

Rich Area of About 29,500,000 Acres in Interior Oregon to Be Served by Strahorn Railroad System

District Now Without Modern Transportation Facilities Will Have Outlet to Three Distinct Railway Lines—Natural Resources Tremendous—Financing of Project Seems Assured.

By Mark Woodruff.
WITH the line of the Oregon, California & Eastern Railway Company definitely located for 25 miles north of Lakeview, there can be but one obstacle that will prevent the big railway project for the development of Central Oregon reaching completion—the failure of Oregon to come forward with the financial support that is necessary to insure the Eastern investor to get in money. A committee of strong men has given the situation careful consideration, however, and it is believed that if President Robert E. Strahorn had not temporarily retired from the field to assure a severe cold, they would have been most acceptable arrangements to send to the world this New Year's morning.

Along the segment of the proposed line to the north of Lakeview the right of way is being acquired, while the engineers for the company are driving to the north as fast as they can move in the winter season. The indications are of permanent in the plans of Mr. Strahorn and sounds an encouraging note to the ear of the man who has entertained the hope that the road would never be constructed.

System to Be Independent.

The Oregon, California & Eastern Railway is to be an independent railway system of approximately 200 miles, all within the state of Oregon. That is, the road will not be controlled by any of the great railway corporations engaged in transcontinental traffic through the new road will connect with them on the north, east and south, where it will turn over the carriage of land products and minerals destined for the markets of the world.

It is planned that the system can be constructed at a cost of \$15,000 per mile, or \$3,750,000. On the south, in which vicinity the engineers are now at work, the State of Oregon is entered by the line of the Nevada, California & Oregon Railway, which terminates at Lakeview, where the Strahorn road begins. On the east lies Warner Valley, which the new road will serve. Going north, it crosses the Warner and Abernethy, the great saline deposits belonging to the state, and then the route passes on to Silver Lake.

Going back again to the south line

of Oregon, it is found that the Southern Pacific Company has a road running to Klamath Falls and serving the great irrigated section of Klamath Valley, an Oregon section of vast resources which is now tributary to California markets. The Strahorn system will send a line from Klamath Falls northward to Silver Lake, where a junction will be made with the line from Lakeview.

Vast Area to Be Served.

In the district which these lines of railroad will serve are 29,500,000 acres of land. Ten million acres are tillable, either through systems of irrigation or by dry farming. About 4,000,000 acres of swamp lands can be reclaimed when the capital is available to undertake this vast work.

The number of beef cattle now in Central Oregon is estimated at 1,000,000 sheep. Its mineral resources are enormous. Mr. Strahorn was first induced to become interested in the now proposed railroad by an invitation sent to him soon after his retirement from the presidency of the Portland, Eugene & Eastern Railway was announced. The letter expressed regret that he was about to return to his home in Spokane and asked him to investigate the vast Central Oregon country and the possibility of its development by railroad building. The letter was signed by A. L. Mills, John E. Young, H. C. Wortman, C. C. Colt, W. F. Woodward, I. Lang, H. W. Mitchell, Ben Helling, Emory Olmstead, R. L. Pittcock, Franklin T. Griffith, W. W. Leadbetter, Henry E. Reed, Julius Meier, John A. Keating.

Frank E. Smith, F. A. Freeman, T. B. Wilcox, C. S. Jackson, F. W. Mulkey, E. L. Thompson, Henry John, J. C. Alms, Adolph Wolfe, Nathan Strauss, E. G. Crawford, O. M. Clark, John T. Douglall, Phil Metcham and E. Hinson. Mr. Strahorn spent several weeks in Central Oregon in making a personal investigation. He traveled in a stock, by means of a horseback and secured a vast fund of first-hand information as to the possibilities of the territory.

Complete Survey Made.

In October Mr. Strahorn called the signers of the letter into conference and frankly related the story of conditions. He pointed out that five railroads had balked at penetrating the vast interior of that region; told of failures that had been made by irrigation and development companies because of lack of transportation facilities in many instances, and of others that must be removed from mismanagement, and he told of the tremendous areas that would produce no tonnage for transportation until settlement is had. Mr. Strahorn called attention to the fact that this must be a "pioneering railroad," constructed and operated at the lowest conceivable cost.

At that meeting a committee, composed of A. L. Mills, J. C. Almsworth, W. L. Ladd, Nathan Strauss, Franklin T. Griffith and C. C. Colt, was named to cooperate with Mr. Strahorn.

In November members of the committee, accompanied by Mr. Strahorn and others to Bend, where the Central Oregon Development League was organized, and at which time Mr. Strahorn committed himself to the building of the Oregon, California & Eastern. Accompanied by C. C. Chapman, editor of the Oregon Voter, Mr. Strahorn then toured Central Oregon and at every village from Bend to Klamath Falls the citizens greeted him with enthusiastic support to the project.

In brief, that is the history of the new project to date. What might have been added to it is that Mr. Strahorn became ill will have to remain for another story. It can be said, however, that the committee of Portland men who are working with Mr. Strahorn are giving loyal support, that hundreds of citizens have come forward with offers to help to the limit of their abilities.

ROAD PROJECTS ARE BIG AID TO HOOD RIVER

Columbia River Highway Important Factor for County Development—Fostering Growth.

By E. E. Scott, Secretary Hood River Commercial Club.
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN saw the opening up of the various links which opened up a water grade road from the Hood River to the Pacific Ocean via Fortland, Kansas as the Columbia River Highway, this road when hard surfaced in 1915 will mean more to Hood River County than any one thing that could have been done in the Northwest. It places Hood River on one of the main lines of tourist travel from all of America in the Pacific Northwest. It has accumulated road building inside the county as nothing else could have done. One of the roads to be built will pass through the logged-off lands of the big lumber companies, which offer opportunities presented nowhere else in the Northwest. While the work of clearing is heavy, the lands are of excellent quality and all are under irrigation. Planted to fruit or diverted to hay-raising or dairying, they will furnish homes to hundreds who are wise enough to realize the opportunity and eagerly go to work.

The 1915 strawberry crop averaged high in quality and brought the highest price ever realized in the county, while less in quantity than 1914, is bringing much higher prices. Dairying and hograising advanced rapidly in 1915 and where in 1914 there were but 121 swine in Hood River County, the number of head now is estimated at 3000. Cows have increased from 484 to about double that number. A secondary has been in successful operation for over a year and has increased its product from supplying the local demand, to shipping to the Columbia River. At least \$100,000 worth of hay was raised among the orchards, which had in previous years been shipped in from Eastern Oregon and Idaho.

Only about one-half of the tillable land in the valley is in cultivation and settlers who will take advantage of the present conditions in securing some of this land are assured of a prosperous future if they will tackle the problem seriously.

GROWERS' ASSOCIATION AID TO TWO COUNTIES

Cooperation of Standard Products and Obtaining Proper Distribution Areas of Lion-Benton Farmers.

By Dr. J. H. Roberts, President Albany Commercial Club.
IN my opinion the greatest need in our community is intensified farming and standardization of products, with co-operation in selling. I think the organization of the Lion-Benton Growers' Association, if the present plans are carried out, will do more toward the development of this county and adjacent sections of other counties and offer more to the prospective home-seeker than anything else accomplished during the year. The Lion-Benton Growers' Association was organized under the laws of Oregon as a strictly co-operative association, with a capital stock of \$25,000.

The object of the association is to promote the growing of standard and marketable products by its members, to find a market through a central agency, with offices, warehouses and necessary by-products plants at Albany, with canneries and other plants and products located elsewhere in Lion and Benton counties wherever most needed to insure handling fruits, vegetables and other products with the least possible loss.

From the work already accomplished by the association it appears as if it would be able to carry out the program outlined within the next three or four years, and, if so, it will assist very materially in solving the problem of the small grower and add greatly to the prosperity of the community.

RAIL AND DREDGING WORK RUSHED IN COOS

Additional Shipping Facilities Will Help to Develop County Rapidly—Dredging Important Industry.

By Hugh McLeish, President Marshfield Chamber of Commerce.
DURING the year 1914 several factors combined to bring about on Coos Bay and in Coos County the most important development in the history of the locality. A new epoch of advancement has been opened by the completion of work which had been started and by the introduction of larger and more advanced plants. Probably the most important development was the construction of the

ROAD WORK GAINS IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

In Past Year 23 Miles of Macadam Highways Were Built—Better Marketing Conditions Result.

By S. C. Killeen, Hillsboro, Or.
PERHAPS the most important feature of Washington County's progress during 1915 was the addition of 23 miles of macadam highway to the improved roads of the county and provision made at the different road district meetings just held that insure continuation of the work during 1916. At these meetings special levies ranging from 2 1/2 to 3 mills were voted in 23 districts, the amount realized being approximately \$60,000. As the county budget provides \$137,000 for road purposes, Washington County will be in a position to complete the coming year. A proposed improvement of interest to Portland motorists is the hard-surfacing of the Hillsboro Forest Grove road at an expense of \$21,000.

In considering road improvements in this county it is interesting to remember that all permanent building has been done within the last five years. In that time roads that may be traveled at all seasons have been constructed to market and shipping centers from practically all sections. An important improvement of this nature recently completed was the road from the New Salem Valley to Lakeview, known as Timber. Its completion makes it possible for residents to journey to Portland in one day, where several days formerly were required, and provides a means of marketing the produce of this isolated district.

BUSINESS CONDITIONS GOOD IN UNION COUNTY

General Farm Production Showed Notable Increase in 1915—Plans to Improve Markets Under Way.

By F. B. Curry, Secretary La Grande Commercial Club.
WITH the passing of 1915 Union County begins the New Year with flattering prospects. During the past 12 months business generally was good, while the output of the farms was larger than in former years. The people of Union County are prosperous and are looking forward to still better times this year.

The wheat yield in the county was larger than usual, due to an increased acreage of wheat. Livestock showed an increase during the year and fruit production also made an appreciable gain.

One of the most important movements during the year was the inauguration of better marketing plans. The business interests of Union County are co-operating in every way to obtain a ready market for products. Satisfactory results already have been secured. The spirit of co-operation undoubtedly will be a stimulus to farmers to increase their production this year.

NEW ELECTRIC LINE BENEFITS CLACKAMAS

Rick District Is Tapped and Intensive Farming to Follow—Opportunities for Home-seekers Big.

By T. W. Sullivan, President Oregon City Chamber of Commerce.
IN my opinion the most important development in Clackamas County in 1915 was the completion of and putting into regular operation the Willamette Valley Southern Railway. This new electric railway starts at Oregon City, the county seat of Clackamas County, and extends easterly for a few miles, then in a general southerly direction, passing through Beaver Creek, Milton, Liberal, Molalla and on into Marion County, terminating near Mount Angel, 25 miles from Oregon City and its present southern terminus.

The country through which this railway passes is ideal, presenting beautiful landscapes, including splendidly developed and developing farms, crossed and watered by brooks and streams, and heavily timbered sections and mountains within full view in the distance. The country tributary to and served by this electric railway is not only scenic but is also a very rich farming section, having a deep, rich soil adapted to the growing of many varieties of grain, grasses and of all kinds of farm produce, as well as to dairying, the raising of livestock and poultry.

With the completion of this railway line, in addition to the splendid freight, express and passenger service it is rendering to the thrifty towns and farming communities along and tributary to it, it will be a great factor in promoting their greater development and improvement, many large tracts of the finest merchantable timber have been brought within reach of the markets and logging branches extending from the main line of the railway into the timber sections have been projected.

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STEADY GAINS MADE IN BAKER COUNTY

Livestock and Dairying Industries Make Gains—Improvement in Mining and Lumbering Noted.

By W. E. Mescham, Secretary Baker Commercial Club.
BAKER COUNTY during 1915 made substantial progress in all lines. There was an increase in general farm production, while the mining and lumbering industries were in a healthy condition. Good prices for farm products prevailed generally, with the result that the farmers are in good shape financially.

The livestock industry is making steady gains in Baker County, while more attention than formerly is being given to dairying. Two large cheese factories have been established in Pine Valley and are operating steadily.

Mining activity in Baker County is now on a conservative basis. The output of the mines is showing a steady increase. The production of yellow pine lumber was up to the average and the prospects for this year are still more encouraging for the lumber industry.

YEAR OF 1915 MOST PROSPEROUS FOR LAKE

Output of Livestock Large and High Prices Obtained—New Irrigation Projects Reclaim Big Area.

By H. M. Nolle, Lakeview, Or.
LAKE COUNTY in 1915 had a most prosperous year as compared with many other sections of the Pacific Coast, principally due to the fact that its greatest industry, that of stock-raising, found a market ready with top-notch prices for all products. Thousands of horses were sold to the foreign army agents; cattle were marketed for a very good price and the sheepmen especially were rewarded with an unusually high price for their wool and mutton. The beginning of 1915 finds Lake County in the best financial condition that it has seen for several years past. The three banks in Lakeview, Or. have assets to the amount of \$1,500,000 and their business is in the most satisfactory condition.

Logging operations of Lake County has received a great deal of attention this year. The irrigation enterprise in the Silver Lake country, which at Paisley have been started and in a few years these localities promise to be veritable garden spots. At Lakeview the Goose Lake Valley Irrigation Company finished the first water for the 1915 crops. The fertile sagebrush lands, which heretofore had been used for dry farming, this year raised all kinds of grains. There were three cuttings of alfalfa, wheat yielded as high as 45 bushels per acre, oats and barley went beyond all expectations, vegetables and root crops produced enormous returns and the indications are that Coos Lake Valley, in a few years, will be the equal if not the superior of any irrigated section in Oregon.

Among the most attractive opportunities which this district offers to home-seekers are dairying, small fruit growing and truck farming. Thousands of acres suitable for those industries are available, with a never-failing crop and good market facilities, the success of any one's launching into any one of those lines is assured.

Daniel Kern, President

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NEW RAILROAD BOON TO EUGENE DISTRICT

Willamette-Pacific Line Big Factor in Lane County Development—Diversified Farming Profitable.

By B. Dike Hooper, Secretary Eugene Commercial Club.
PERHAPS the most notable single development in Lane County during 1915 was the completion of the coast of the Willamette-Pacific Railroad, which will, when completed, give Eugene direct connection with Coos Bay, Siuslaw River points on a daily schedule over one of the finest pieces of permanent construction in Western Oregon. For years the interior of Lane County has been stifled and the coast people were determined to have a road and that the traffic justified main line construction, the Southern Pacific Company took over the rights of way of local capitalists and have opened the front door to a county nearly as large as the State of Connecticut.

Coupled with the railroad development has come additional improvement of Siuslaw harbor, accomplished jointly by Lane County and the Government at an expenditure of \$450,000. It is now possible to ship single lumber car-loads of 1,000,000 board feet in perfect safety. This was demonstrated on September 2, when the steamship Grace Dollar cleared with a cargo of this amount. An ever-improving water outlet for Lane County's 60,000,000 feet of Douglas fir is thus assured.

Desirable Government land in Lane County, suitable for settlement, has long been taken up. The great opportunities for settlers in this county today are in dairying, hograising and diversified farming.

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