

INTERIOR TOWNS FACE BRIGHT FUTURE

As Markets Open To Wealth Of Forest And Field, Thriving Cities Will Spring Up

THE story of the man who once let slip by an opportunity to purchase for a song the lot on which now stands a towering office building will undoubtedly be repeated again and again in Central Oregon, some day, to the generation now growing to manhood.

It is inevitable that in the awakening of an undeveloped country of the magnitude and resources of Interior Oregon several substantial cities will grow from what are now country villages. Perhaps one will be another Spokane—several embryonic cities in Oregon's Inland Empire are already claiming the title—and if any man lives who can point an unerring finger toward the city that is to be a boundless fortune awaits him. More probable is it, however, that instead of one great distributive point and several minor ones, there will be in Oregon a half dozen substantial cities—perhaps a dozen.

In strictly Central Oregon there are now four towns that will receive early railway service, each of which is a substantial city of promise. These towns are Madras, Redmond, Bend and Prineville, the largest of which now has a population of but 1500.

Madras, lying farthest north of all, will be the first to receive railway benefits. The town, which has a few hundred inhabitants is about four years old and is yet unincorporated. It lies in Willow Creek basin where in earlier days the big stock roundups of Central Oregon were held. Willow Creek Basin was apparently once covered by a large lake but to the west the outlet into the Deschutes River gradually cut through the rim-rocked hills until the lake was drained dry. Willow Creek now meanders over a big flat through the town and leaves it through a gap in the higher plateau. Steep sloping walls rise 220 feet each side of the outlet. Through this gap the Oregon Trunk Line will emerge from the Deschutes River onto the plains of Central Oregon, while across the gap, 250 feet above its rival, the Harriman road will bridge the creek.

Up Willow Creek 12 miles east its valuable coal deposits awaiting the coming of the railroad to make them active mines. Eighteen miles southeast, Frank Forrest, a wealthy stockman, has installed an oil-drilling outfit and is prospecting for the buried lakes of petroleum of which there are strong indications. To the east lies a belt of pine timber, in which it is said there are 2,000,000,000 feet, not in forest reservations, that will be brought out by way of Madras. South is a big acreage of dry farming country, now producing from 17 to 25 bushels of wheat to the acre, according to the intelligence with which the soil is tilled. To the northwest lie the Madras and Agency Plains, areas of large extent devoted to grain growing. Bold capitalists are proposing to irrigate 70,000 acres of this land. The estimate of the agricultural area tributary to Madras is in excess of 30,000 acres. Twenty miles east of the Hay Creek Ranch, owned by the Baldwin Sheep & Livestock Company, this ranch of 28,000 acres is the biggest producer of blooded sheep in the world, and it is also famed for its Shorthorn and Hereford cattle and its shire horses.

Madras counts on becoming a division station for both railroads, and it is about the right distance in the interior to have its hopes in this respect realized. In the next election the town will incorporate, and a movement is also on foot to divide Crook County and make Madras the county seat of the new county of Jefferson. Jefferson County, as now proposed, will be that portion of Crook County lying north of Crooked River and west of the Blue Mountains.

For ten miles up Willow Creek canyon the Oregon Trunk Line will have its most expensive construction work. The railway grade will be blasted out of solid rock walls for practically the entire distance at an estimated cost, complete with rails laid of \$150,000 to the mile. Madras will be a distributive point for all this work and 2,000 men will be employed in the vicinity for nine to ten months.

The town has hardly awakened yet to the possibilities of the future. Farm lands have gone up in price only 30 per cent in the last six months and can be purchased now for from \$20 to \$30 an acre. Town lot prices are low in comparison with those of the other towns of Central Oregon. Close to residence lots are listed at \$100 and lots in the business district up to \$500.

Lumber for buildings is hauled about 15 miles and costs from \$17 to \$20 a 1000 feet, according to the season of the year. There are brick clay deposits near town. Juniper wood is used for fuel, and the demand of the railway work has lately increased the price of wood from the old figure of \$4.50 a cord to \$6 a cord and more.

Recently the townsite was purchased by the Interior Land Company, composed of Porter Brothers, V. D. Williamson, J. B. Kautz and others, and is being connected with the building of the Oregon Trunk line. This company has also purchased 750 acres near town and plans to dam Willow Creek, provide irrigation for that tract and give the town a water supply.

Madras now has a small flouring mill and a Walla Walla company is preparing to establish a large one. The town has three churches and a schoolhouse of eight rooms.

Twenty-six miles south of Madras and across Crooked River is situated Redmond in the center of the present irrigated land section of Central Oregon. Redmond now has perhaps 250 inhabitants. Surrounding it are about 12,000 acres of irrigated land under plow, and brought into cultivation only within the last two or three years. Next year the cultivated area surrounding Redmond will be 20,000 acres. The cabins of new settlers on the irrigable lands are going up in all directions—the knowledge that the railroads are coming has livened the

country. Redmond is the present announced terminus of the Deschutes Railroad Company's line, but no one believes that the Harriman road will stop there. While the railroad graders are established right in Madras they are still eight miles north of Redmond. Since railroad work started, 110,000 worth of town lots have been sold in Redmond and they have brought from \$100 to \$200 a lot. There has been but one increase in lot prices within the last few months and that was a raise of \$25. Redmond is soon to receive some of the advantages, other than irrigation, to be derived from the Deschutes River. A company of Redmond men has commenced work on a \$240,000 power project at Cline Falls, four miles away. A 25-foot dam is to be constructed, 175 feet between banks, by the aid of which 30,000 horsepower will be developed. A wood pipeline will bring water into town.

Surrounding Redmond for miles is a juniper dotted plain, set down in which are the irrigated farms and fields. Redmond business men say that the juniper, aside from its fuel value, is the best wood that grows. The berries that the trees produce every other year are worth a pound in New York, if properly picked and cleaned. Juniper berry picking, however, is not an industry among the whites, although the Indians on the Warm Springs Agency, across the Deschutes, send two or three tons East every year. On the Deschutes near Redmond, are unlimited quantities of a light silica formation that looks like chalk but will not make a mark on a blackboard. Tests have shown it to be an excellent porcelain material, a perfect silver polish and an excellent dynamite base or absorbent for nitro-glycerine. The deposit is similar to that near Mosier.

When the present irrigation projects now reclaiming the land in the Redmond country are completed, the town will be the center of a district comprising 150,000 acres of fertile and highly cultivated lands.

For miles, as he journeys southward, the traveler can see in the distance a cone-shaped hill rising out of the plain and which has been known since early days as Pilot Butte. Pilot Butte now is a landmark that rises over the thriving town of Bend. Bend reached, the traveler is in the edge of the pine timber. Unlike the timbered country of Western Oregon, the pine belt is free from underbrush, and Bend, located in the edge of the forest, is in a natural park. The Deschutes roars through its trees and is in a substantial brick, stone and frame buildings, with plate glass fronts. It is the county seat of Crook County, and its Courthouse, built last year at a cost of \$50,000, is one of the best in the state. The building, too, was constructed of "rim rock" obtained in the vicinity of Bend. A county high school building was constructed of brick and stone three years ago at a cost of \$24,000. Prineville has a handsome stone hotel building, comfortable residences, electric lights and waterworks. In this town, 25 miles via the roughest of roads from the nearest railway point, clothing, groceries and dry goods may be purchased from complete stocks at prices that rival those of the interior railway towns of the Willamette Valley. Its two banks have deposits totaling more than \$500,000. A flouring mill, where last year wheat brought a better price than when laid down at Shaniko, takes care of much of the present grain output of Central Oregon and its product as far as Burns, 115 miles away by wagon road.

Northward between Prineville and Grassy Mountain are 37,000 acres of dry-farming bench lands. On some of these lands last year wheat yielded 40 bushels to the acre when grown only experimentally. The town lies in a deep valley at the confluence of the Crooked and Ochoco rivers. The valley lands are very fertile and produce alfalfa, meadow hay, grain, fruits and vegetables. To the south are the High Plains, now being rapidly settled. Twenty-five miles east is the Mayfielder district, a country that promises much when given railway transportation. Land prices in the Prineville district have felt the influence of railway development. Farms have gone up in value 50 per cent and in some instances 100 per cent. Valley lands now sell for \$60 to \$80 an acre and bench lands from \$20 to \$40. Residence lots sell in Prineville at from \$25 to \$100. Business property brings from \$50 to \$150 a front foot.

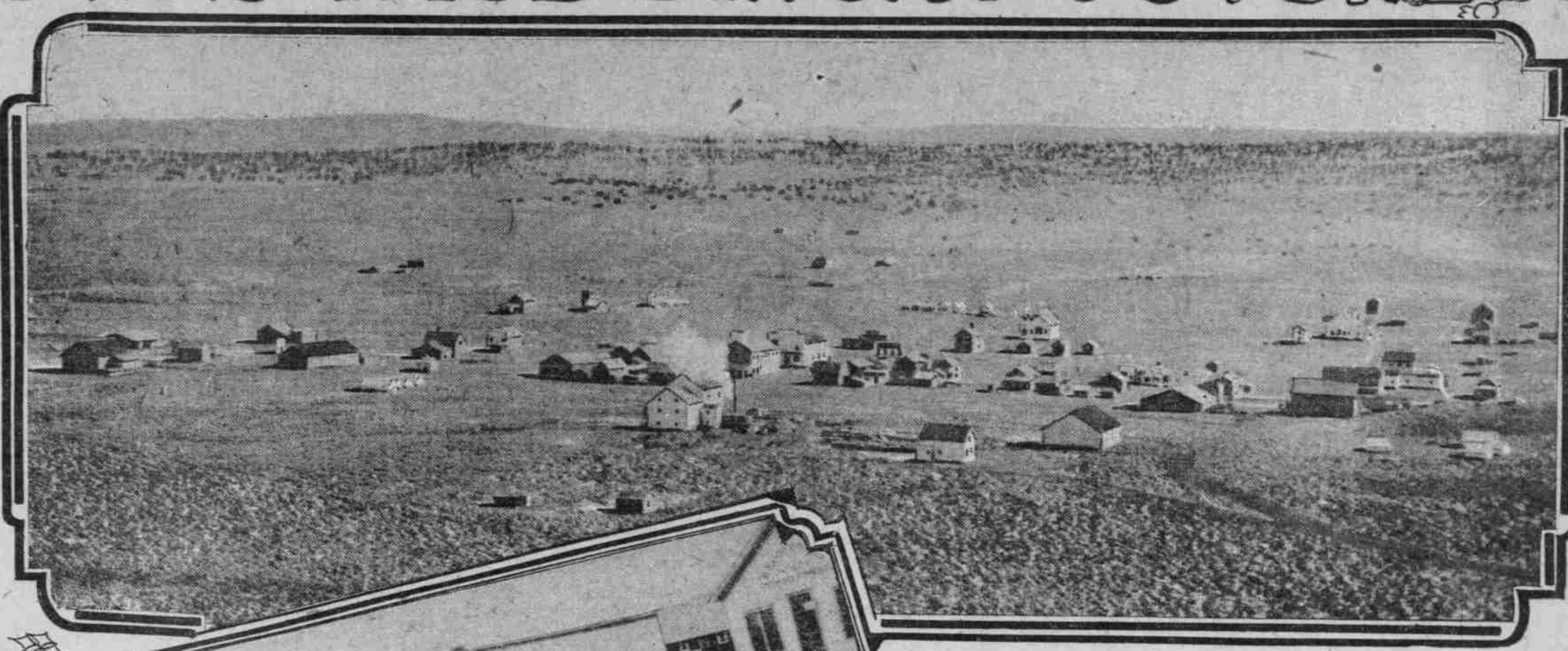
The advantages of Prineville are realized by an active commercial club, which is installed in a large building, where the members have the use of billiard and pool tables, bowling alley, gymnasium, card rooms and assembly hall.

Climatic conditions in the four towns mentioned are practically the same. The climate is equable, the thermometer rarely going over 90 degrees in Summer or under zero in Winter. The high altitude gives cool nights in the Summer, no matter how hot the day.

Usually there is about one week of ice-producing weather in the Winter, during which ice for Summer use is stored. In temperatures, some hot and some cold exceptions have been noted. The record of greatest Summer heat ever recorded was 119. Last Winter, which gave a period of almost unprecedented cold throughout all Oregon, saw the thermometer in Central Oregon go to 44 below zero in some places.

The western section of the valley was first settled, probably because of the certainty of railway transportation within a reasonable distance and within a comparatively short time. The Klamath-Natron cutoff of the Southern Pacific will pass within 18 miles of the western end of the valley, and the Oregon Trunk line, it is expected, will also skirt the western end. Still more direct railway transportation, however, is in prospect, for the east-and-west line extension of the Oregon Short Line from Ontario to Neatton surveyed through the valley. Surveying parties have been working in the valley this Fall getting rights of way and seeking satisfactory grades.

At the eastern end of the valley where it widens and its confines are not clearly marked there are lands still open for entry. Some claims have been taken up there under the dry farming law, but in the western portion of the valley, homestead has been the preference. For lands in the High Plains country the filings are made at the Government Land Office in The Dalles. As heretofore stated, there is a special commissioner at Silver Lake. The stranger in the country, however, who starts out to secure a claim on his own initiative is confronted by several difficulties, chief of which is the discovery of the tracts that have not been entered upon. Probably the best course for him who has no friend in the district who knows the location of the best open tracts is to seek out one of the numerous land locators who are in the district. The land locator's fee runs from \$50 to \$150 for each claim. The usual contract provides that the agent shall point out the land and if it is not satisfactory to the homesteeker the agent shall receive no fee.



MADRAS FROM AGENCY PLAINS



BEND FROM THE EAST



CROOK CO. COURT HOUSE, PRINEVILLE MADE OF CENTRAL OREGON STONE



PRINEVILLE FROM BLUFF OVERLOOKING THE CITY



TYPICAL RESIDENCES OF BEND COMFORTABLE AND MODERN



SCHOOL HOUSE AT BEND



STEAM DRILL BORING WELL AT REDMOND

THOUSANDS OF ACRES OPEN TO ENTRY UNDER FEDERAL HOMESTEAD LAWS

Rush of the Land Hungry Is Under Way Into Central Oregon, Where Last Large Stretches of Unappropriated Public Domain in United States Await Development.

THE race by two great railroads for Interior Oregon that began last July, brought into prominence the last opportunity of any great magnitude in the United States for entry upon Government homestead lands.

The call of the soil has been felt by hundreds and a rush unprecedented in the West outside of those attending the lottery distributions of newly opened Indian reservations, is under way.

There are two main districts in Interior Oregon that offer opportunities for homestead entries into which landseekers are now flocking, one of which is in Crook County and the other in Lake County, and the total area of which is approximately 750,000 acres. These two districts are in sections of Oregon which is reasonably certain will receive early railway transportation, and before Spring has come it is likely that further extensions of railway construction will be announced that will direct attention to the immense acreage of other public lands lying vacant in Harney and Malheur Counties.

In Crook County, southeast of Bend and south of Prineville, lies a tract of approximately 170,000 acres on what has heretofore been known locally as the "High Desert." Interior Oregon, however, is lessening to from upon the word "desert" as applied to lands in that locality, and the name is being changed to

"high plains," for the land is by no means a desert as the word is applied to the Mojave Desert or Death Valley in California.

Lying at an altitude of 4000 feet, soil of rich volcanic ash mixed with clay, water procurable at depths ranging from six to 30 feet and having an average yearly rainfall of fully 12 inches, the high plains present an opportunity for grain-growing by dry farming methods not excelled in any country. The land is level, free from rocks and trees, while sagebrush growing six feet high interspersed with bunchgrass speaks for the fertility of the soil.

Lands on the high plains are open for entry under the dry farming homestead act by the terms of which continuous residence on the land for five years is required and commutation at an earlier period is not permitted. The entries may be of 320 acres, however, while 160 acres is the limit under the old homestead laws. Residence on the land within six months after date of filing is required and the entryman must show in making final proof that at least one-eighth of the area embraced in his entry was continuously cultivated to agricultural crops, other than native grasses, beginning with the second year of the entry, and that at least one-fourth of the 320 acres was so cultivated beginning with the third year of the entry.

Homesteaders are taking up lands on the high plains under the provisions of both homestead laws, some preferring to limit their holdings to 160 acres and

commute under the old law after 14 months by paying the Government \$1.25 an acre.

In the latter months of 1909 more than 500 entries were made on high plains land and approximately 170,000 acres were taken up, according to estimates made by realty men in Central Oregon.

The country is brand-new and the new settlers have not yet had time to show what their lands will produce. It is known, however, that the character of the soil is good, the rainfall ample and the climate not severe, so there is apparently no reason why proper methods of cultivation, wheat, rye and barley should not be grown successfully.

Portions of this tract are within a reasonable distance of Bend or Prineville, both of which will soon have rail connections with the outside world. Other portions are isolated, however, but if reports are true the Oregon Trunk Line will extend eastward across the High Plains to a connection with the Burlington, thus giving the district good railway facilities. In any event development of tonnage will bring branch lines into the district.

In the northern part of Lake County lies the other goal in the present homesteaders' rush—a basin 45 miles long and averaging ten miles wide and comprising what are known as the Christman Lake, Silver Lake, Fort Rock and Fremont districts. The Government chart of Lake County shows that this district was occupied ages ago by a lake which on draining left a sediment

deposit with the original volcanic ash that makes an extraordinarily rich soil. On three sides of this basin lies a high plateau covered by heavy timber and growth of pine timber that makes up the Fremont Forest Reserve. Thus protected the valley, although having an altitude of 4000 feet, has a moderate winter temperature. Snow melts shortly after falling and stock grazing continues all Winter. Good well water is found at a depth of 20 to 30 feet and the sage brush grows so luxuriantly that it is not grubbed out but burned off and the roots plowed under.

In the latter part of 1908 fully 1000 homesteaders filed on lands in the basin and about 400 have already gone on their land, built houses and begun other improvements. Two sawmills, now in operation, supply the homesteaders with fuel and fence posts are obtained from the forest reserve free. Each of the four main settlements has its general store, school and Postoffice and at Silver Lake there is a special commissioner from the Land Office to receive entries.

The settlement in the western portion of the basin being the farthest from a railway connection in the State of Oregon. It is 185 miles south of Shaniko, and about an equal distance from Clatskanie Falls. There is a daily stage line each way through the valley, however, rail connections being made at Shaniko, and a rural mail service is provided.

The settlement entries have been most numerous at the western end of the valley and there practically all of the Government land has been taken. In the vicinity of what is now Fort Rock, one year ago there were two homesteaders and the stockmen passing through the country and stage trails thought they were crazy. Today from an entrance in the same locality a general store, two schoolhouses and more than 150 settlers' cabins may be counted within a radius of five miles. The settlers who were in early enough to raise

small crops last year produced oat hay five and one-half feet tall, turnips and rutabagas weighing eight to 25 pounds and good yields of potatoes and cabbage.

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