SECTION SIX

Oregon Journal

SUNDAY WITH HER THE NEWS AND WRITINGS

OREGON ELECTRIC LINE SECTION

PORTLAND, OREGON, SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 17, 1908.

INTERURBAN ELECTRIC LINES HELP CITY PROGRESS

EXTENSIVE SYSTEM OF GREAT LOCAL BENEFIT

About 1,000 Acres of New Lots Have Been Platted Along Oregon Electric Railway—Rapid Advance in Prices.

With the advent of electric interurban railroads in adition to the extensive streetcar transportation facilities already enjoyed, South Portland has undergone a magical change in the last year. It is estimated that about 1,000 acres of new lots have been platted within or adjoining the city limits, and hundreds of acres lying out in small acreage tracts that are selling rapidly for gardening and small fruits.

South and southern Portland, embracing the front of the range of hills that bound the city along the west side, always have been beautiful residence districts, although not generally appreciated because of the lack of convenient transportation facilities. Fifteen years ago there was a great boom in southern Portland and Fulton Heights. People saw in this district the making of a beautiful suburban residence part of Portland.

Help Property Sales.

A company built a motor carline connecting the city with Fulton Heights, and as soon as this line was in operation prices of lots all along the front of the hills went up rapidly, and sold readily at $400 to $700 per lot. With the financial panic of 1893 the motor line collapsed and its operation ceased. The trestles across the gulches rotted away, and the prices of lots declined to almost nothing, as the beautiful property that was to be served was thus cut off from streetcar connection with the business center of the city. A few purchasers who had built homes remained on the hills and improved their places which today are among the most attractive in Portland, having a grand view of the mountains, the Willamette river and the city.

The construction of the Oregon Electric has brought all this large district again into the market, and hundreds of lots have been resold in the last year, in addition to the newly platted properties that lie along the line for a distance of five miles from the company's Jefferson street depot.

Lots within the city limits are selling at from $200 upward. Acreage tracts at the edge of the city and for two or three miles south bring from $200 to $300 per acre. The Oregon Electric is now operating nine trains each way daily, giving quick service and making stops at the following stations within and near the city: Corbett street, Fulton Park, Capitol Hill, Alder Springs and Multnomah, the latter station being five miles from the Jefferson street depot. The fare is 5 cents to Corbett street, Fulton Park and Capitol Hill, 10 cents to Alder Springs and 10 cents to Multnomah. A commutation ticket makes the fare to Alder Springs and Multnomah 8 cents, and there is a book of 52 tickets that reduces the Alder Springs fare as low as 5 cents.

Trains to Salem.

The running time between Multnomah and the Jefferson street depot is 20 minutes. Of the 18 daily trains, 12 are through trains between Portland and Salem, and six are termed Wilsonville locals, going only as far as the Willamette river bridge at that point and then turning back to Portland.

The electric railway company has built carbarns and shops at Porter and Hood streets, and employs there 20 men. There are also regularly employed 18 trainmen, who live in the vicinity. The broad level land lying along the west bank of the Willamette in the neighborhood of Fulton is admirably adapted to manufacturing industries, and will undoubtedly develop rapidly along this line. There are good sites for lumber and furniture factories, canneries, car building shops, foundries, ship building plants and other industries. A large lumber mill and box factory will be built on ground south of the Jones lumber mill, and is the forerunner of other similar mills.

Trackage facilities in South Portland are becoming very extensive. A glance at the map shows that South Portland has five important transportation lines, each one independent of the other. They are the Southern Pacific's interurban line to Oswego, the United Railways company now building on Macadam street, the Oregon Electric, the Portland Railway, Light & Power company's line to Riverview cemetery and the Southern Pacific's Fourth street line—all running through South Portland. No other part of the city can boast of so many independent transportation lines.

New Townsites.

Excursions to suburban tracts and new townsites along the Oregon Electric are becoming common incidents. The Spanton company has laid out 200 acres in lots at Alder Springs. Roger Sinnott has platted 100 acres inside the south limits of the city. Madison Villa, an addition of 40 acres, has been platted by F. Breske. Clohessy & Smith are putting Capitol Hill on the market, and making extensive improvements throughout the property. They are opening a broad street and building a wide wagon bridge to give connection through the addition to Capitol Hill station on the electric line.

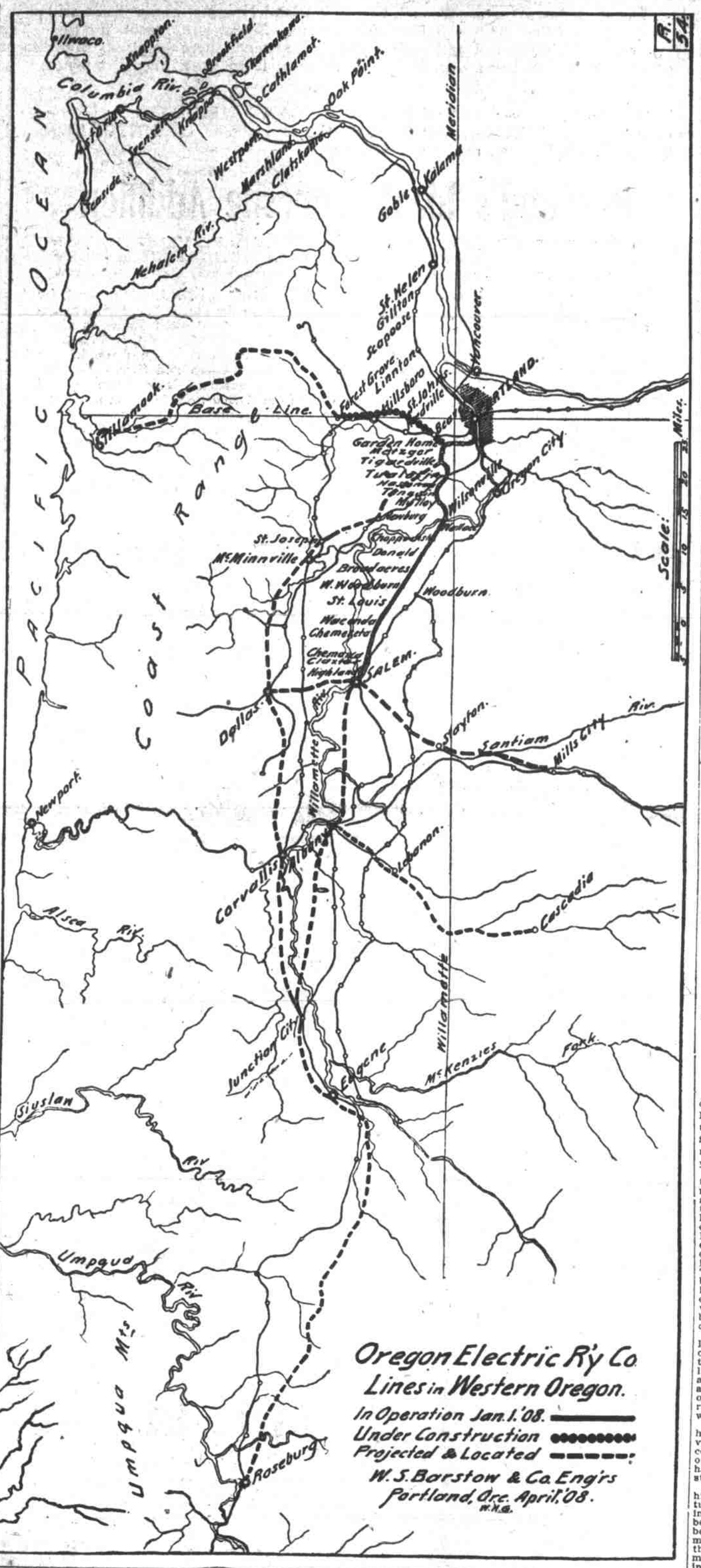
Chapin & Herlow have put on a tract at Multnomah, the first station beyond Alder Springs. South Portland Heights, well within the city, is placed on the market by L. O. Ralston. The old Terwilliger homestead property of upwards of 200 acres has been platted and much of it sold in residence lots by J. C. Costello. Ground has been cleared and the site formally dedicated for a large Catholic school to be built at Corbett street and Slavin road. There are now 2,500 feet of cement sidewalks under construction in the Terwilliger tract.

In this tract Fletcher Linn, president of the Oregon Furniture Manufacturing company, secured a large block of lots and sold them at cost to the factory's employes, who have built many neat cottages and bungalows.

Further out along the line of the Oregon Electric a great gardening and small fruit growing region is being developed. A tract of 4,000 acres has just been offered for platting. Around Garden Home, for years famous as a vegetable and small fruit section, many acres are being placed under cultivation. The Metzger acre tracts a short distance beyond Garden Home, are selling rapidly for truck gardens and country homes.

When all is said and done the Willamette valley has made Portland what she is today, and this new line means five times as many people on the north bank of the Willamette in 10 to 15 years as there is today.

"Although land now can be had for $100 an acre along this line, in five years the best of it cannot be touched for less than $1,000 an acre. A dairy within 20 miles of Portland to the south is today a hopeless proposition—for instance, because it takes so long to get the milk to the city. Now put in the new electric line, lay the milk down here within 20 to 45 minutes after it is cooled right from the cow, and you see what a dairy is worth, even if 20 miles away. The land now good only for ordinary farming and worth from $50 to $100 for that purpose will clearly be worth 10 times as much for dairying, chickens, berries and truck gardens, to say nothing about suburban homes for people working in the city who want to live in the country and go and come as they do in all big eastern cities. When you put Salem as near as is Vancouver you make the land in between worth just what it is between here and Vancouver. Next to the north bank road, the deepening of the Columbia bar, this new line is the greatest thing that ever happened to this city.



SOUTHWEST SECTION OF CITY ATTRACTIVE

Streetcar Lines Have Helped Populate One of Most Favorable Districts—Opening of the Valley Road Will Aid Portland.

The southwest portion of this city is the section more than any other favored by nature and it is the judgment of all far-seeing men that it is destined to attract the bulk of the population as time grows on.

It is true that Southwest Portland has not in the past kept pace with the development of other parts of the city, for which cause there is good and sufficient reason until now. Principally, the lack of transportation facilities has retarded the progress of this favored section of the city, but now that the Oregon Electric railway (the Portland and Salem line) is completed and in operation the condition has greatly changed within the last 90 days, so much so that Rip Van Winkle, who was wont to dwell there, will know it no more.

Unlike other portions of the city, it took money to build this railroad through South Portland; in fact, millions from the start, because it necessitated the purchase of the entire right of way, to say nothing of the immense cost of construction; hence South Portland has had to wait all these years for the men who at last have appeared and successfully completed this great enterprise.

The immense benefit that will accrue to the city of Portland and to the valley traversed by the Oregon Electric railway will prove inestimable. Within the last 90 days, since the completion of this main line of the Oregon Electric railway, there has been more real demand by actual settlers, and not speculators, for 5 and 10-acre tracts along this line, and more bonafide transfers for all cash have been consummated from Wilsonville to Portland than has taken place in the same territory for 40 years.

The same is true of Southwest Portland. Take, for instance, the section of the city lying south of Seymour avenue, that beautiful slope, a stretch of high ground overlooking the Willamette river extending to the schoolhouse at Fulton Park, more than a mile in distance. Prior to the building of this line it was practically inaccessible. Go and observe the change now; and yet while South Portland despaired for a long time of getting a railroad until the Oregon Electric railway appeared, it is an indisputable fact that real property in that vicinity, by men of good judgement, was deemed the best investment and would prove so, because it is the experience of all that cities in the United States the great growth takes place and values attain a higher figure ultimately in the south and west sections of every large city. Portland certainly will not prove an exception to other cities. I simply mention these facts that, no matter how difficult the obstacles to overcome appear in the way of building in these directions, the expansion of all great cities is to the west and south finally, and, as I said before, in those directions apparently real property attains its highest permanent value.

With the branch lines to be built by the Oregon Electric railway from the main line, which branch lines are now under construction, this city will be drawn into daily communication with many thousands of people. The territory now traversed by this line and the extensions under way is susceptible of greater results than any other part of the state, from the fact that the land is unquestionably the best, the soil is good, the water the very best and plenty of it. The capabilities of 5 and 10-acre tracts of land along this line for garden purposes will sustain a family industriously inclined in comfortable circumstances.

Such tracts of land as I refer to above can now be bought reasonably cheap; cheaper than the same land can ever again be bought, naturally so. My advice to those who read this letter is to go at once to the southwestern portion of this city, take a look at those hills, with absolutely no intention of investment, and then watch the condition for a few years. Don't buy, but simply watch the transformation. This is high-class property, not cheap stuff; every bound will be a thousand dollars at a time. The thought will many times recur to you in cogitating with yourself you could have bought with a few hundred what now is selling for many thousands of dollars. The same condition will not prevail in any other part of Portland, as this section is the only choice part, and with the boulevard now contemplated and soon to be built, skirting the sides of these beautiful hills in South Portland, with the magnificent panorama before the eyes of the visitor, do you think you can make cheap property of that? Well, if you do you have another "thing coming." In the past, as I stated, people have followed the line of least resistance, notwithstanding this very desirable locality. They would take a look at these hills, and from the fact there was no transportation they would get footsore and hie themselves to the east side level land, which accounts for the population in that section.

The greater advance in values from now on until the end of time will take place in real property in the southwest section of this city. That fact is freely admitted by all shrewd observers.

M. J. CLOHESSY.

B. M. LOMBARD IS ENTHUSIASTIC

Believes New Country South of City Will Be Developed by the New Line.

"The new electric line from this city to Salem will affect Portland more than many people now dream," said B. M. Lombard, whose office is in the Madison building at Third street and Madison. "It will be in many ways like the early history of the real estate movement of New York city. In the early days there the main street was Canal street, that ran across the island as Washington crosses Portland. When the land was opened up to the north the main business street became Broadway, running at right angles in a general way to the former main thoroughfare.

"Now, this is just what is going to happen here, I believe, when this new country to the south of us is built up by this electric line. The main business streets of Portland will, within 15 years, run north and south instead of east and west, as now.

"Business, especially retail, follows the residences. There is no room to the west for the city to grow, the growth down the river will clearly be in the line of large manufactures, such as lumber mills and all that, and business centers seldom, if ever, have been known to jump rivers. Hence, the business growth of Portland will from now on be to the south.

"There is another thing to remember in this regard, and it is that Portland has grown in all directions heretofore except to the south. Now, it is going to spread where it can get the best land at the cheapest price that is available, and the southern portion of the city is the cheapest land in Portland. The east side has grown marvelously, in fact, has perhaps grown a trifle more in proportion that has the city as a whole, while the southern part of Portland has almost stood still. From now on the east side will not fall back, but sort of rest on its oars and let the southern sections catch up, so to speak, and perhaps even surpass it.

"The climate of this section is such that people can live in the country the year round. We have no heavy snows, for instance, to block traffic in the winter. This means that people will have suburban homes to the south of Portland along this electric line for miles.

"Salem can be reached in from 90 to 100 minutes, and in time it can be reached in an even hour on express trains, just as are now run between Seattle and Tacoma. This means practically one long town reaching for 50 miles to the south of Portland and ending in Salem. All this will, of course, cause the larger farms to the south up the Willamette valley to be broken up into smaller places, say five and 10-acre tracts, and cultivated intensely. This means millions of more products raised within 50 miles of Portland and marketed here. And these people must be supplied in return from Portland.

NORTHROP ACRES.

One Third of Tract Already Sold—Only Opened Couple Months.

M. E. Lee has been very busy since he platted Northrop acre tracts. He reports that one third of the addition is sold out already, in about two months' time. People are beginning to build now, one house being under construction and plans are being prepared for several more. Mr. Lee was one of the first to see the opportunities of this section afforded by the new Salem line and wisely secured the valuable Northrop tracts, which adjoin Carson Heights and Capital Hill on Taylor's Ferry road. It is only about five minutes' walk from Capital Hill station. The tract is laid out in park style with pretty trees and is the closest in acreage tract in the city. It is a bad day indeed when Mr. Lee or his associate, Mr. Logan, are not seen in their familiar automobile wending their way southward with their car full of prospective purchasers of Northrop acres. As they return the bland smiles across their dials indicate harvest time. From present indications the two L's will have to invade other fields to meet the demand of the public.

BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE.

Salem Line the Main Artery Pumping New Blood Into Suburbs.

The hillsides along the line of the Oregon Electric line are indeed pretty—remaining dormant for years on account of the wretched transportation facilities; they have not received much attention from citizens. The advent of the new line, however, has stimulated the public to hie themselves to those altitudes that afford so much scope to lovers of natural scenery. The new line begins the ascent at Corbett street and for about two miles there is a panorama of city, river and mountain scenery that rivals the Council Crest ride. Along the hillsides there are building sites par excellence, which no doubt will be covered with picturesque homes at no distant day. The problem of reaching this district is now solved, and many homes will be built this summer.

Twenty years ago the possibilities of this section were appreciated, and lots brought fabulous prices. But the abandonment of the old carline to the cemeteries gave the property a great setback, which it is only now recovering from. Values fell to almost nothing and the land remained unimproved. Since the opening of the Salem line there has been a big awakening, however, and building sites are changing hands, and many houses projected. The existing conditions today are closely analogous to Portland heights a few years ago. The trend indicates a home-building spirit and a rapid increase of values. The scarcity of west side building sites makes it compulsory for people to radiate in other directions and the direction which shows the least resistance will attract the home-builders.

Alder Spring, just beyond the hills at the head of the fertile valley, is proving a great magnet for home-builders of modern means. Being on the Oregon Electric line and only about fifteen minutes' ride and a 5c fare, lots are finding ready buyers. The Spanton company report the sale of ten lots there to Salem people alone. They sold fourteen lots last week in Fulton Park, adjoining the Corbett property. H. L. Johnson, the tract manager, has built a real estate office opposite the depot and reports a brisk inquiry and expects to be a very busy man throughout the entire summer.

S. PORTLAND HEIGHTS.

This Tract Rapidly Filling Up With Manufactories and Homes.

South Portland Heights includes Green's and Sweeney's additions in Terwilliger tract. It was platted in 1906 into three hundred and twenty-four lots, one hundred and six being sold and numerous homes and manufactories now dot the lower section from Macadam road westward. Thurston manufacturing sites have been sold and four factories are about to be built. There are twenty-five dwellings erected, eighteen of these were built in the last three months. At it takes only ten minutes to reach the tract it is favored by those whose time is limited. What makes it especially attractive is the good transit accommodation, the tract being reached by the Fulton cars, Oregon Electric, Oswego railroad, Southern Pacific, United railways, under construction on Macadam road, also by the Willamette river, the boat trip being delightful. The prices of lots range from $500 to $750. L. O. Ralston, the owner is enthusiastic over the rapid development of South Portland and looks for big things for that section of the city which has been rather overlooked of recent years and which is now astonishing everybody.

Among the improvements in this section is a three-story school completed this year. There is a basket and handle factory valued at $15,000, a mattress and spring factory valued at $35,000, a chair factory valued at $75,000, a furniture factory valued at over $100,000, a sawmill valued at $350,000, a shingle factory valued at $30,000, a box factory valued at $20,000, a saddle factory valued to $20,000, and other concerns. These are all adjacent to the Zimmerman plant recently purchased by the Schwartzschild & Sulsburger company. J. Margulis is building a four compartment flat to cost $10,000. The activity along the river front is a criterion of the future of the southwest end of the city.

LEHMAN ACRE TRACTS.

Also Situated at Metzger Station and Selling Rapidly.

The Curtiss company acquired 84 acres of very fine land at Metzger station and put it on the market only two weeks ago. So quickly has it appealed to the public that the tract is more than half sold out now. The land is mostly all cleared and sightly and is choice for vegetation. As Metzger station is only 30 minutes' ride from the city it is considered close in and the low prices of acre tracts are inducing people to secure land. The rapid transit of course is an extra inducement to those who intend raising garden truck, fruit, etc. The experience of other cities with electric feeders tapping outlying districts is that the whole country tributary to such lines enhances rapidly in value, hence the desire of securing land while the prices are at such reasonable figures. Metzger station is proving a great magnet for those seeking homesites and investments.

SALEM RAILWAY BIG IMPROVEMENT

Proves an Important Factor in Street and Interurban Transportation.

Editor The Journal—Concerning the development of the country south of Portland and to the new Oregon Electric railway, will say that I think the Salem line the most improved street railway development of the last few years.

The history of all eastern cities and those of the coast has been that these new suburban lines which give quick service over a larger area of territory are the greatest developers ever known. This has been especially well demonstrated in Los Angeles and San Francisco where suburban property, even 10 and 15 miles out, on account of quick car service are readily bringing today from $500 to $2,000 a lot. The main consideration for a suburbanite is the time required to reach his home and not the distance traversed and as the Oregon Electric railway makes very few stops, it will bring a large amount of territory within close access of the business district.

The southern portion of this city has laid dormant for a number of years on account of the physical nature of the country. On the flat there was very little ground that could be developed and unless some such suburban line as the Oregon Electric railway went out for several miles and tapped the rich valleys back of the hills, there was not enough to support a carline.

Portland heights and Willamette heights have witnessed a splendid development in the last few years on account of good car service, while some of the prettiest hills in this whole city have practically remained at a standstill.

The new railroad climbs along the hills as far as Fulton Park and then turns off into the valley, thus affording transportation to a vast area of beautiful property which has hitherto been inaccessible and I look for a tremendous up-building movement out in this section, within the next few months, as well as an enormous increase in realty values.

I have been handling a great deal of Portland heights property in the last two years and have seen property values increase enormously. There seems to be a tendency for Portland people to go to the hills and as the area of Willamette and Portland heights is extremely limited, this demand must take a new course, which along the line of least resistance is along the line of the Oregon Electric railway. Property values there are extremely low and offer the best inducement of any portion of the city for either investment or home building.

THE SPANTON COMPANY,
Per H. L. Johnson.

HERMAN METZGER FEELS CONFIDENT

Prominent Merchant and Property Holder Sees Bright Future.

"This new line will not stop at Salem by any means," said Herman Metzger, the wool and hides merchant at 238 Front street, who is a large real estate holder at Metzger station on the Salem Electric. "The Willamette is as rich as any valley in the world, and this line will in time tap every foot of it. Anyone can readily see what this will do for Portland. I understand that branches will run to the sea coast at Tillamook and to other points like that on both sides of the main line running in a general way to the south. I believe that in time this line will connect with similar lines in California to the south and in Washington to the north. But this is some time ahead. What I am interested in is the effects of this new line on property out my way right today and in the next 10 years. Last year the land about my place was worth only $100 an acre; today it is selling rapidly for $200 an acre, just double. I do not think it the least exaggeration to say that land along this line to the south as far as Salem at least will increase five times in the next 10 years. This means $1,000 an acre in 10 years, which I think is well within conservative limits.

"Distance now days is measured by time, not by the rod. In this regard it is possible in five years to run a train from Salem, 50 miles away, in the same time it takes to reach St. Johns today. Any one who wants a home in the country yet so near that the children can attend school in the city can get what they want out along this new electric line. If this sounds rather too good to be true to many who have not seen what an electric line will do for a section of country, let them look up what such lines have done in the middle west, or in New England. As everybody knows, this network of electric lines, running cars 10 times more often daily than a railroad can afford to do, has so cut into the steam railroad passenger and small freight business that the New Haven & Hartford, one of the largest railroads running out of New York City, has been compelled to buy up these lines at the cost of something like $20,000,000 to protect themselves. The east and the states like Indiana are thickly settled because the electric lines make it possible to live three, five or ten miles from some town or city and yet get right into the heart of the business center night or day in from 15 to 40 minutes and for 5 or 10 cents car fare. This gives us positive proof what this line will do for the Willamette valley and for Portland.

"Of course no one must expect the electric people to go to running fast trains every 15 minutes before the country is settled up thick enough to pay them to do so. The road brings the people and the people cause the road to increase its service. So the line with a new roadbed and no branches and but a few trains per day running at an average speed will bring in new people hunting for suburban homes or small farms or garden tracts. As these come in the service will increase, the price of land will rise. One helps the other. One thing is sure as sunrise, that this new road means millions of value added to every bit of the Willamette valley. In years to come it means an electric line from Los Angeles to Vancouver, B. C. but that is too far ahead to consider now. From here to Salem is enough for me just now."