

CENTRAL OREGON AS SEEN BY HOOD RIVER PARTY

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farms after emerging from several miles of canyon. Commodious farm houses and buildings were noticeable throughout Sherman county, built in the years when wheat farming there was profitable. Wasco, the first Sherman county town reached, presented an odd appearance of decay and improvement; of wooden buildings deserted and brick structures recently built. From there to Moro, the county seat, and Grass Valley, mile after mile of rich wheat soil lay on every hand, subject to the fickle goddess of rain for production. We were informed by the owner of a large wheat farm that light crops had been harvested for several years and that this year much of the wheat was injured by rain during the threshing season. He stated, however, that expectations for a fine crop next year ran high, due to the heavy early September rains. Bowling along and climbing rapidly we hit Kent at an elevation of 2,800 feet. Ten miles south of Kent we crossed the line back into Wasco county and seven miles further on came to Shanko, the terminus of the branch railroad that runs out of Biggs, and for many years the starting point for the entire central Oregon country.

At an elevation of nearly 4,000 feet Shanko seems nearly on top of the world, and its main asset is scenery. For miles around there is no growing thing except here and there straggling patches of sage brush. But the view—this is magnificent. Spread out for miles is the surrounding country with eight snow-capped peaks in the distance—Mount Washington, Snowy Butte, the Three Sisters, Diamond Peak, Black Butte, Mount Jefferson, Mount Hood, Mount Adams—in fact the entire range of the Cascade mountains is outlined against the sky for a distance of 200 miles. With the building of the railroads up the Deschutes the glory of Shanko as a trading center has departed, but its scenery still remains. The hundreds of men, horses, freight wagons and stages that traversed the roads from the interior to this point in all kinds of weather are no more. The toot of the locomotive whistle at Madras and Redmond announces that progress has been carried 100 miles further into the interior. Except for the Antelope and part of the John Day country there

is little left for Shanko. Two hotels, a big wool warehouse and a few little newspapers are now its chief claims to distinction.

Nine miles further south brought us to Antelope, at the edge of the stock country and a drop in elevation of almost 1,000 feet. Nestling at the bottom of foothills, amid poplars planted many years ago by its thrifty Scotch and Irish pioneer residents, this little center for sheep and cattlemen slept peacefully in the sunlight. The days when the cowboy rode in and shot up the town have apparently gone and nothing remains of its strenuous past but bullet holes in the ceiling of Frank Silvertooth's famous saloon. Hardy, intelligent Scots and Irishmen and their descendants are to be found in the Antelope country. Past masters at raising and judging horses, cattle and sheep they lament the passing of the open range. Not the least interesting of them is Franklin McBeth, born with the smell of leather in his nostrils and landlord for 15 years of the Occidental hotel. True to Uncle Sam, but still a lover of his native land, every year or two he entertains the Oregon Scotch Society which gathers at Antelope, and then there are great doings. The bagpipe pipes, kilts flash in the sunshine, nimble feet leap over the broadsword and "Annie Laurie" and "The Blue Bells of Scotland" are sung as only Scotchmen can sing them. Let it be said also that Franklin McBeth is as good a hotel keeper as he is a Scotchman, which is saying a great deal indeed.

Leaving Antelope and its interesting citizens to the east we took the road to Madras, passing through the famous Cow Creek canyon and over the no less celebrated dove hills. In the days of freighting Cow Creek and these hills were the terror of teamsters in wet weather and men, horses and wagons were frequently lost in getting through this dangerous gap and sea of mud which afforded the only route to Madras, Bend, Prineville and all that section of Oregon country. We now struck Crook county and at Hay Creek, 120 miles out from The Dalles, a rich hay country was reached. Three miles further, over sage brush hills sparsely timbered with juniper trees, brought us to Madras, now reached by both the Oregon Trunk and Deschutes railroads.

Situated in a sandy flat Madras appeared to be a thriving little city with the drawback, however, of having a scarcity of water. It is the

center of a wheat growing and stock country, but in most instances water has to be hauled miles for both domestic and drinking purposes. Madras was given a big boost when the railroads reached it and for a time its residents entertained the belief that the railroad shops would be located there, but it is now said that they will be placed at Opal City or Metolus, where both railroads take the same track. At present Madras is the starting point for stages (which by the way are automobiles) and freighting teams for Redmond, Bend and Prineville.

Preferring a country where water was a little more plentiful, we pushed on to Redmond, 33 miles south. The run was through a thickly-grown sage brush and juniper tree country, with lofty, rock-bound hills. Here we struck the first evidence of the big irrigation project of the Deschutes Irrigation and Power Company, and also got our first glimpse of the festive jack rabbit. A number of these long-eared speeders scooted across the road in front of the machine as we neared Redmond about sundown, and in getting over the ground had us beaten to a frazzle. With irrigation, the country around Redmond shows evidence of being brought into a high state of cultivation. Many new clearings are visible, and the soil, a rich, sandy loam, seems capable of growing anything that will survive late and early frost. Redmond was putting on airs on account of the railroad having reached there the day before, and attended by a visit from Gov. West and Sam Hill, the traditional golden spike had been driven by the little daughter of Mayor Jones. The town was full of life and bustle, and preparations were being made for a general whoop up Sept. 30th. Redmond (dub itself the hub of Central Oregon, and there is some truth in the assertion. Half way between Madras and Bend, it is the nearest railroad point to the Prineville country on the east and Sisters, Laidlaw and Metolus on the west and south, and has a big area of good soil tributary to it. Comparatively speaking, in this land of magnificent distances it is near timber. As a business place, Redmond shows enterprise and prosperity and is fast building up. It is believed that fruit can be grown there successfully, a belief borne out by the fact that at Sisters, 15 miles nearer the Cascades mountains, some of the finest peaches in the state are grown.

Leaving Redmond Saturday morning, we ran to Bend, a distance of 20 miles, passing along the main ditch of the Deschutes Irrigation and Power Company, 20 to 30 feet wide and conveying a large volume of water. The country between Bend and Redmond is comparatively flat, covered with sage brush and juniper and with scattering pine timber. Land holdings are being cleared, irrigated and cultivated in this section, and it gives promise of being one of the most productive and prosperous in the central Oregon country. At Bend we found the citizens excited by the coming of the railroad, which is expected to reach there October 5th. For a time at least, Bend will be the terminus of railroading into this section of the state, and showed a more substantial growth than any town we had yet visited. Several stone office buildings, built of red granite quarried in the near-by hills, were noticeable, and the magic touch of water gave it green lawns to enhance the beauty of a number of handsome dwellings. Situated on the bank of the Deschutes river, which is as placid as a lake at this point and for 40 miles above, the town reposes in the edges of pine timber. The hum of a sawmill announces that the timber is being transformed into lumber. Bend's people are progressive, and, like other interior towns, the automobile has preceded the railroad. Substantial banking institutions, well-equipped stores and good hotel accommodations also mark the steady stride of progress. In distance, Bend is midway between The Dalles and Medford, 175 miles from the Columbia river by wagon road and 150 by rail.

From Bend we dropped back on the west side of the Deschutes to Laidlaw, happening to arrive when a district agricultural exhibit was being held, and saw many fine specimens of grain and vegetables grown without irrigation. Lower down we stopped to view the celebrated Cline Falls, where the Deschutes drops 30 feet, presenting a beautiful spectacle, and then pushed on over the plateau to Crooked river canyon. Here we took the opportunity of seeing the Crooked river bridge, one of the mechanical marvels of the year and the third highest transportation bridge in the world. Towering above the yawning chasm for 325 feet, this structure is 300 feet long and is anchored by huge abutments set in the solid rock sides of the canyon. One peep over the sides of this mammoth crack in Mother Earth, caused, no doubt, by the sudden cooling of the earth's surface ages ago, is sufficient to instill fear into the hearts of ordinary observers, al-

though the bridge workers swarmed over the spans of the partly completed bridge like flies, apparently unmindful of any danger. The bridge is located about ten miles below Redmond. Many of the huge parts of the structure were freighted in by wagon, and its cost, when finished, will approximate half a million dollars. Construction trains were running over it the day we were there, although the riveters were still at work.

Passing under the railroad trestle we headed for Prineville, the county seat of Crook county. A tire blow-out caused a sudden halt, and while it was being repaired, lunch was prepared and served in the open. The cook allowed no kicking, and the journey being resumed, we headed into the Crooked River valley at O'Neill and sped for Prineville, traversing 13 miles of the best looking country seen on the trip. Broad acres of hay and grain land, sleek, stock, big ranch houses and farm buildings lined the way. The roads were excellent, and the city of Prineville, lying at the head of the valley, proved to be the most attractive and prosperous visited. A handsome stone court house lends official dignity to the town, while well-kept, sprinkled streets, broad sidewalks, a commodious garage, numerous automobiles, fine teams, good hotels, splendid dwellings and well-stocked and fitted up stores of all descriptions denote unquestioned prosperity. With the railroad but twenty miles away, Prineville feels that it is now almost a suburb of Portland, and its enterprising citizens have subscribed \$50,000 toward the construction of an electric line to traverse the valley and secure rail transportation direct with the outer world. Power will be taken from the Crooked river, a few miles east of the city. The terminus of the road will be at Redmond or Opal City.

A night ride through the Grizzly mountains of 56 miles brought us back to Antelope. On this run the jack rabbits, startled by the lights, cavorted around the car, darting in all directions, and one that was too venturesome was run over. Leaving Antelope the next morning we passed through Shanko, crossed the line into Sherman county, struck Bakeoven and headed for Sherar's grade, the terror of all who travel it. Down its rocky ledge of road we

slowly dropped, fearing each turn would send us to the bottom, no guessing how many hundreds of feet below. At the bridge over the Deschutes we saw the two new railroads, Harriman on the Sherman county bank and Hill on the Wasco side, and also the famous old Sherar place and water power site, valued at \$50,000. The crawl up the grade on the Wasco side, was even longer and more dangerous and not until we were up on the plateau did we feel safe. From here we could look off for miles and see the White River, Tygh Valley and an immense section of country that we had only skirted. From Sherar's bridge the run was through Boyd over ever stretching out and rolling wheat and hay lands to The Dalles.

The trip past Chenoweth, through Mosier and over the Cascades brought us again into the valley of waving apple trees and the editor was made suddenly aware of this fact by a whoop from his companion in the back seat, who was unable to restrain himself properly notwithstanding that it was the Sabbath day.

The conclusions reached by an investigation of the central Oregon country are that the coming of the railroad means a process of cutting up big acreages into smaller ones, the influx of a greater population and a rapid increase in the refinements of a greater civilization. The hardy cattlemen naturally regrets the plowing up of land he regards as better adapted and more profitable for grazing than for farming. He points to the day when the big ranges were covered with cattle and declares times were then more prosperous in this big country, and it must be admitted there is much point to his argument when successive failures in wheat farming are taken into consideration. On the other hand the wheat, hay and general farmer desiring a more segregated life presses his claims and is fast driving the stockman out. In the meantime the iron horse is becoming more potent than the wild one, as has been the case in other parts of the country, and the days of land freedom in central Oregon are over. The ultimate prosperity of this great country—far from being without its charm; where scenery is a drug on the market, will depend on an intelligent selection of crops best adapted to semi-arid conditions and high altitudes.

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