

PICTURESQUE WALLOWA

Experiences of Three Good Roads
Missionaries From Portland in Oregon's
Most Northeasterly
County Where There
Are But Three
People to Every
Square Mile

Written for The Journal by Marshall N. Dana.

MEMORY paints a cascading stream which twists a rushing way through the deep and ragged gash it has made in the hard rock of the red mountains. Above—the blue of the sky, the gold of the sun. Below—the road, a slender line lacing the gorge, and a silvery, leaping trout.

Patience, the engine drew us up the river slope. We had come through the hot lands where the sands are always stirring—the miles between Biggs and Umatilla, where the fever of the heat is cooled not in the least by the silent flowing Columbia. The conductor of the puffing, once a day train, with its mingling of freight and passenger cars, had accepted our mileage. A sudden turn at Rondwa and the Grande Ronde river was left to continue its flow toward the Snake. We were in the gorge of the Wallowa.

The engine chugged and sobbed. Occasionally it slowed as if to rest, then continued the pull up the grade. A breeze blew through the open windows. The day was all serene and beautiful. Go fast, go slow, it was delightful.

Then, without announcement, the surprise! The mountains had been walls about us, the sky a roof. A turn and it was a level country, unending wheat fields spilled to the north, the mountains, a spiked sky line against the blue south. It was the valley of the Wallowa, the train moved more quickly.

This is the land where lived and fought Chief Joseph and Chief Joseph's son. Looking upon its peaceful beauty it was as impossible to imagine struggle as it was to blame Chief Joseph for trying to hold what he considered his own.

My friend, Phil S. Bates, insisted that the Wallowa country was "a continuous succession of scenic surprises." A. H. Averill, the third member of our party, exclaimed "Wonderful," and the word seemed to carry much more than its conventional meaning.

Ours was the first good roads missionary journey into this northeastern corner of Oregon, where the county is called Wallowa, the first town, Wallowa, the river Wallowa and the lake Wallowa. After we had discovered that the roads generally speaking were much better than in the Willamette valley, we spent a good deal of time trying to find why the 1,533,000 acres of valley and mountain lack population, publicity and a press agent. In fact there are approximately three people to a square mile in Wallowa, the 1910 population figures being 8364.

Wallowa county has three towns of importance on the railroad, Wallowa, Enterprise and Joseph, each with a population of about 1200. Location is a little place between Enterprise and Joseph. Fio-a is a coming community, 40 miles north in the sheep country.

The Wallowa river border: the Blue mountains northern slope. It is fed by streams that dash out from the canyon and these in turn find their unfailing sources in the high mountain lakes. It may be emphasized that Wallowa county has the greatest accessible water supply of any equal area in the northwest.

Half of the area is arable. Dry farming is profitable; irrigation brings big crops of wheat, alfalfa, barley, oats and sugar beets. Irrigation is a meritorious ditch digging. Water is everywhere. The valley is 35 miles long. Its

THREE PEOPLE PER SQUARE MILE IN WALLOWA.

width varies from two to 10 miles. The elevation is from 2000 to 4100 feet in the valley, and the peaks ascend to 8000 feet. North of the Wallowa, east of the Grand Ronde, is level country, clothed with some billions of feet of untouched fir, pine and tamarack. The mountain sides are heavily timbered. High slopes and valleys furnish wonderful grazing for this year's run of nearly 200,000 sheep and approximately 50,000 cattle. Something like 1,000,000 acres is included in government reserve. The mountains are granite, marble and flint. Prospectors find lead and copper and gold, but they toll for any of these things. The bench lands along the Grand Ronde bear apples that weigh a pound apiece, and in such numbers and with so little care that the trees break under the burden of fruit. Near the streams frosts sometimes nip the potatoes even in July, but farther back is scant frost danger and the richest of soil.

The towns are fairly well built and they thrive with hope, yet with only partial realization of the opportunity before them. Land values vary from \$10 to \$150 an acre, and keep very close to \$50 an acre. Wheat produces at 40 to 60 bushels an acre. Oats and barley run 80 to 100 bushels an acre. Potatoes come out of the ground 75 to 100 sacks to the acre. The first explanation of population lack is, or has been, transportation lack. The railroad has been operating only a little more than two years. It has but one trip each day. Wallowa raises more hogs than any other county in Oregon, but there is difficulty in getting them to market in good shape. I do not remember seeing any opportunities included in the exploitation literature. The people in all of Wallowa's towns came to our good roads shows with an eagerness and in numbers as gratifying as encouraging. Mr. Bates' message as director of the Oregon Association for Highway Improvement and

special representative of the federal highway department was illustrated with the views that had been provided by the government and by the O.-W. R. & N. Co. publicity department.

Another message to the people which I took it upon myself to deliver was that Oregon must be organized to vote upon understandable and satisfactory highway bills through the initiative at the next election. No more of a legislature smaller than the legislature, if you please. The leadership of Governor West, of the highway association and of the commercial interests points to popular highway laws popularly approved as the only logical and consistent method of procedure for Oregon at this time.

Highways of perfect sort in Wallowa, for instance, would bring tourists in to admire and wonder over the Switzerland of the northwest. Means of transporting the generous crops would be afforded. Population would follow, and then prosperity and progress for none of them ever precedes highway improvement.

Where the Air Is Clear.

We kept constantly exclaiming over the marvelous clarity of the Wallowa county air. It seemed to our valley eyes a mile to the edge of the mountain. The distance was seven miles. They tell this story in illustration: George E. Chamberlain, then governor of Oregon, started in company with Ed Eccle, an Enterprise editor, to find the distance to Enterprise.

"What is the distance to Enterprise?" asked the governor of a man they met. "About a mile and a half," was the answer.

The two trudged on for half an hour, and they met another native. "How far is it to Enterprise?" asked Eccle.

"About a mile and a half," was the prompt answer.

The journey was continued. On and on walked the governor and the editor. They met a third man.

WALLOWA FALLS.

"How far is it to Enterprise?" asked the governor. "About a mile and a half," was the answer again. The governor made a seat on a wayside boulder and rubbed his perspiring countenance. Eccle attempted encouragement. "I wouldn't feel blue, Governor," he suggested. "At least we're holding our own."

Wallowa river and its tributaries furnish an abundance of water power. The streams that rush from the canyon could electrify the state. Where power has been generated they have a custom of running mills during the day time and furnishing lights with the same power at night. Consequently we

were surprised, reaching Enterprise in the middle of the day, to find the lights on full blast. We concededly supposed it was illumination in honor of our arrival. A question brought this answer: "No, sir, this ain't no celebration. This is ironing day in Enterprise. All the ladies have electric irons, and so we always turn on the power to run their irons on Wednesday."

Does anyone remember another such exhibition of municipal gallantry? We found some curious localities near the Wallowa country. One is a place where pure lime crops out of the mountain side, enough to last apparently a thousand years. Over on the Innaha is a place where the valley produces a tropical vegetation and the fin-

LAKE WALLOWA LOOKING NORTH SHOWING NATURAL 400 FT. EMBANKMENT.

est of watermelons. On the hot rocks are rattlesnakes, and the whole thing is an unexplained phenomenon. A little way from Elgin, which is the gateway to the Wallowa, are caves where water congeals in summer time, and where it never freezes in winter, and this is another unexplained phenomenon.

Almost the best part of the journey was the stay at Joseph. Above the city is the crystal mountain lake; above the lake the falls. In this city three kind folks keep a hotel, and their successful efforts to see that we should

WHERE MOUNTAIN MEETS VALLEY IN WALLOWA.

have a trout breakfast won warm gratitude. That trout breakfast followed an early morning ride that will always be remembered. F. D. McCully, banker and business man, called us up the night before we intended to leave and asked us to join him in a ride into the Swamp creek country, leaving at 4 o'clock and returning in time to catch the train at 8:30 o'clock. We told him of the trout, and he agreed to shorten the schedule. When we tumbled out in the gray, still morning, sleepy-eyed, we found that Mr. McCully's driver was to be Mrs. McCully. We told her of the trout. She set the spark forward and the road sped backward. Only when we exclaimed over the speed made on the sometimes rocky road did she modestly confess that seven times she had driven the machine over the Blue mountains, passing places where the road was but a line on the cliff, and where a careless swerve would have plunged "all to a death far below—yet without ever an accident."

One may stand at a point on Eagle Cap mountain in the heart of the range and count 17 lakes. All about this viewpoint is the eternal snow. Down, down in the valley are homes looking like playhouses. The streams are silver threads, the falls of the Wallowa a scarf of carded wool pendant on the mountain side. Against the eastern horizon stand the Seven Devils mountains in Idaho, grim, severe, their serrated peaks black against the sky. The sun shines uninterrupted save for the banners of electric clouds that gather on Eagle Cap's peak of a hot afternoon. The air is so clear that distance is as nothing. The silence that broods over the mountains throws a spell over the one who gazes, until, above, the wonders at the liberties one takes with the great things of God.

PASSING OF JOHN W. GATES REMOVES MOST INTERESTING OF AMERICAN FINANCIERS

JOHN WARNE GATES, whose death occurred in Paris Wednesday last, and whose daring speculations on Wall Street won for him the popular title of "king of plungers," was a self-made man if there ever was one. Starting from practically nothing, he fought his way up until he became a man of enormous wealth, a power in the financial world and the controlling spirit of some of the largest business interests in the country. All this he accomplished by his untiring energy, his shrewd business sense, his unlimited self-confidence and his proverbial recklessness in taking chances against tremendous odds.

John W. Gates was born on a small farm near Turner Junction, now West Chicago, Ill., on May 8, 1855. The son of Asel A. and Mary Gates. He received his early schooling at the district school near his father's farm, and then took courses at Wheaton college in Wheaton, Ill., and at Northwestern college in Naperville. He had no liking for the monotony of farm life, and decided to enter upon a business career. His first business venture was contracting to huck a neighbor's corn. With the money saved from this undertaking he bought a one-third interest in a threshing machine, then a new invention.

The crops were bountiful and threshing business so profitable that after one year Gates bought out his partners. While traveling with his machine from farm to farm, Gates became acquainted and fell in love with Delora R. Baker, the handsome daughter of a farmer near St. Charles, Ill. He was but 19 years of age and practically penniless when he married the girl. He contracted to clear some timber land for a farmer and when he had fulfilled his contract he had \$1000 in bank. With this money he opened a hardware store at Turner Junction. He did good business, but his ambition was not satisfied. The possibilities of the barbed wire business, then something new, attracted his attention, and he became traveling salesman for Colonel Isaac Ellwood, a pioneer in the barbed wire business. Gates soon made for himself a reputation as being the best barbed wire salesman in the country. He earned large commis-

sions, but that did not satisfy him. Mr. Gates undoubtedly could have accumulated a large fortune through his yearly savings had he chosen to remain a salesman. He was of that class of salesmen who prefer to take their pay in commissions. His fees of that kind would have been very large, and from them he could have saved each year considerable sums of money.

But the order of his intellect and temperament led him into a kindred, although somewhat advanced, field of operation. He had become known to the great merchants, to the bankers and to the manufacturers of St. Louis, who regarded him with considerable curiosity and interest, because of his great capacity as a salesman in Texas and the southwest.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Gates' attention was centered upon barbed wire at first because this newly invented fencing apparatus had been brought to his attention while running his little store at Turner Junction. It was one of the great inventions of the time, at least so far as service to the agricultural industry of the west was concerned. A very large manufacturing of barbed wire had been established at Worcester, Mass., but this was not the concern with which Mr. Gates was identified.

He introduced into Texas barbed wire invented for and manufactured by Ellwood of Illinois. His roamings through Texas satisfied him that there was a greater field for himself in the manufacture of barbed wire than in the sale of the commodity through his personal exertion. When he made his proposition to capitalists of St. Louis to establish a barbed wire establishment at St. Louis, he was most cordially welcomed. It is an interesting fact in the career of Mr. Gates that, as he was undoubtedly the first to suggest the germ of the idea out of which the United States Steel corporation grew, he was also one of the first, some say actually the first, to introduce the modern method of combination into manufacturing circles of the west. He was then 30 years of age when he organized the Southern Wire company, and later consolidated that with two other companies, naming the combination the Consolidated Steel Wire company.

That was long before the organization of the United States Steel corporation had been dreamed of; it was at a time when the Carnegie Steel company was gaining pre-eminence among American steel and iron manufacturers. The underlying principle of the consolidation of these steel and wire manufacturing companies does not differ greatly from the principle adopted in all the later combinations of other manufacturing corporations.

There is no reasonable doubt, that in the mind of John W. Gates the principle of combination of what had been competing companies and later the selling of the stock of the combination at a profit to some other company, was first conceived, at least in the west. To do this successfully is of itself incontestable proof of great business ability.

Mr. Gates went somewhat further than wise business policy would have suggested, for he seems to have been tempted to overcapitalize the stock of this combination. He had, however, always insisted that he never really overcapitalized, but that there was lurking in or inherent value, or at least future value, in all the stock issued by combinations which he had organized. At all events these transactions caused

Mr. Gates, when only a little past 30 years of age, to be numbered among the so-called high financiers, not using the term in the sense of reproach which was afterward applied to it. It is certainly one of the achievements of Mr. Gates that he was among the first to recognize the business policy, economic and wise, which lay behind the principle of cooperation.

He must have made money very rapidly in the years between 1885 and 1898, when he organized the American Steel & Wire company. These undertakings were what he always regarded as his "bread and butter business." They were activities which were not only to furnish him an income sufficient to support him in the style of which he had become accustomed and to permit him to engage in some rather expensive recreations, like racing, but also to provide for a steady yearly increase of his capital.

About the time Mr. Gates organized the American Wire & Steel company he formulated in his mind a plan which, if it had been adopted, would have created an international steel and iron trust. This plan would have been in violation of the Sherman anti-trust law as that law has recently been interpreted by the supreme court. But at the time Mr. Gates worked out the details of it he was advised that it would not be in violation of our laws. Out of that plan grew the germ of the United States Steel corporation. When the various complications occasioned by the alleged purposes of Mr. Carnegie and his associates to build a Carnegie steel company railroad and to enter into violent competition with certain other steel and iron producing companies, caused a very strained and dangerous situation to arise, it was John W. Gates who suggested to Charles M. Schwab that the peril could be eliminated and that a very great opportunity could be seized through the combination into one great corporation of the Carnegie companies and various other steel and iron producing companies.

Into that corporation Mr. Gates said that the American Steel & Wire company would gladly go, provided the

organization were satisfactory. He was sure that the National Tube company, the Illinois Steel & Iron company and the American Tinplate company, as well as others, could be brought into combination.

Gates wanted to be one of the directors of the trust, but Mr. Morgan, fearing his recklessness, did not consider this advisable and kept Gates out of the board.

A few years later Gates evened his score with Mr. Morgan, by buying up the controlling interest in the Louisville & Nashville railroad, which the Morgan forces were trying to obtain. Gates sold out to Morgan and his share of the profits amounted to several million dollars. After a while Gates entered the southern field as a competitor of the big steel trust, and organized the Republic Iron & Steel company. He bought up the controlling interest in the Tennessee Coal, Iron & Steel company and acquired important holdings of iron ore owned by the Alabama Consolidated Iron & Coal company and the International Power company.

For a number of years Gates resided in Chicago, where he owned a fine mansion on Michigan avenue. He sold the house in 1908 and removed to New York, where for some time he occupied apartments at the Plaza hotel, paying \$40,000 a year rent for the same. He had been a plunger and daring speculator in Chicago, but his career in New York was even more speculative. He devoted a great deal of his attention to the development of his large business interests in Texas and in other parts of the south and southwest.

The pine is believed to be the oldest of trees, some having attained the age of 700 years.

The late John W. Gates and family.

The late John W. Gates and family.

The late John W. Gates and family.