

ELGIN GEM CITY IN AGRICULTURAL EDEN

Growing Eastern Oregon Town Just Awakening to Wonderful Resources.

LAND REMARKABLY RICH

Lumber Industry Is Large and Soil Is Adapted for Production of All Varieties of Fruits. Residents Progressive.

BY ADDISON BENNETT. ELGIN, Union County, Oregon, Jan. 11.—(Staff Correspondence.)—The ordinary traveler in passing through Union County to the east or west over the O.-W. R. & N. railway and viewing the Grand Ronde Valley in all of its wealth and beauty, may think that he has seen all of that wonderful section. But great would be the mistake made by such a supposition.

From the point where the Grand Ronde River flows from the canyon of the Blue Mountains, a few miles west of La Grande, to its confluence with the Snake, not far below Lewiston, is considerably more than 100 miles. For long stretches of this distance the river winds through deep and heavily timbered canyons. Occasionally it opens out into fertile valleys, but for perhaps 70 miles of the 100 there is but a ribbon of level land along the shores of the stream.

Road Touches Four Towns. Leaving La Grande for the north, on what is now called the Joseph branch of the above-mentioned road, but which for many years was known as the Elgin branch, the road lies across the open country through the little town of Island City, Alicel and Imbler. About four miles below the latter place the road enters what may be called the first canyon, which it winds up for five miles to the little City of Elgin.

I said this is on a trip to the north, but the road bears almost as much to the east as to the north for the first 37 miles, to Rondawa, where it leaves the Grand Ronde and swings off along the Willows River to the southeast, ending at Joseph, which is almost due east of the starting point at La Grande. And this letter is to deal with Elgin, with its position, its surrounding country, its resources—its explanation for being on the map. For very many years this town was known simply as a lumber camp. The unthinking imagined that when the 6,000,000, 8,000,000, 9,000,000 feet of lumber tributary to the town had been eaten up by the 18 or 20 sawmills in the immediate vicinity, there would be no reason to maintain anything more than a post-office on the Elgin townsite.

Country Being Developed. Like all successful communities there were from the very beginning those who saw with prophetic eyes the future standing on the Elgin townsite. But even the most optimistic did not see the half of the future advantages of the embryo city. They could not, for it has taken years to demonstrate the fertility of the soil, to test the climate, to determine the annual precipitation—above all to learn what are the agricultural products best adapted to the adjacent lands. And not the half of these labors have yet been accomplished. Every year there is some new product shown to be more profitable than some one that was supposed to be the best up to that time. New blood is coming in, new methods are being tried out, new products planted or sown.

When the land owners find themselves so to speak, the prices of the lands will be quadruple what they are now. That is why I say this is a place the land-hungry should not overlook. Let not the reader conclude from these few remarks that Elgin has not found her stride. The people have gone far enough to show that they have here a tributary country that is not only now, but from the geography of the section, must always remain solely theirs. Some 300 square miles, with Elgin lying along the sea, are so linked to the little city by grades and water courses that their trade will flow here as naturally and continually as the waters flow into the sea.

The town situated in what is called the Indian Valley, to distinguish it from the Grand Ronde Valley in the La Grande, Union, Imbler, Coys and Intervening sections, takes this name from Indian Creek, a stream flowing in from the southeast. There are three other streams flowing into the Grand Ronde as it passes through Indian Valley, and up each of these streams is found fine arable lands.

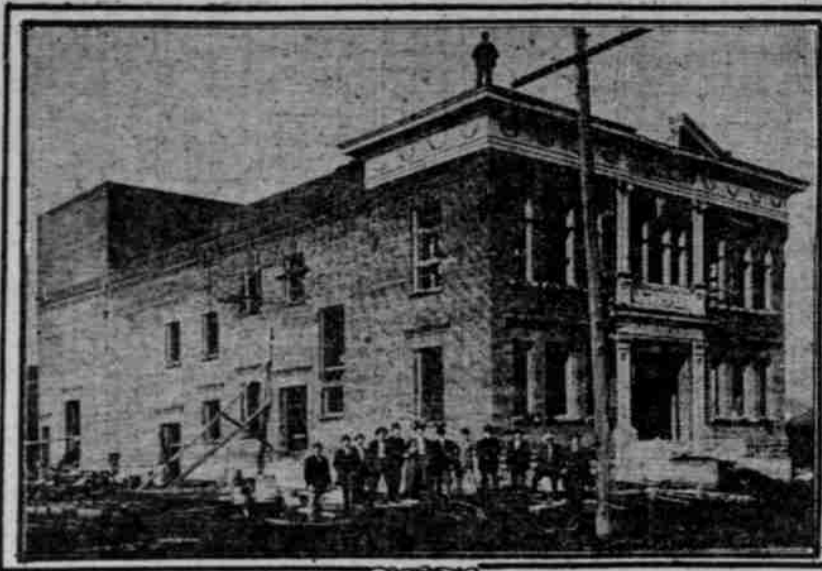
The citizens assert they have about 15,000 acres of the choicest horticultural and agricultural lands suitable for diversified farming, and almost twice that amount of bench lands in their immediate domain. The latter is now largely given to the raising of cereals and potatoes, and there are no better potatoes produced in the world than on these lands. Irrigation is not necessary on any of these tributary areas, the precipitation here averaging about 30 inches yearly.

Snow Protects Crops. A large amount of this snow, which almost universally covers the ground to a depth of several inches during the cold weather, to protect the crops from the frost and later to melt and sink into the soil for the nourishment of the vegetation during the summer months. One peculiarity of this entire section is that scarcely ever do they have any rainfall worthy of moment during the months of June, July and August. But the soil does not need it. H. H. Weatherpoon, Mayor of the town, and one of the most progressive men here, took me through, over or under a little pile of potatoes, just a small pile, only 1800 sacks, which are stored in a frost-proof fruit house here in town, and almost all of these were produced on these uplands without a drop of rainfall from the time the tubers were placed in the ground until the tubers were dug. Mr. Weatherpoon is just now sorting and grading these potatoes for shipment, and he says that to be sold for table use will bring from 10 to 20 cents more a 100 than any others shipped to the San Francisco market.

And this is a new industry. Not four years ago three or four wagon loads of potatoes would glut the Elgin market. Three years ago "a whole carload" was shipped at one time—and all Elgin wondered. This year there will be shipments aggregating 75 carloads. And the price paid to the growers will average a dollar a hundred. The varieties grown are the American Wonder and the Burbank. But you must remember even this business is in its very infancy, in its experimental stages.

The day before I arrived two carloads of apples were shipped to Germany, and another car is now being

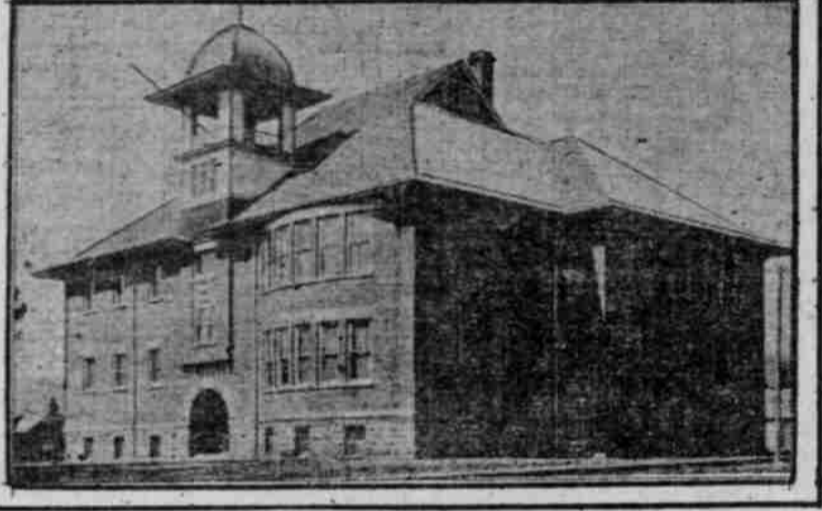
THREE SCENES AT ELGIN.



ELGIN OREG.



ELGIN OREG.



ABOVE, CITY HALL—CENTER, VIEW OF TOWN—BELOW, ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL.

prepared for the London market. These shipments are not sent on consignment. They are sales made to former customers.

Fine Apples Grown.

I might go on and say that Elgin can and does grow as fine apples as any section of Oregon, and keep well within the truth. I need not say that, like all sections, there are certain varieties here that do not do as well here as in other localities; on the other hand, I could say that some of the best varieties, like the Rome Beauties and Jonathans, come nearer perfection here than anywhere else, because they will remain at their best two months longer than those of the same "breed" grown in other sections are past their stage of usefulness.

Oh, yes, I could preach a lengthy sermon on Elgin's fruit, could tell of enormous yields, wonderful profits and the magnitude of the industry is reaching. I might give the dimensions of some of the largest strawberries ever produced grown here in the Indian Valley. You might question me if I said they are the best in the world, and many have been seen that were larger than eight inches in circumference, four of them filling an ordinary quart box. But is not the future of Oregon more dependent upon diversified farming than upon the apple? The Elgin people agree with me on this subject. I know they do, for last night it is the leading citizens of the place held a banquet at the Sommer House and I was an invited guest.

The subject was talked over, and the wise, enterprising and progressive land owners of this section are not going to put all of their products in one basket—not by a long shot. The cow and the hog and the potato are not to be simply by-products, with apples and other fruits as the chief industry; they are going to diversify, diversify and keep diversifying. They know they can excel in many products, such as celery, potatoes and strawberries. How many others they do not know, but they are going to find out.

And then when, not many years hence, the O.-W. R. & N. is extended down the Grand Ronde to the Snake, giving a water-level haul to Portland, and the Panama Canal is finished, you will find here one of the most prosperous sections of Oregon.

Land Prices Not High.

Of all the places I have visited in Oregon I find the land prices the lowest in Walla Walla County and here in the Indian Valley. Wheat land that will produce every year (remember there are no "off" years, no summer fallow) from 50 to 60 bushels of wheat an acre is selling for less than \$75 an acre. I would be ashamed to tell you the low prices asked for undeveloped lands just as good. The shipments by rail from Elgin during the year are approximately 1500 carloads of lumber, twice that of logs, a hundred carloads of grain, half as much flour—counting fruit, potatoes, hay, cattle, hogs and sheep, perhaps 6000 carloads.

The population of Elgin is given by the census as 1120. It is a splendid little city. The water system is good, but must soon be enlarged, the city having grown very rapidly in the last two years. The electric light system is not city-owned, but the service is much better than the ordinary, and the prices very low. The city bridges are on a very good school system as there is in the Northwest. The city superintendent, Professor E. G. Bailey, is one of the most efficient instructors and organizers in the state. The city is just now finishing a municipal building, a large brick structure, 50 by 105 feet, two stories, which will be a novelty, but a great advertising feature. The city offices occupy the front part, beneath is the library and hose house, then there are other offices, and the rear part is one of the finest little theaters in Oregon. The Sommer House is one of the best hotels east of the mountains. The proprietor is R. A. Greene.

But this letter must end, not however, without saying that E. H. Piagg is conducting a splendid country weekly here, the Elgin Recorder.

GERMS SPREAD FEAR

Labor Federation Condemns Carrying Around Bedding.

IMMIGRATION PERIL TOLD

Governor's Penitentiary Policy Indorsed by State Body in Big Annual Convention at The Dalles.

WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE APPROVED

State Federation of Labor at The Dalles Is Unanimous in Opinion.

CITY MAY PAY OFFICERS

Special Election Will Be Held at Grants Pass March 15.

GRANTS PASS, Or., Jan. 16.—(Special.)—A special election will be held in this city March 15 for the purpose of submitting to the voters three ordinances, one of which is intended to provide salaries for all city officers.

Sawmill Foreman Loses Leg.

John Steffen, Jr., Dies.

VANCOUVER, Wash., Jan. 15.—(Special.)—John Steffen, Jr., 23 years old, a native of Portland, died today at 10 o'clock in St. Joseph's Hospital. He is survived by his father, John Steffen,

A Remarkable Sale Event at the Emporium

More determined than ever are we to clear our racks at all costs. It's the chance of a lifetime—savings that are possible here now



Come here Wednesday. We invite you to inspect the greatest garment values ever offered in this city. You will be amazed.

SUITS

Entire stock (excepting Black and Navy Serges) divided into 3 big lots,

\$10.00 FOR \$17.50 to \$21.50 SUITS You'll be agreeably surprised in these splendid Suits, all this season's best styles, in pretty mixtures of grays or browns. They're genuine bargains.

\$13.75 FOR \$22.50 to \$30.00 SUITS A beautiful lot of the season's most fashionable Suits in novelty mixtures and chevrons in every wanted shade. High-class Suits at the price of the most ordinary.

\$18.45 FOR \$32.50 to \$40.00 SUITS The woman of taste will find this lot very much to her liking. Highest-grade, beautifully tailored Suits at such a ridiculously low price.

COATS

Our entire stock in 3 big lots. Come choose your Coat early.

\$10.00 FOR \$14.75 to \$16.50 COATS Smart Coats in plain tailored, polo or fancy styles in a big selection of materials, all shades. A most extraordinary offering.

\$12.50 FOR \$17.50 to \$21.50 COATS At this price we have grouped a wonderful lot, every wanted style and color of Coat. They're too numerous to describe here. Just come in and look at them.

\$14.95 FOR \$22.50 to \$30.00 COATS All our highest-grade novelty Coats are grouped at this price. Stylish misses and women should not fail to see them.

Navy Serge Suits 1/4 Fur Coats Entire Stock Less 1/4 Half Price

Fur Coats 1/4 Half Price

\$13.50 Satin Dresses, Clean-Up A very charming style of Duchesse Satin Dresses, prettily trimmed with pointed collar of contrasting shades. One of the very newest models. Sale price only **\$7.75**

Big Reductions on Waists

\$1.35 Tailored and Linen-gathered Waists **\$4.50 to \$6.95** Silk and Net Waists

Of pure linens, madras, linene, lawns and batiste in very dainty styles, and exceptional bargains. In very attractive styles of mes-salines, taffetas and nets in all shades. A real bargain at

90 Cents **\$2.75**



Raincoats

\$9.85 Coats are now **\$6.35**

\$14.75 Coats are now **\$10.00**

\$19.50 Coats are now **\$13.35**

\$23.50 Coats are now **\$16.95**

efforts, and vote for said initiative ballot at the next election to be held in November. N. J. Sinnott and Judge R. R. Butler have promised to campaign Eastern Oregon for the cause of suffrage.

Salem Seeks Next Convention.

SALEM, Or., Jan. 16.—(Special.)—Mayor Lachmund today telegraphed an invitation to the State Federation of Labor meeting at The Dalles during January of next year, as the Legislature will be in session here at the time.

EUGENE AFFAIRS HALTED

University Regents Adjourn Until After Supreme Court Rulings.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, Eugene, Or., Jan. 15.—(Special.)—Assured by the respective counsels in the Parkison referendum case, involving the legislative appropriations for the State University, that the completed briefs are about to be filed in the Supreme Court, the University Board of Regents at their regular semi-annual meeting today adjourned after momentary deliberation to meet at the call of President Campbell. Only the local regents, Friendly, Dixon and Fisher, were present at the meeting. President Campbell is hopeful that the present litigation will have terminated at the end of another month, when he expects to call the adjourned meeting of the Board.

If the final decision is favorable plans will be formulated immediately for the erection of the new buildings, while if the Galloway opinion is reversed emergency measures will be outlined to meet the current fiscal needs of the university.

GIRL'S FRIENDS ARRESTED

Tacoma Academy Student Deceives Parent and Relatives.

TACOMA, Jan. 16.—According to the police, a charge of kidnaping a 14-year-old girl will be placed against Charles Parkhurst, age 19, a cashier at a vaudeville theater, and Howard Coppock, age 20, a clerk in a cigar store. The girl, who attends a school in this city, had been visiting her home in North Yakima. An uncle in South Tacoma received word she was returning and would visit him before returning to the school. Instead of going to her uncle she went to friends and later attended the theater. The Tacoma police traced the girl to a hotel in this city, where they found her in a room occupied by Coppock. The police say Coppock had tried to conceal the girl. He was arrested, as was also Parkhurst. The girl was taken to the home of her uncle. The men will be charged with attempted abduction.

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Another proposed amendment by the initiative covers franchise privileges in which a franchise may not be granted without popular expression of the voters, thus taking the entire matter out of the hands of the Council. The last proposition is to issue \$50,000 in refunding bonds, by redeeming the outstanding warrant indebtedness.

Sawmill Foreman Loses Leg.

CAMAS, Wash., Jan. 15.—(Special.)—W. C. Bennett, sawmill foreman for the Crown-Columbia Pulp & Paper Company, suffered the loss of his left leg today. Mr. Bennett was replacing a belt on an overhead pulley when he lost his footing. His leg was caught between a joist and some drive gear and was broken, the knee joint torn open and the leg severed.

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The Brown Bottle keeps Pure Beer Pure

"Schlitz in Brown Bottles" has a full, fine flavor which brings to you the taste of the barley and the hops. It has the sparkle and life due to a perfect yeast. The freedom from germs shows careful sterilization. It does not cause biliousness or ferment in your stomach, as it is properly aged before leaving the brewery. The Brown Bottle insures absolute protection against the damaging effects of light.

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