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A REMARKABLE GROWTH

Story of St. Johns' Phenomenal Development from a Village Set in Firs to a Modern, Thriving City

It has been the history of the founding and building of every great city that those who laid the foundation for future greatness sought primarily a location affording natural means of transportation; the greatest cities of the world today stand upon the banks of the navigable rivers or are builded by the harbors that afford anchorage for the deepest draft vessels that go down to the seas.

The great transcontinental and trunk railway systems seek these places as their terminals, for after all it is the ocean-going craft that make possible the construction of the great railway systems.

What, then, are the possibilities of a city that is built upon one of the greatest inland waterways of the United States and at the same time affords rail transportation over the lines of two of the greatest railway systems of the world?

Such a city is St. Johns, the key to the transportation on the Columbia and Willamette rivers.

A few years ago there stood on what is now one of the most prosperous manufacturing cities of the Northwest a few scattered dwellings and one or two small industries in a vast forest of firs. The din that follows in the wake of development, the shriek of the whistles of factories, and the buzzing of the saws of mills were seldom heard. The principal sound emanating from the industrial or commercial world was the splashing of the wheels of a passing river steamer, which plied on its ways to ports on the Columbia.

But the genius of commerce and industry does not long allow locations that offer pre-eminent advantages to remain unutilized.

Adjoining St. Johns lay the great city of Portland. Her future greatness depends upon her water transportation facilities. St. Johns is nearer the mouth of the Columbia and the confluence of that mighty stream and the Willamette.

The possibilities opened by this fact were first realized and appreciated by what is now known as the St. Johns Lumber Co., which has one of the largest saw mills on the Pacific Coast. A small and comparatively insignificant mill was installed. Then one by one other captains of industry, with far seeing and unerring judgment saw the wonderful opportunity offered them at St. Johns.

With the establishment of these industries began the building of St. Johns, which today stands high above the water front on a wide spreading plateau, and is a city of 5,000 inhabitants, throbbing with the multitudinous activities of a manufacturing center.

But it is with modern St. Johns, the gateway to the Willamette and the key to the transportation of Portland and southerly cities on the magnificent stream that drains one of the richest and largest valleys on the face of the globe, known as the Willamette valley, that we wish to deal with in this article.

Almost within her city limits is the entire point of the peninsula, whose point is washed by the waves of both the Columbia and the Willamette. St. Johns has a great water frontage. The day is not far distant when this entire water front will be a solid line of docks and industrial plants.

It is inevitable, because with the marvelous development that is now going on in the Northwest, and with the two great railway systems seeking this peninsula as a terminus for their all-the-way water grade lines from the mountain passes that give entrance to the East, the demand for manufactured articles

and for industrial activity will increase in proportion to the increase in population.

Great transportation experts have declared emphatically that the peninsula, in other words, St. Johns, is eventually to become the New York of the West.

That the possibilities of this city have been appreciated by many progressive business men and investors is clearly evidenced by the fact that ten years ago the taxable property in this city amounted to \$200,000; now it aggregates \$4,500,000, and there was expended during the year just closed, for public improvements alone, one and a half times the entire valuation of the city at earlier date, or \$300,000.

This remarkable growth has not been in any way the result of unnatural methods, nor can it be classed with the boom variety. It was the natural, inevitable result of a full comprehension and realization of a desirable location on the part of thousands of progressive American people, coming from every section of the United States to the Northwest—the land of opportunity—and to St. Johns the coming metropolis of this mighty empire, embracing the states of North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, Northern California and Oregon, with all their wonderful resources: their great fields of waving grain, their flocks feeding on a thousand hills, their orchards and vineyards, their forests and mines.

Controlled by the wonderful Western variety of progress, the inhabitants of St. Johns have surrounded themselves with all the institutions that are the product of modern times. A magnificent city hall, built on the old colonial style of architecture, graces one of the prominent locations of the city, providing a home for the municipal officers and shelter for the performance of all civic functions.

While this is essentially and primarily a manufacturing and industrial center, the call of modern times for education of the younger generation has not remained unheeded. Today St. Johns points with pardonable pride to one of the very finest high school buildings in the entire state, which was erected at a cost of \$40,000, while three grammar or graded and a catholic school are afforded those of the children who have not as yet advanced to the high school curriculum.

True to their history the churches of all denominations have one by one established themselves in our midst as the population increased and the demand for spiritual ministrations grew. The Methodist, United Evangelical, Baptist, Congregational, Christian, Adventist, German Baptist and Catholic, and many of the societies banded together for religious worship, have splendid edifices here.

The moral atmosphere of St. Johns is such that no person need hesitate to invest, build a residence, make a home and rear their children in this environment. The people of St. Johns believe in so regulating the affairs of their city that it shall rank high with those of this and other states as a city of homes as well as a city of industry.

Absolutely necessary to the permanent and enduring greatness of any city are public service corporations that serve the public in the fullest sense of the word. In this respect St. Johns can boast of better facilities than any city in the Northwest of comparative size.

The Portland Railway Light & Power Co. one of the foremost public service concerns in the West, furnishes ample transportation, lighting and power facilities. It

operates an excellent streetcar service between this city and Portland, the fare for the nine mile ride to the center of Portland, being only five cents. In connection with the streetcar service is maintained the Portland Suburban Express company, which runs daily freight and express cars between this city and our adjoining neighbor on the south. The Mt. Hood Railway, Light and Power company also furnishes light

and power to a large percentage of people, giving most excellent service. The St. Johns Gas company supplies gas for light and heat and is most successful in meeting the needs of its patrons for all purposes at a very reasonable rate.

In nearly every instance the first questions that a person asks when contemplating investing in a city is concerning the water system. St. Johns can boast of as good water as any city in the state, better than the majority, it having been analyzed by the state chemist and declared to be pure. The water supply is stored in huge tanks, with sufficient pressure in the standpipes to furnish every residence in the city with water for every necessary purpose.

Judiciously scattered throughout the city are fire plugs, with a heavy pressure, which, combined with a well organized, and equipped fire department, gives ample protection from conflagration to the citizens.

The Pacific Bell Telephone and Home Telephone companies, two of the largest telephone systems in the United States, serve St. Johns. Municipally owned and controlled the city dock, erected on the water front, affords the hundreds of vessels that ply the Willamette dock facilities.

At the first glance it might appear that with such extensive improvements in this city the tax rate would be abnormally high. Such, however, is not the case, as the books show that the rate is lower than in any other city in Oregon of similar size.

The metropolitan appearance of the main business streets of this city invariably impresses the person who for the first time enters its gates. Substantial, costly, handsome brick and stone structures line the main streets, affording splendid facilities for store rooms, office buildings, etc.

In this connection it, perhaps, is well to lay stress on the fact that those desiring to build here will find that the building material can be obtained cheaper than in the greater centers of population, due to the fact that the many industries on the water front are turning out building material of every character, including lumber, sash, doors, windows, etc., while several big firms are extensive dealers in lime, cement and like material.

A city of 5000 population, situated right along side a city of 250,000 with interurban car service is indeed the exception. Our merchants carry such a splendid grade and variety of goods, and our factories and industrial plants cover

these industrial plants located within the city limits of St. Johns, employing from 25 to 350 men each, and with payrolls aggregating from \$1000 to \$15,000 per month.

It is self-evident that the men who are at the head of these concerns would not have located in St. Johns unless there was a well defined reason for it, and a decided advantage in doing so. The reason is that we are six miles nearer the mouth of the Columbia river, the great outlet to the Pacific ocean, than is Portland, the metropolis of Oregon; below the many bridges which span the river in the congested district of the big city and retard maritime operations in spite of all regulations. Here we have plenty of sea room free from all obstructions.

One of the factors that promises to contribute largely to this city's further development and well being is a strong commercial club of almost 150 members, recently organized. The services of one of the best publicity promoters of the

result of careful research into the mysteries of psychology and mental science.

In no section of the United States has the change come so rapidly, so completely and efficiently as in the Western States, to whose people the antiquated is repugnant and the modern attractive. It was unnecessary, in a large measure, for the Western States to discard the old methods of 50 years ago, because this is practically a new country. The schools have grown up with the section and possess that virile, progressive spirit that characterizes everything in the West and especially in this great Northwest.

The public school system of Oregon is recognized as one of the best in the United States. Its supervisors and its instructors are trained capable persons, who have made a life study of their work and who throw an enthusiasm into it that spells success in every instance.

We can safely declare, backed by the knowledge that our statement is unequivocally correct, that St.

Plans Practical Work

Much is hoped by the citizens of St. Johns from the new commercial club recently organized to put the city where it belongs, on the commercial map of Oregon. A number of problems are to be solved, reforms to be carried through, before St. Johns can get into its stride and finally become one of the great manufacturing centers of the coast as its river and railroad situation entitles it to become.

The new club is zealously yet shrewdly attacking the big task that lies before it. It has elected a live president, an active board of directors, an alert, hard working secretary, and several committees, has chosen commodious quarters, engaged an organization and publicity manager, raised ample funds to carry the undertaking through for a year—with more promised if the club makes good—and by January 15 will be ready to begin the work mapped out.

What a prominent member calls "the ills of St. Johns"—the drawbacks that have prevented the city's development along its destined lines—will be first attempted to be remedied. When good headway is made in this work, efforts to secure new industries will be made.

Another aim is to make St. Johns an attractive residential district. Nature has done its part in the way of fine scenic effects and the city council has helped by spending this year alone \$300,000 on civic improvements. During its seven-year evolution from the wilderness to a modern city of 6000 people, the city has erected a large public dock and a fine high school building, to mention but two of its notable constructions. Several wealthy Portland men have moved to St. Johns and built costly and beautiful residences. Many of the people employed in Portland live in St. Johns, where they buy lots and build homes cheaper than in the larger city, and have lower taxes to pay.

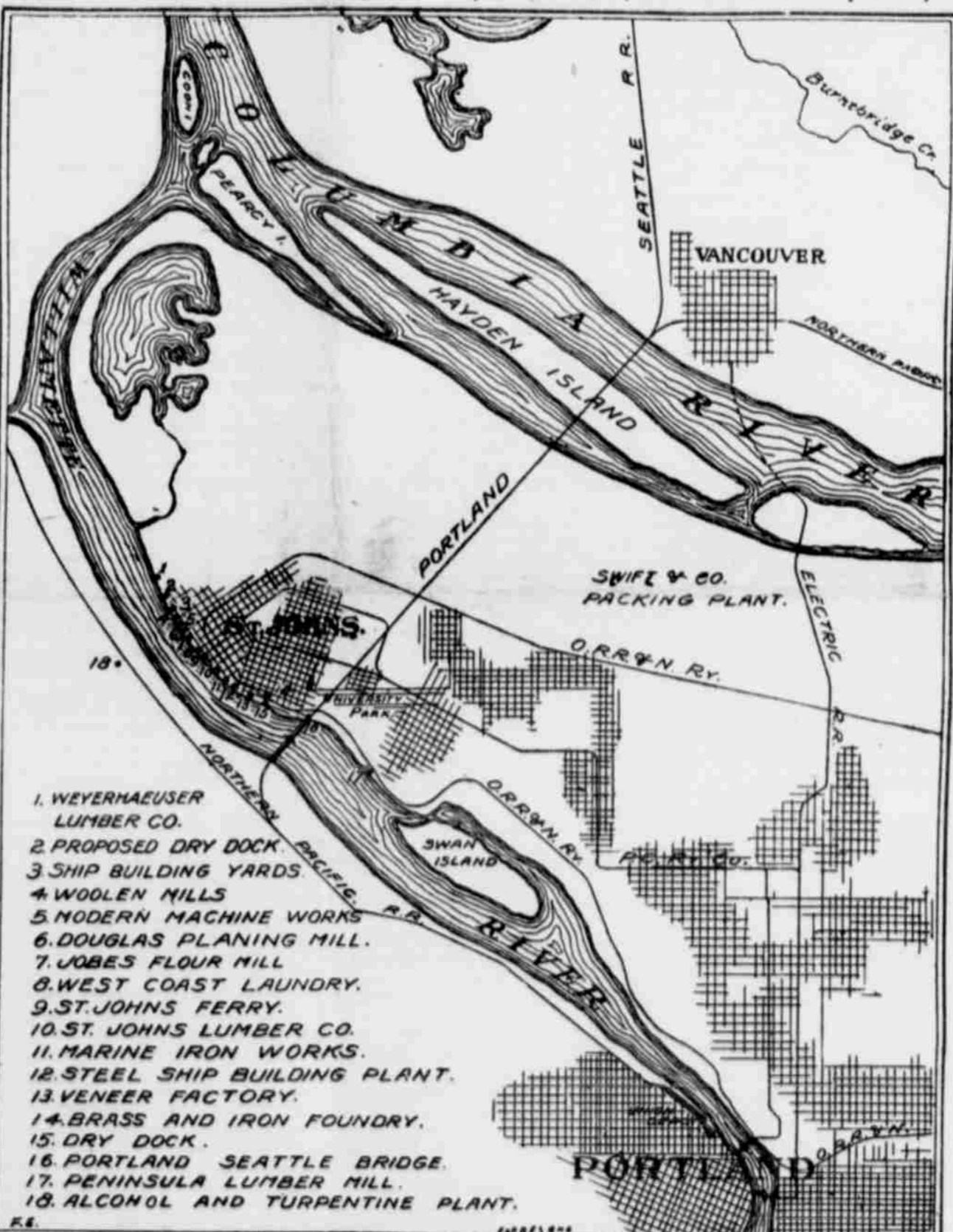
The reforms immediately aimed at by the new commercial club are: A better car service to Portland; a daily postal delivery (the whole population now journeys twice a day to the postoffice for mail); a free approach to the city dock, which now costs \$10 a day interest on the \$60,000 investment and earns nothing; a good highway or electric railroad to Kenton; to get river steam packets to stop at St. Johns to land and take on passengers; larger and better equipped police and fire departments; the total and everlasting abolition of "mossbackism" in St. Johns so that several important thoroughfares leading to Portland can be improved and made passable and that valuable deep water frontage can be made available for factory sites—at present held at prohibitive prices.

These are a few of the reforms the commercial club hopes to accomplish. The club also aims to get in with other organizations to help develop and boom the resources and attractions of Western Oregon. The project to tap the streams of the Cascades so as to irrigate the Willamette valley during the dry season, will have the support of the St. Johns Commercial club, which will also do its best to encourage the Mount Hood Railway company's project on the Peninsula.

As the largest ocean craft can come up to St. Johns, where the Port of Portland has an immense dry dock, the water frontage here offers a situation unparalleled for the establishment of large industries. On the north side the Columbia river needs but to be dredged in parts to offer superb shipping facilities to manufacturers. On the Willamette side there are 12 or 15 important industries, including two large lumber mills, and over the river there is quite a cluster of industries, including the government dock. Direct connections with this thriving district, and with the large farming territory in the Tualatin valley lying south of it, will be had before spring, through the free ferry to be operated by the county of Multnomah. It is expected St. Johns and the entire peninsula will benefit largely by the increased traffic and trade resultant therefrom.

The officers of the club, who will direct its campaign for a greater St. Johns, are: President, Frank Test, assistant superintendent of the Portland Woolen Mills located at St. Johns; 30 directors, comprising the solid and representative men of the city; publicity manager, B. F. Crawshaw; secretary, A. W. Markle, editor St. Johns Review—Portland Journal.

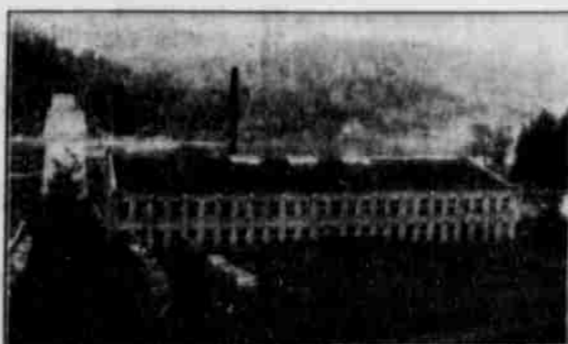
For Rent.—Furnished housekeeping rooms, 109 West Burr street 2 1/2 blocks to Burr station. Phone Col. 184. 5-4t.



New City Dock



Woolen Mills



For Insurance see F. W. Valentine