

BANK DEPOSITS TELL STORY OF PROGRESS

Centralia Rounds Out One of Best Years in History.

BRIGHT FUTURE IN SIGHT

Many New Store Buildings and Dwellings Indicate Prosperity of Thriving Washington City.

BY ADDISON BENNETT.
CENTRALIA, Wash., Jan. 4.—(Special Correspondence.)—It is just a year since my last visit to Centralia. I must confess it has made a year of prosperity for this fine little city and if conditions are to be judged by appearances, observations and painstaking talks with some of the leading citizens, I feel that it never before had as rosy an outlook as it has today. Those who remember the troubles mentioned in the article that has beset the city during the last six or seven years, such as strikes, fever epidemic and bank failures, need not be told that it took a people of courage and stamina to weather those adverse storms. But they were weathered and I will go back and say again that Centralia never before had as rosy an outlook for the future as it has at the beginning of the year of 1919.

I think one of the speediest ways to show that all of the traces of the financial troubles have been obliterated, will be to give the statements of the three banks as made on the first day of last November. The most important, in the measure of deposits, is the Farmers & Merchants Bank. Its capital and surplus on the date mentioned was \$91,413.11; its deposits were \$170,000.14. The officers of this bank are as follows: H. H. Rhodes, president; B. E. Johnston and W. B. Keir, vice-presidents, and C. Paul Ulmann, cashier. This bank has one of the most stately and commodious banking houses of any city of the size in the West.

Guaranty Bank is Young.
The First Guaranty Bank is second in deposits, with \$22,747.64, capital and surplus \$33,356.83. The president is J. E. Fitzgerald, the vice-president and cashier is Albert Smith. This is rather a fledgling of a bank, being only 37 months old. It was founded by the purchase of the old Field & Luce Bank, which had deposits of a little more than \$200,000. On November 1, of that year, 1914, the deposits had grown to \$227,693.07.

The guiding hands and minds in this deal were the officials mentioned, but their associates in the direction and ownership at this time are George E. Smith, E. B. Fitzgerald and Ethel L. Neal. Their deposits on November 1, of that year, were \$22,747.64, the capital and surplus \$33,356.83.

I do not know when I have come across a bank in recent years that has made a finer record than that. The officers pride themselves on their fine quarters and the fact that their handsome fixtures were made in Centralia of Washington fir by Centralia workmen. They have only \$5,156.36 invested in fixtures and equipment.

The Centralia State Bank has deposits of \$253,779.96, a capital and surplus of \$114,132.72. W. J. Patterson is the president, A. U. Dann, vice-president. This bank owns a very handsome building in a good location in the business district of the main street.

Bank Deposits Are Huge.
In justice to all of these banks it should be said that if the date of the statement was January 1 instead of November 1, the totals would be something like \$75,000 more for each bank. But as it is my record as given does not fully show the strength of the Centralia banks nor does it give their easy financial condition, for they all have far more cash and exchange than the law calls for. In other words the financial condition of the city may be said to be of the very best.

As usual in cases where I have to write about a community, I went here first to the Commercial Club, of which Albert Smith, of the First Guaranty Bank, is the president. After an interview with him and the secretary, Newell S. Wight, whom I found to be a returned soldier. He just got home the night before my arrival, but he found his future work all out for him. He was a little rusty as to the improvements made here during his absence, but he took me around to those who knew and could inform me. Usually this club has occupied very handsome club-rooms, and will probably open them up with improvements in the near future. Their old reliable secretary is on the job again. Mr. Wight is a very popular young man and his friends were glad to welcome him home with no scars of battle upon him.

Daily Newspapers Are Asset.
There are two daily evening newspapers in Centralia. The Centralia Chronicle began its publication when the town was on paper, or up in the air. That was in 1890. Ray W. Edinger is the business manager, H. L. Bras is editor and Vance H. Noel is city editor. This paper has a finely equipped office, does a big line of job work in an excellent manner, and is well edited and conducted in every way. You will find in the Centralia Chronicle pushing with its every energy any movement for the upbuilding of Centralia, Lewis County or the state of Washington. It has never been a slacker but always doing more than its full duty.

Many New Buildings Rise.
It would take more time than I have to go over the improvements made here in the way of buildings during the past year. I think I could find 25 store buildings in 25 minutes that have during that time been remodeled or reconstructed. They during the past few months Messrs. Smith, Fitzgerald, Field and others have erected a fine theater, the Liberty. This structure cost \$75,000 and is used as a picture house. It will seat 1000 people. This house would do credit to the city of Seattle or Portland—it is a perfect gem for a city of the size of Centralia.

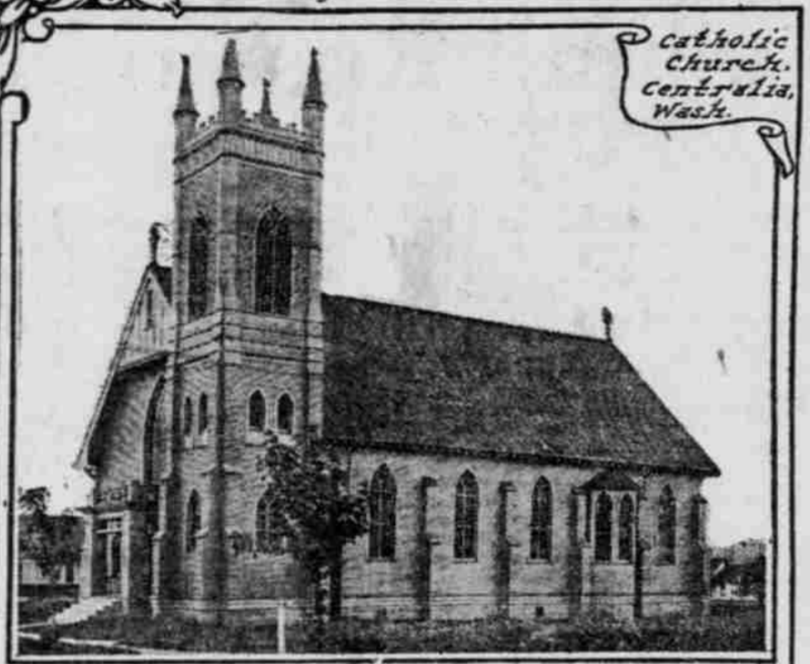
SCENES AT HUSTLING SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON CITY OF CENTRALIA.



Hotel Centralia, Centralia, Wash.



High School, Centralia, Wash.



Catholic Church, Centralia, Wash.

dozen railways emerging from this busy little city. There are acres and acres of land in the great railway yards, which cover more ground than do the yards of many cities in the country 10 times the size of Centralia. It was to fill a great want of switch room that brought the town into existence. It was primarily simply a railroad town, and always will be, for it truly is like a hub, with each of its spokes representing a railway; but you would have to have nearly 20 spokes if each through line was set down as both running in and out of the yards here. Had it not been for the great amount paid here each month to the railway workers during the financial and other troubles of a few years ago Centralia would be now but a memory; but that great payroll saved the day for the town.

Hospital Under Construction.
I started in a page or so back to mention the improvements that have been made here, but stopped before I got fairly started. One of the structures now going up is a large hospital, which will have both surgical and medical departments. Dr. L. A. Scace is the prime mover in this enterprise. And the city has a school building, the Edison, in course of construction. This building will cost about \$50,000. As to residences I think there are a couple of dozen, anyway, that have been put up since last Spring. Some of them are quite expensive structures.

I might go on and tell of many other improvements of great or minor importance. But I have two subjects, three in fact, to touch upon. First, the chances are bright for a state normal school to be erected here. There are three such schools now in the state, each sustained by a tax of one-tenth of a mill per annum. These schools are located at Bellingham, Cheney and Ellensburg. So it looks like the various Legislatures had provided for every section of the state except the southwestern portion, the 14 southwestern counties having to send their pupils at least as far as Ellensburg. The claims of the county are so good that such a school has come near being located here by more than one Legislature.

Normal School is Eyed.
But now, from the farthest settler in the east end of the county to the farthest on the west, and from the northernmost to the southernmost, there is unanimity, cordial co-operation, even a

camaraderie of labor and effort. Indeed, the whole county is unitedly asking for that school. Formerly, sometimes even in crucial hours, there has not been that active fellowship between the people of Centralia and Chehalis. But now the people of Chehalis aim to a man and woman say that Centralia must have that normal school, and the best fighters Centralia will have before the Legislature will be from the old rival town, Chehalis.

Much Land is Available.
I have just one more subject to touch upon, and it appears to me that from the standpoint of a citizen of Centralia it ought to be the foremost subject before the people of the city today. I am simply going to outline it in a few terse sentences. Lying to the north and east of the city are two so-called prairies, sections of open country. One of these is called Poind's Prairie and the other Waunche's Prairie. To be suitable to raise agricultural crops this area of about 3000 acres, lying in the front yard of Centralia, needs irrigation. And right now, if not through it, flows the Skookumchuck River, carrying sufficient water to irrigate every acre of it, carrying it and emptying it into the Chehalis River to be quickly lost in the ocean.

To utilize this water no great reservoir, no great dam, no expensive work is needed. Just a little dam of diversion a few miles up in the hills and the canal for carrying the water. The work could be done for \$10 an acre, the water and the land is ready for the hands of the people of Lewis County, Centralia. Will they take it in hand? No finer opportunity for a promoter exists in the West than this. But let the promoter be a citizen of Lewis County and let the work be given out to the men who own the land or who will buy it. Surely if the people of the county are the wide-awake people they claim to be they will take this project up at once. If they want homes to offer the returning soldiers here lie 75 40-acre homes, now worthless, only awaiting the water that

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PEOPLES NEWS PICTORIAL COMEDY AND LITERARY DIGEST "SCHOLL"—Master Picture Organist

Flu Claims Two at Cottage Grove.

COTTAGE GROVE, Or., Jan. 4.—(Special.)—Influenza has claimed but two in this end of the county during the

past two weeks, although two further deaths are thought possible unless there is a quick turn for the better. With these exceptions the epidemic seems to be well under control and the total number of cases has decreased appreciably during the past two weeks in the city particularly the situation

has greatly improved. The second of the two deaths of the past two weeks occurred today, Rudy Cline, of Mosby Creek, being the victim. He suffered from exposure two weeks ago when a tree fell on his house and demolished the building. He and Mrs. Cline were compelled to seek shelter at a neighbor's and walked a mile in the cold scantily clad. Dry slabwood and blocks. Holman Fuel Co., Main 353, A 3333.—Adv. About one-half the population of persons bathe at very trivial cost.

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