine root crops, large quantities of alfalfa—5 tons to the acre—and some fruit are raised. In the center of the Crooked River valley, somewhat east of the main line of the railroad, and at the junction of the main line of the railroad, and at the junction of Ochoco and McKay creeks with Crooked River, is Prineville, the county seat of Crook county, formerly a great trading center for stockmen, and now one of the most important and attractive towns in Central and Eastern Oregon.

Southeast from Bend and south of Prineville is the principal homesteaders' district of Crook county. Here, there are hundreds of thousands of acres of the very best sagebrush and bunch-grass lands available for entry under the 320 acre homestead, or dry farming, act. Under this act the homesteader is permitted to take up 320 acres of land suitable for dry farming and secure a patent in five years by residing thereon and doing a specified amount of improvement each year. The land is particularly adapted to the growing of winter wheat and other grains by dry farming methods, and is readily accessible by team or automobile from Prineville, Redmond or Bend.

Grizzly School a Good One

The patrons of the Grizzly school who are the most interested co-workers in the county in their school affairs, gathered at the school house last Friday to greet and cheer their teacher and scholars in their last day's work. The teacher, Mr. R. S. Goff, the directors and patrons of the district have worked hand in hand, for the last two years in building up the standard of their school, and now feel that they have the best rural school in Crook county. The patrons were free to express their appreciation of the year's work by preparing a basket dinner equal to anyone's Thanksgiving feast.

Mr. Goff is strong in advocating the policy of developing the children's mind on national and local timely subjects, capable of reasoning and conversing on subjects of the day, so subjects were chosen by the graduating class and essays were written which expressed their own ideas on the following subjects: "Protection of American interests in foreign countries," by Vernon Chitwood.

"The Sixteenth Amendment," by Clifford McKenzie.

"The value of an education," by Mattie Bland.

"Amendments to the Monroe Doctrine," by Glen Chitwood.

The children did extra well with their work and it will no doubt prove instrumental in interesting them in questions of their country and community.

A mathematical contest with a neighboring school was arranged but as the challenged school failed to appear the scholars battled with one another for honors and were pronounced lightning calculators by the visitors.

The prize offered by the teacher for the most headmarks was won by Manilla Dee, who missed but three words in the entire year's spelling lessons.

After a few complimentary remarks from Mr. Chitwood and Mr. Bland, school was dismissed for the year.

Great credit should be given the directors for their willingness in providing modern school equipment. Last fall they purchased a fine Waterman-Waterbury heating and ventilating system which is a friend to school children's health and there has been no absences on account of coughs or colds during the last term. The directors will be free to endorse the Waterman-Waterbury system to any school, and are contemplating the purchase of a "Waterman Sanitary Drinking Fountain."

Desirable Homeseekers

A Portland paper states that numerous colonists have arrived in Central Oregon since the reduced rates went into effect. They are rapidly absorbed on the immense area of undeveloped land in that section.

The interior of the state is receiving more settlers this spring than ever before as this is the first period during which the railroads have been completed all the way to Bend. Many people leave the trains at Madras, Metolius, Redmond and intermediate points and are taking up lands in the vicinity of these places.

Every through train from the East brings scores of homeseekers. Many go to Portland and from there radiate to other portions of the state. The most pleasing situation in connection with this season's colonist movement is that an increased proportion is seeking homes on lands in preference to positions in the cities.