

### Railroad Construction in Oregon Prosecuted With Vigor, and Important Lines Are Completed

Extension Work in 1915 Included Eugene-Coo's Bay Line, Grants Pass Road, O.-W. R. & N. Feeder to Riverside—Extensive Betterments Made—New Projects Under Way.

DESPITE the fact that 1915 was a year of decreasing revenues—the early part of it was, anyway—railroad construction in Oregon continued with sufficient vigor to remind the natives of the remarkable development of five or six years ago, when new lines were being built in almost every direction.

While the aggregate new mileage of the year just closed was not equal to that of the year that saw most of Oregon's railroad development, it is significant that the work here did not halt altogether as it did in some other parts of the country.

Probably the most important development of the year was the activity on the Southern Pacific's new line into Coos Bay. This project was started four years ago and has been under way continuously ever since.

#### Line to Operate Soon.

All the remaining connections, it is believed, will be made early in the Spring. This will make it possible to open the line and establish through service between Coos Bay and the outside world before the beginning of the Summer. It is probable that a trade excursion will be conducted out of Portland by the Chamber of Commerce as soon as the new line is opened.

Another most important project which underwent considerable development during the year was the O.-W. R. & N. Company's extension across the state from the eastern state line towards Central Oregon. This work was started three years ago and has been progressing gradually by easy stages.

The company last year completed the second unit of the project from Junction to Riverside, a distance of about 70 miles. Meanwhile it let the contracts and started construction on the third unit from Riverside to Crane Creek Gap, a distance of about 40 miles. This contract was let to Twiby Bros., who now are at work on it. Their work probably will be completed early in the Spring.

The company originally intended to extend this line to Arden, a point in the Harney Valley, about 40 miles west of Crane Creek Gap, but it is understood now that construction will end when the latter point is reached. This development, however, will enable the company to serve an important part of Eastern and Central Oregon that now is without railroad connection.

Portland commercial interests now are eager to secure a connection with this line that will divert the business in the direction of Portland. Some im-

portant progress was made, within the year, along this direction. Upon invitation of a group of Portland business men, Robert E. Straborn, already famous as the builder of the North Coast roads in the State of Washington and the Portland, Eugene & Eastern, in Oregon, made a survey of construction possibilities in Central Oregon and subsequently outlined a system of new lines that will connect all existing roads in Central Oregon.

While no actual construction work was done on this project, much progress was made. It is probable that work will begin early in the new year.

A development of minor volume but of major importance was the completion within the year of the O.-W. R. & N. Company's main-line cut-off between Coyote and Eola. This new trackage will eliminate about eight miles of distance on the route between Portland and the East and will effect a substantial saving in grades and curvature.

#### Heavier Rails to Be Laid.

In the closing months of the old year the O.-W. R. & N. Company completed arrangements for relaying more than 100 miles of track between Portland and Huntington, with 30-pound rails, replacing 15-pound rails that no longer are adequate to carry the heavy traffic now handled over the road. These rail renewals also will be accompanied by a corresponding volume of the renewals.

The company has contracted for heavy purchases of tie material with mills along its line.

Another project undertaken by the O.-W. R. & N. Company in the last few months is the improvement of the St. Johns tunnel, within the City of Portland. Contracts have been let for a concrete lining for the bore, which is more than half a mile long, from end to end. The work will cost about \$400,000. This route is used for all the passenger service between Portland and Seattle.

#### Grants Pass Road Under Way.

Developments of the year give the people of Grants Pass final assurance that eventually they are to have direct

rail connection with the seaport of Crescent City, Cal.

The Grants Pass-Crescent City road was projected many years ago, but not until the last few years did any definite progress result. The people of Grants Pass issued \$200,000 in bonds to start the road southwestward from that city and subsequently actually built 10 miles of line, which was placed in successful operation.

Incidentally, it was pointed out that when this line is completed it will offer a new route between Portland and San Francisco. Crescent City is but a short distance from the present northern terminus of the Northwestern Pacific, a road that has been pushed northward from San Francisco under the joint ownership of the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe. It is possible that when the Grants Pass-Crescent City rail is completed some through traffic between Portland and San Francisco may be handled over that route.

#### Roseburg Line Assured.

Another Southern Oregon project that promises much to the development of that region is the road proposed by Kendall Bros., extensive logging and timber operators at Roseburg. The Kendalls have plans for building a standard railroad out from Roseburg eastward, into their timber holdings. They intend to make it a common carrier and to be of service, if possible, in developing the territory through which the line is to be built. It is probable that some actual construction work will be started on this project early in the present year.

The past year also witnessed completion of the Willamette Valley Southern Railroad, an electric line operating between Oregon City and Mount Angel a distance of about 40 miles. This road serves a fertile and productive territory, some of which has been without ample railroad facilities. The road is operated in connection with the Portland Railway, Light & Power Company, which has guaranteed the interest on its bonds.

### Portland's Domestic Trade Is Big

Value of Merchandise Received and Dispatched in 1915 Totals \$53,004,974. Coastwise Steamship Service Improves.

PORTLAND purchased commodities from other Pacific Coast ports that moved by water during 1915, drawing more abundantly on California than other states, that in the aggregate attained a valuation of \$24,651,558. In the same period Oregon products and manufactured material that were shipped from Portland for other Pacific Coast harbors reached a valuation of \$15,353,416.

Combining these with business transacted through the medium of water lines with other sections of the United States gives a most comprehensive idea of the worth of domestic commerce alone. In appraising cargo drawn in 1915 from the combined harbors of the United States the figures are placed at \$24,312,811, and that moved from Portland to domestic ports at large was worth \$16,422,942, a total value of \$40,735,753 for the year's business.

One of the striking features of a resume of the coastwise and general domestic commerce movement is that, contrary to a material curtailing of

tonnage for that trade, inasmuch as numerous steamers were chartered from the Coast fleet to carry offshore cargoes, the depression experienced through the war abroad and the sudden closing of the Panama Canal, the movement of cargo from Pacific Coast ports only fell off in valuation from \$27,918,419 in 1914 to \$25,611,558 last year. Much the same story is told by the figures governing the movement from Portland, the total for 1914 having been \$17,758,919 and for last year \$15,353,416.

But, in adding the valuation of all domestic commerce for each of those years, 1915 is ahead by \$1,532,554, accounted for by the fact the Panama Canal movement between Portland and other parts of the United States was greater during the past year. This city stands forth as having the best service from ocean carriers with California ports of any northern harbor. Taking in the entire Columbia River it is far advanced in that respect as the crack new turbiners, Northern Pacific and Great Northern, were placed

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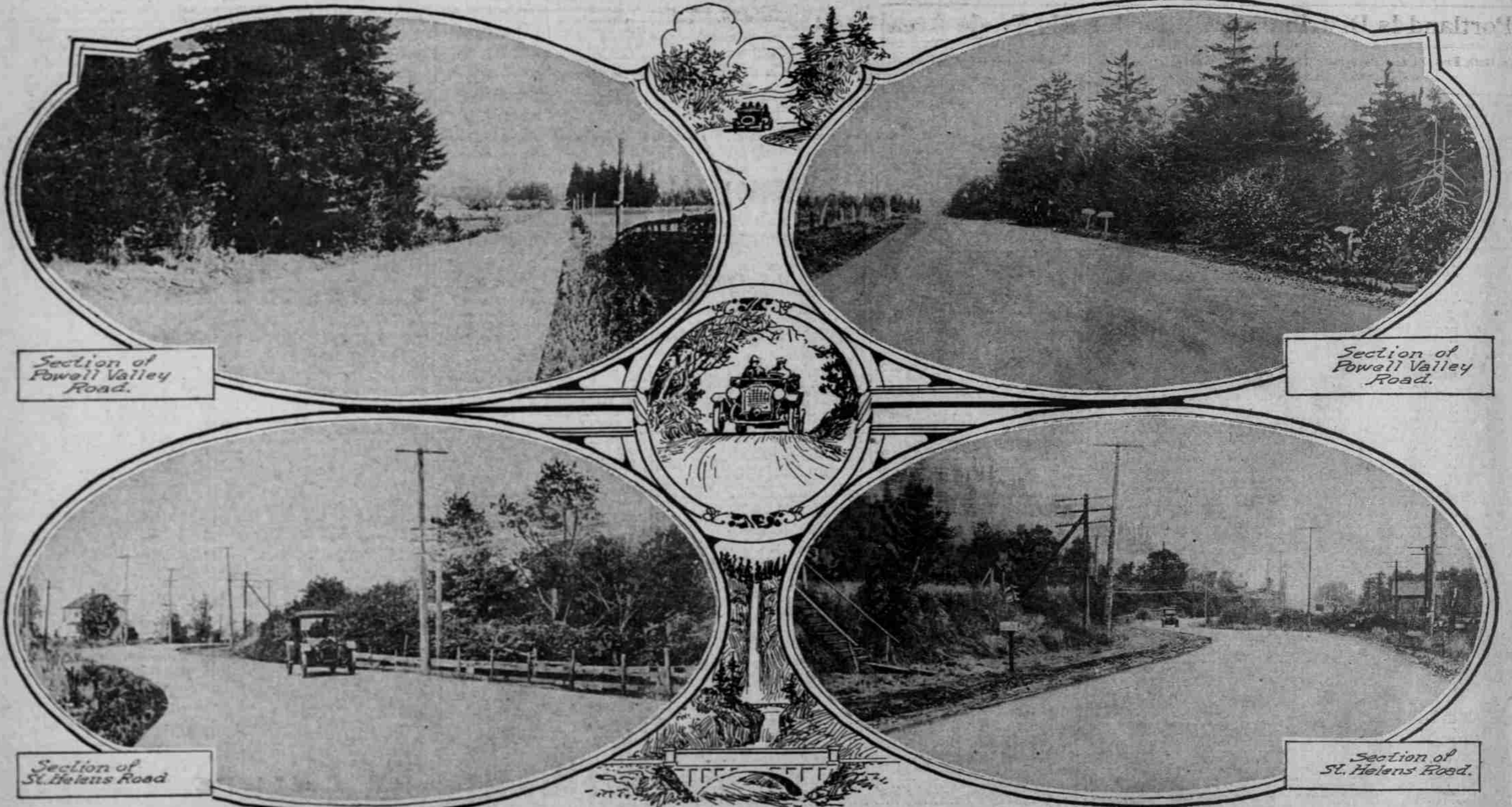
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in operation early in the season between San Francisco and Flavel, making connection with Portland by rail, road, and thousands of passengers and tons of cargo were handled that way. In the way of direct lines between Portland and San Francisco is the "Big Three" fleet, the Beaver, Bear and Rose City, operating on a five-day schedule to San Francisco and Los Angeles. The North Pacific Steamship Company has operated two vessels in the freight and passenger service to San Francisco, Los

Angeles and San Diego, the Roonoke and Geo. W. Elder, in addition to the F. A. Kilburn, and, until recently, the Santa Clara, from Portland to San Francisco, calling in Coos Bay and Humboldt Bays on the way. Not the least of the vessels that have a most important part in the port's business are steam schooners, the Klamath, Multnomah, Willamette, Cello, Wapama and Yosemite being operated by the McCormick Steamship Company in the passenger and freight

trade, with the Prisco, Daisy Gadsby, Daley Putnam and others at times in the Arrow line cargo service, and more coming in the Parr-McCormick line, bringing general cargo north and loading back with lumber. Grain and lumber form the south-bound cargoes of the steam schooner coterie. On the liners move grain, paper, fruits, both fresh and canned; condensed milk and a regular list of manufactured articles. Northbound, virtually all bring grocery stocks for

wholesalers distributing from Portland, as well as supplying the home market, sugar, salt and canned goods being the leading commodities of that kind, while on the steam schooners many of them are laden with the same class of freight, sometimes carrying deckloads of asphalt as well, and there are others of the same type that are utilized for the northbound voyage in the transportation of cement and asphalt, all of which California now supplies to this market.



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