

WOOLGROWING IMPORTANT INDUSTRY

Leads All Others in Several Counties of Eastern Oregon and Many Small Flocks Are Kept in Willamette Valley--Wool of Fine Quality

By E. F. Averill.

IF SOLOMON in writing his Fifth Psalm had referred to sheep instead of cattle, and the statement, "the sheep on a thousand hills are mine," had appeared in some Oregon newspaper today, it would have caused no comment. There is more than one man in Oregon who could make the statement and still be within the bounds of truth.

Oregon stands well up in the front rank of wool-growing states, but owing to the inaccuracy of reports on the industry in this state, it is impossible to give exact statistics. From the office of the State Board of Sheep Commissioners, however, it is ascertained that 2,216,977 sheep were dipped in Oregon last Spring and Summer and from these figures, State Sheep Inspector Lytle and Dan P. Smythe, secretary of the Board of Sheep Commissioners and the Woolgrowers' Association, estimate the total number of sheep in the state at between 2,500,000 and 3,000,000. In Eastern Oregon, Willamette County

The Malheur Land & Livestock Company is probably second with 30,000. The average flock, however, consists of from 1800 to 2500. As there is no open range in the Willamette Valley, the average flocks contain from 100 to 250 sheep.

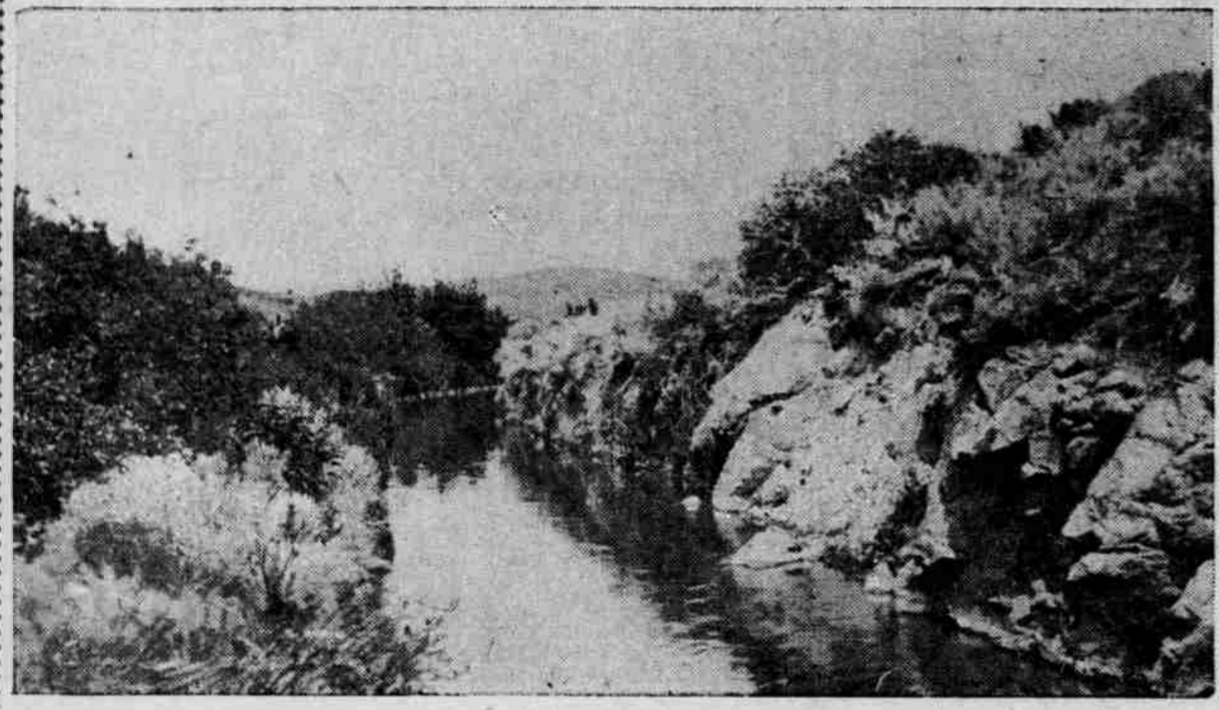
Record prices for sheep were reached during 1907. Starting early in the year, the market gradually advanced until, when the sales closed in the Fall, yearling ewes sold as high as \$5.75, wethers \$4.75 and lambs \$3.75. These prices, compared with those of a few years ago, when an ewe and her lamb after shearing were sold for \$1.20, and wool brought but 5 cents a pound, explain the rapid increase in the wealth of Oregon sheepmen. The Oregon clip in 1907 sold at an average of 17 cents for the heavy and 22 for the light range and 27 and 23 for the Valley product.

While many sheepmen have prospered and some have become wealthy, expenses have increased with the high prices for sheep and wool. The vast free ranges of a few years ago, where the sheepmen were permitted to graze their flocks without let or hindrance, are found no longer. All woolgrowers now own or lease their

corrals, unless guarded by armed herders. Sometimes the coyotes enter the corrals at night and slaughter both old and young.

Re-enactment of the bounty law would cost the state many thousands of dollars and it is, therefore, hoped that the poisoning scheme that is to be tried this month throughout Eastern Oregon will prove successful. It is believed that for less money the state can get rid of more coyotes with poison than under the costly bounty system.

For many years scab was considered the most dangerous pest with which the sheepman had to deal. The disease was thought incurable and, indeed, growers usually kept a few scabby sheep on hand with which to fight unfriendly shepherds. At the last Legislature, however, an annual dipping law was passed and under the provisions of this measure, State Sheep Inspector Lytle and Dr. McClure, head of the Bureau of Animal Industry, with a large corps of assistants, have practically rid the state of this disease and caused the obnoxious Federal quarantine on Oregon flocks to be raised. The number of sheep in Eastern Ore-



THE ANKENY CANAL, ACQUIRED BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR KLAMATH IRRIGATION PROJECT.

was exempt from the dipping regulation and only in four counties of Western Oregon was this law enforced. The flocks in about 12 counties in the western part of the state were therefore not accounted for and in the four exempt counties of Eastern Oregon, the only hands dipped were those known to be infected or exposed to disease.

The same authorities estimate the 1907 clip of wool at between 15,000,000 and 17,000,000 pounds, or an average of eight pounds to the sheep. They say that under normal conditions the flocks of Oregon shear an average of nine pounds to the sheep or from a pound to a pound and a half heavier than the sheep of any other state in the Union. The Winter of 1906-7, however, was a hard one and unfavorable for wool growing. The preceding Winter was much milder and in the Spring of 1906 some individual growers received as high as \$2.75 a fleece from over 4000 ewes.

The outlook for 1908 is most encouraging. The Winter so far has been very open and prospects are that Oregon wool will be of good quality and the output large.

While the figures given by the commissioners apply to the state as a whole, the wool industry is chiefly confined to that portion of Oregon that lies east of the Cascade range. Here in years past, the bands of range sheep have been made up almost altogether of Merinos or fine wool sheep. Of late years, however, the old range Merino has been giving way to high grade Delaines and Rambouilletes. There still remains a strain of the French Merino in most of the Eastern Oregon flocks. Recently some breeders have been crossing the Lincoln and high grade modern range Merinos with excellent results.

A. Smythe and William Smith, of Arlington, have been crossing full-blooded Lincoln rams with Merinos and have secured a yearling sheep that shears from a pound to a pound and a half more wool than the Merino. For mention the new cross seems to surpass any of the other cross-bred, not excepting the Shrop, heretofore considered the best range cross for mention. There were several large importations of Lincoln bucks last Fall for the ranges of Eastern Oregon and there seems to be a growing tendency to raise the merged breeds.

The Rambouilletes and Delaines are both on the increase and are bred with much success in all parts of Eastern Oregon. Umatilla County breeders not only supply the ranges of this state, but their rams have a National reputation and are shipped to all portions of the West.

In Western Oregon the conditions are altogether different. The climate of the Willamette Valley is peculiarly adapted to the coarse wool grades and here the merino is seldom found. Much success has resulted then in the breeding of the Lincoln, Shrop, Hampshire-down and Cotswold sheep.

Oregon seems to be well adapted to the Lincoln, and from present appearances this is to be the coming sheep. At present there are more registered Lincoln bucks in this state than in all the other states of the Union combined. The number here is about equal to that in Canada and it was from Canada that this breed was introduced into the United States. The original home of the Lincoln was Lincolnshire, England.

As an indication that the Lincoln or some other coarse-wool cross is to be the coming range sheep of Eastern Oregon, it is cited that in the Spring of 1908 an average of 12 1/2 pounds was shorn from an entire band of half-breed Lincolns and the wool sold at 21 1/2 cents a pound. Yearlings sold on the range for \$3.50 a head and weighed 175 pounds when put on the block in Chicago the latter part of June.

A. Smythe's half-breed Lincolns took seven prizes, including firsts, at the International Fat Stock Show at Chicago, in November, where they were in competition with sheep from all the range states. These were undoubtedly the finest range sheep ever raised in Eastern Oregon and have topped the market in Chicago for three successive years.

The largest individual owner of sheep in Eastern Oregon is the Baldwin Sheep & Land Company, which has 36,000 head.

gon is constantly decreasing, the falling off being especially notable in certain districts. Large range areas are annually being taken up by settlers, while in some counties it is being discovered that the range is too valuable for the running of stock and it is being plowed up and seeded to wheat. This is particularly true in Umatilla, where the number of sheep is being decreased at the rate of from 5000 to 8000 head a year.

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ing the Northwestern Railroad down Snake River from Huntington to Lewiston. About 40 miles of grading have been completed on the road, and there is now material on hand for the laying of rails for a distance of 15 miles. Construction on the road has been suspended during the money panic, but it is expected that work will come at any time to resume operations, and the grading outfits

have been left on the ground in anticipation of this order.

This road will give transportation for the ores from the great Iron Dyke district, at Homestead, which is now producing large amounts of copper ore that are being treated at the mines. This is one of the richest copper districts of Eastern Oregon, and will be a wonderful producer when proper transportation facilities are afforded. Several new towns

have come into existence along the new road, Copperfield being the most promising of any of them as it is situated at the great Ox Bow tunnel.

The Northwestern Railroad down Snake River will open to the public some of the greatest natural scenery ever looked on by human eyes. For miles down this wonderful canyon the rock walls rise sheer for a height of 400 feet, and are almost impossible of ascent or descent. So rapidly does the deep river flow that it is noticeably higher in the center than at the sides. In laying out the road surveyors were let down a distance of 200 feet over ledges to drive stakes for the survey. So far as is known only four men have been successful in making the trip through this canyon, although several others have tried it and lost their lives. The sun rises in this canyon at 11 o'clock and sinks from view at 2 P. M.

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BUILD LINE INTO EAGLE VALLEY

New Railroads From Baker City Will Give Impetus to Stock Raising and Mining in Tributary Territory

By Don Pruitt.

RAILROAD construction received a decided impetus in the great mining and stockraising country tributary to Baker City during the year 1907, and more than 100 miles of new road are now under construction. The citizens of Baker City have subscribed \$100,000 in stock to the Eagle Valley Railroad, which is now building from Baker City to Eagle Valley, and will continue over the mountains into Pine Valley, giving an outlet to the rich agricultural, timber and mining district of that section.

Actual construction work is now in progress on the Eagle Valley Road and more than seven miles of grade has been completed at the Baker City end of the line. The company is now negotiating with the Utah Construction Company for a large amount of grading and expects to let the contract in a few days for the rock and bridge work for nine miles of road in Box Canyon on Lower Powder River. The company is well financed, and will push the construction work as fast as men and money can accomplish it, as it is desired to have the road completed by next Fall if possible.

The Eagle Valley Railroad will furnish transportation for a large amount of ore that is now awaiting shipment from the Virtue mining district, and will give adequate facilities for the transportation of the products of the rich Lower Powder Valley. Proceeding east it will tap the Goose Creek copper belt, where thousands of tons of low-grade ore are awaiting shipment to the Sumpter smelter. The gold mines of the Sparta district will be given transportation, which will greatly increase their output. The timber belt east of Sparta will be tapped, and will furnish a large amount of freight for the road.

Some of the finest tomatoes in the Portland markets come from Eagle Valley, and the apples of this section are bringing high prices in the Eastern mar-

kets. The great drawback to fruit-raising has been the lack of transportation, as the products have had to be hauled 40 miles before reaching the railroad. This is also a rich agricultural and cattle-raising district, and the coming of the railroad will mean increased production in all lines.

The road will also enter Pine Valley, at whose head are the great mines of Cornucopia district. These mines are now turning out hundreds of thousands of dollars of ore each month, but with the transportation afforded by the railroad the developments will be vastly increased, and the production of these mines will soon be close to the million-dollar mark.

With the coming of the Eagle Valley Railroad also comes announcement that

STREET IMPROVEMENTS DURING YEAR 1907.

During the past year 34.24 miles of streets were improved under ordinance by the City of Portland. This work represented a total expenditure of \$531,248.76, and included a considerable amount of hard-surface pavement. During the year the city also laid 12.29 miles of sewer, costing \$92,781.43. Besides these improvements, 15.46 miles of roadway were graded and 41.47 miles of sidewalk laid under private permit.

A wool-scouring and baling mill will be erected in Baker City, the Citizens' League having offered to donate the site. A smelter has also been promised Baker City, and a franchise has been granted for a streetcar and interurban electric railway to be in operation within 18 months.

The Harriman system is now construct-

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March 22, 1905, Deposits	\$ 56,000.00
March 22, 1906, Deposits	138,000.00
March 22, 1907, Deposits	236,000.00
Dec. 3, 1907, Deposits	256,000.00

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