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Salem Is to Have Mills to Weave Local Flax

A Hundred Million Dollars a Year Will Come, and a Million People Will be Employed Directly and Indirectly in the Manufacture of Linen

Salem is to have her first linen mill this year. The machinery has already been ordered. The initial buildings will begin to assume shape soon. It is planned to have the machinery started by the first of July. The Miles Linen Company, with B. C. Miles, well known Salem man as the moving spirit, is the corporate name. It is all local capital to start with. The beginnings will be carefully made. The plan is to proceed cautiously and to avoid all mistakes as nearly as possible. But the enterprise has in it the makings of a big concern—running into the millions. The makings are in the character of present stockholders and in the nature of the business. Such enterprises carefully managed live throughout the ages and grow constantly and take in the world as their field. That is the outlook for the Miles Linen Company.

Will Be Others

This will be the first concern in Salem to spin flax "yarn," and to turn out twine, and perhaps to weave linens. But it will be followed by others—many of them. There will be other linen mills making coarser fabrics and also those turning out the finest of fine linens. There will be others making specialties; for there are hundreds of these, in both linen and hemp articles—because we can grow the finest hemp in the world here, as well as the finest fiber flax ever produced or that can be produced.

Is a Great Event

This is a great event, the building of the first linen mill in Salem. It is sufficient cause for great rejoicing here, and throughout Oregon—for it means the ambitious beginnings of the greatest industry in Oregon, to last as such for all time—

And this is sufficient excuse, if any were needed, for calling attention to some of the benefits that will accrue from this development here, and to the fact that the raising of flax and the making of linens will make a permanent industry—

As permanent, for instance as Salem's paper industry, based on the fact that the world will always need paper; that paper is made from cellulose, and that there will be cellulose as long as there is any vegetable growth that will stand up; that has fiber—from the veriest garden weed to the giant of the forest.

So there will be need for the manufactures of flax as long as civilized man shall use napkins or table cloths or towels or clothing or tapestry or laces or handkerchiefs or air planes—

And so long as he paints houses or automobiles or any single thing on which paint is used, from a hairpin to a floating city called a ship; and so long as he uses putty for windows or doors in shacks or palaces or skyscrapers; and so long as he makes linoleum for his floors.

Why?

Because linseed oil is flaxseed oil; lin is the word for flax in French and several other languages. Linseed oil is pressed or boiled out of flaxseed; yielding in weight 35 to 41 per cent of the flaxseed; about 35 per cent of the flaxseed grown on the fiber flax in the Salem district—

And linseed oil is the only oil produced in commercial quantities that is a "drying" oil. What is this "drying" process? It is not really drying at all; not like the evaporation that takes place when the housewife hangs her washing on the clothes line. The "drying" is due to the instability of linseed oil and its sensitiveness to atmospheric influences. It changes itself chemically, combining itself with the oxygen from the air. If a film of linseed oil is exposed to the air it absorbs oxygen quickly, becoming more and more sticky and viscuous during the absorption until at last it dries like an elastic skin. The amount of oxygen thus absorbed by the oil may be as much as 20 per cent of its weight. In making paints and varnishes the coloring material, white lead, lamp black, ultramarine or red lead is ground with a small quantity of linseed oil and then mixed with more linseed oil, and with the oil of turpentine; and when a layer of paint is spread on a surface of metal or wood it "dries" quickly, and a protective skin is left. The glazier, too, depends on the "drying" quality of linseed oil when he fixes up a new pane of glass with putty. He uses whiting ground up with linseed oil, and it is the linseed oil that makes the mixture hard when it is exposed to the air. The same thing happens when the maker of linoleum mixes ground cork and rosin with linseed oil. The linseed oil drinks in oxygen from the air and oxidizes and solidifies the mass.

The Miracle Plant

Now take the flax plant. Here in the Salem district it may be planted and harvested (pulled) in 70 days or less; some irrigated flax was planted and pulled last year within 50 days, in the Turner neighborhood. It is a miracle plant. It will grow in that short time and it will last throughout the ages. Its fibers are so fine that they may be divided and divided to microscopic fineness, and an Irish girl, 13 years old, spun a thread of it 1432 miles long, from a single pound of fiber! And spun together and woven into cloth it will outlast the life of the spinner and weaver 5000 years, as witness the fine linens in the tombs of Egypt; and it will make a cloth that will defy the elements, as in the sails of ships and the wings of airplanes aloft in a hurricane.

First in value is the seed; for linseed oil and poultices and medicine.

Next is the fiber for upholstering or spinning tow or for spinning into "yarn" for thread or twine, or for weaving into cloth of various kinds.

Then the water of the retting tanks is used for fertilizer. The oil meal, after being pressed for the linseed oil makes dairy feed. So do the bolls with the broken and small seeds. The latter is also good for horse feed. The shives or woody part of the flax straw—the inside part after the fiber, which is on the outside, is taken off—is burned for fuel in making steam heat or other heat—

So there is no waste in flax—absolutely none.

The pulled flax does not exhaust the soil as much as grain crops, or cabbage or potatoes. A second crop the same year may be grown in flax land. With proper rotation, flax may be grown for 1000 years on the same land. It will produce each year what we sell, when manuactured, for as high as $24,000 an acre, or more.

It will go on doing this forever.

So the flax and linen industries are good for all time. They will last as long as civilization lasts. They are payers of high wages and salaries. They may be developed here in the Salem district, on less than 100,000 acres of land, giving employment to over 1,000,000 people, directly and indirectly, for all time.

There are only a few districts in the world in which the finest fiber flax can be grown and retted and manufactured with the fields within eyeshot of the factories. The Salem district is one of these. We have the setting to become the Belfast of the New World. And more than a Belfast, for we have the American genius for quantity production. We will see linen, five times as durable and potentially valuable as cotton goods, cheaper in the markets of the world than cotton goods. Perhaps before very long. And Salem no doubt will have a master hand in bringing this about.

Brief History of Flax

"Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

—2 Corinthians, 5:17.

In the flax industry, all old things are not passed away, and will not; but some old things have passed and others are passing, and more will pass. But the miracle plant that grows from the seed in 70 to 90 days and produces a fiber that lasts "forever," for all practical purposes, is the same as it was in ancient Egypt; excepting for improvements made by modern methods of selection and cultivation. After the manner of H. G. Wells, but very briefly, take the following "Outline of History," applied to the flax industry.

A Long History

Flax is the oldest known vegetable fiber used in the making of articles for wear and household use. It was grown in ancient Egypt. Fine linens are found in the tombs in the "Valley of the Kings," where the mummified bodies of the great houses (pharoahs) were put away 6000 years or so ago—and samples of these fabrics, many of them preserved in the British museum, show weaves that our modern machinery and methods cannot imitate. The narrowness of these textures shows that the shuttle was not known to the ancient Egyptians; the width was limited to the length of the human reach. But the shuttle was known in the time of Job, supposed to be the oldest book in the world, for Job is reported to have said, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope." (Job 7:6.)

Came the massacre of St. Bartholomew; came a time (around 1685) when persecutions sent colonies of Huguenot weavers from France to the north of Ireland; came the slow development of the now great linen industry of the Belfast district.

Belfast became the great linen city of the world, drawing her supples of fiber from Holland, Belgium, France and other countries, including Russia; mostly Russia, where she got the bulk of it before the war, Ireland itself producing only some 10 to 13 per cent of it. And her hemp fiber from Italy.

All this made Belfast a very rich city; a city of 550,000 people, and that that part of Ireland a very rich section.

Then came cotton manufacturing on a large scale, and cotton was largely substituted for linen. This phase retarded the rapid growth of the linen industry in England, Belgium, France, Austria and Germany, and in Scotland; and in the Belfast district, too—but Belfast has held her own and more, even in face of this fierce competition, despite the fact that she has not succeeded in her many attempts to much enlarge the home growth of the raw materials in Ireland; depending on imported fiber.

So much for the "Outline of History."

The New Things

But little was done in all the long years towards discovering and adopting new processes; arriving at shortcuts.

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We Produce Best Peppermint

And We Grow Most Pounds to the Acre and With Highest Menthol Content and Best Flavor

Salem district peppermint oil is being quoted in the New York market at $6 to $8 a pound. Such prices would make the mint industry in this district a bonanza industry. Half those prices would make mint grown here a most profitable crop. We have a boom now in the mint industry here—

And we should have a bigger one.

Salem should have a peppermint refinery. She can have one, if all the growers will join the Oregon Cooperative Mint Growers Association; if they will organize 100 per cent. The advantages would be many. In the first place, the full profits would be brought here. In the second place, the product would be standardized, and higher prices would be realized.

The finest and richest peppermint oil in the world is produced in the Salem district—An oil with 51 per cent of menthol content, against the 38 per cent of the oil produced in Michigan, Indiana and New York, our competitors in this country—and an oil that ranks at the top for purity of flavor—so that dealers pay more for our oil than for the eastern oil, and the eastern oil must be mixed with the Oregon oil in order to give it the proper flavor.

Besides, our growers get more pounds of oil to the acre.

All these are tremendous advantages; they give our growers what amounts to a franchise in the profitable production of peppermint oil, for which there is a rapidly growing demand, especially in the candy and gum trades of the United States.

Mint was used in medicine 400 years before the birth of Christ; and perhaps a great deal longer. But it is only of late years that the demand has grown to enormous and ever increasing proportions. That the farmers of the Willamette valley are destined to supply the increased demand there is little doubt—because they can do this at a good profit.

The following are pertinent facts, worthy of the attention of prospective new comer, also of farmers already here who have suitable mint land.

Peppermint is a profitable crop:

Because it is of hardy growth and has fewer natural enemies than almost any other farm crop;

Because it produces a full crop the first year that it is planted;

Because it produces a good crop for several years after the first year with very little labor—some growers say 10 years;

Because it does not have to be marketed immediately but can be held without deterioration until maket prices are favorable;

Because the crop is of such small bulk that the cost of hauling to market is practically nothing and the distance of the grower from transportation facilities does not have to be considered;

Because the oil commands a good price, taking one year with another, which affords the grower a good margin where the land is properly adapted to mint.

The mint industry is not likely to be overdone, in view of the increasing demand and the higher production and quality of the Oregon article—

And in some years it will be a bonanza crop—

And during a series of years it will pay well, as has been the experience of all the older growers, who have been the pioneers of the industry.

Another thing, there are three distinct varieties of peppermint, the Japanese, the Black Michem and the White Michem. White Michem has been produced successfully only in England, Saxony

(Continued on page 4)

223 Miles of Paved Roads in 20-Mile Radius

Marion County Has Expended Two Millions of Dollars in Road Building in the Past Five Years, and the Plan is to Proceed as Funds Allow

The map herewith tells the story of how completely Salem is the center of a great paved market roads system radiating in every direction. It shows that within a radius of 20 miles of the capital city there are 223 miles of hard surfaced highways; all leading to this city, and connecting all the important market towns and cities in this rich and potentially vastly richer section of the potentially richest state in the Union.

The reader will note that of the 223 miles of paved roads within this radius 124 miles are county market highways, and 97 miles are sections of the Pacific highway, paved by the state.

A study of the map, with its legends, will convey to the reader a very good idea of the charmed circle of progressive development in this field for this territory, but there is also given below some brief facts gleaned from the records of the Oregon state highway department, followed by a very plain and straightforward checking up of progress by Marion County Road Master W. J. Culver:

From State Highway Records

Salem is fortunately situated on the Pacific highway 52 miles from Portland and 25 miles from Albany. The through travel over the Pacific highway at Salem during the summer season now reaches an average of about 2500 vehicles per day, and it is safe to say that there will be at least a 20 per cent increase this year, judging by past experience.

Connecting Salem with Dallas, the county seat of Polk county, is a paved highway 14 miles in length which affords excellent transportation facilities between the two counties. The Salem-Dallas highway also connects with the West Side Pacific highway and taps that travel artery and diverts considerable through travel to the east side route. In addition, travel from McMinnville and Tillamook county uses this road as a direct highway to Salem.

During the summer months the Salem-Dallas highway carries an average traffic of 800 vehicles per day, and the west side Pacific highway after the opening up of the new pavement south of Monmouth last year carried an average of 1500 vehicles per day for the first month. These figures will increase proportionately as the west side route becomes better known.

MARION COUNTY ROADS

Editor Statesman:

Marion county now has 123 miles of asphaltic concrete pavement and 26 miles of gravel macadam on the market roads and house through the small towns where paving has been done to connect up the roads.

Thirty-four market roads were named by the 1919 special election.

On 30 of these roads some pavement has been laid, on most of them for the entire length; on the other four roads there is good gravel macadam.

All market centers in the county are connected up with good improved roads.

A large amount of paving has been done by the county for the cities and larger towns in which the municipalities have paid back to the county the actual cost of the work; the saving to the property owners reaching a large sum; the cities benefited by the work have been Salem, Silverton, Mt. Angel, Woodburn, Stayton and Jefferson.

Where paving has been laid on the market roads the width is 16 feet; the depth of the paving is 4 inches laid on a 5 inch base of gravel macadam; in a few places the width was reduced on hills and uneven ground to make conditions better for team travel.

The work has been done in the last five years; the total cost being close to $2,000,000.

At Low Costs

The average cost of the completed paved road per mile has been $15,000, and the average cost of gravel macadam road $5,000.

The money with which to do this work came from the sale of bonds, $850,000; from the 2 mill tax (Pierce market road law); the auto license law and from the regular levy made by the county court for road work.

Last year $85,000 of the bonds were paid off; in July, 1925, $85,000 more will be paid, and equal annual payments will be made each of the eight succeeding years until the issue is retired.

The work has been done by county forces working for wages. Only one-third of one mile of grade and paving work has been done by contract, and that because no county plant was near; the work was done at Brooks by a contractor working on the Pacific highway, who had a plant located there.

Seven concrete bridges from 16 to 120 feet are included in the above work. The pavement has stood the heavy traffic remarkably well and the cost of repairs has been small.

The first of this year we had 100 miles of pavement completed, and the repairs on the same during the year has been less than $5,000.

The work undertaken in 1919 has been completed; the county has four good paving plants, several large crushers and plenty of grading machinery to go ahead with road work.

Will Go On Building

In the spring after the legislature adjourns it is likely that the county court will map out an additional market road system and go ahead as fast as the funds will permit.

It is to be hoped that the legislature will not change the 2 mill tax or decrease the income of the counties from the auto license law.

In order to keep up the road improvement work to the present pace it will be necessary to provide additional funds as the bond money is gone. However, with the two sources of income above named remaining the same, the court can expect to pave from ten to 12 miles and improve from 15 to 20 miles with macadam each year, and if the several districts through which the new market roads run will encourage the work by voting small special taxes the mileage can be increased.

It is likely that the amount of paving to be done for the next few years will be reduced and more attention given to grade and macadam work, so that the roads will be ready for paving when the traffic shall make it necessary. When the cost of maintaining a good rock road is less than the interest on the cost of paving the same the paving can wait.

Helping Self Help

For the coming year the court is trying a new plan to encourage the districts to help themselves.

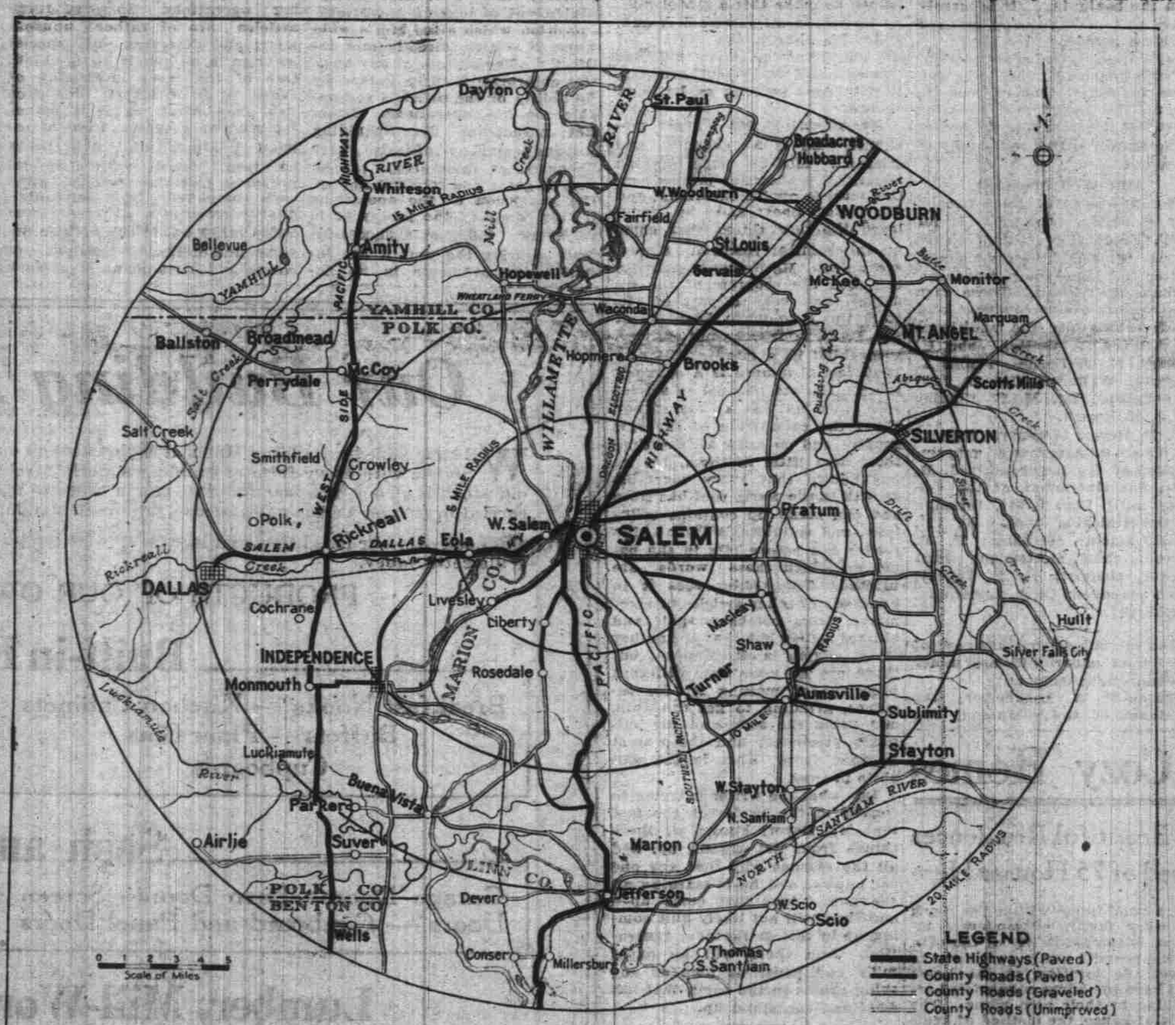
In each road district voting a special tax amounting to 2 or more mills, the court has provided a sum amounting to 2 mills on the valuation in the district as an additional fund for permanent work.

Thirty-six districts in the county have taken advantage of this offer and have voted special taxes amounting to $57,000, and the amount contributed by the court will amount to $25,000. This money, together with the regular district funds, will permit much good work to be done.

The other road districts will have their regular 4½ mill tax with which to keep their roads in repair and in some cases make permanent improvements. Marion county roads now stand as follows:

Paved, 122 miles; standard macadam, 36 miles; graveled and rocked, but not to standard width, 760; not surfaced, 260; paved by state on Pacific highway, 38; total, 1,246 miles.

W. J. CULVER,
Roadmaster



Has Sold Bicycles for 10 Years in Capital City

Lloyd E. Ramsden is Pioneer in Bicycle Business in Salem

Lloyd E. Ramsden, who operates a bicycle shop at 387 Court street, has been in business in Salem for the past ten years. Mr. Ramsden started in business on a small scale and gradually increased until at the present time he has a very complete shop. Mr. Ramsden does not only specialize in bicycles but handles a complete line of bicycle accessories and specializes in children's wheel goods such as scooters, tricycles, velocipedes, autos, etc. He also conducts a first class repair shop, repairing bicycles and all children's wheeled goods.

Mr. Ramsden is very optimistic as to the future of his business and looks for 1925 to be a banner year. He expects that the demand for children's wheel goods will be greater than ever before.

There is doom here for a Henry Ford of the drug garden industry. It is capable of being made a gigantic industry. We can grow them all, and produce them cheaper than any other section can.

MacDonald Has Experience

Local Agent for Marmon Car Gives History From 1899 to Now—Has Seen Many Changes

R. N. MacDonald is one of the oldest men in the automobile business, starting his career in 1899 by serving as a mechanician apprentice for three years with Ross Stationary Engine company of Buffalo, N. Y.

In 1902 he went with the Conrad Steamer company, manufacturers of steam automobiles, later Thomas Flyer when the company was building one cylinder autos then with Pierce-Arrow when they built their first two-cylinder vertical motor. In 1905 going with Franklin Auto company, Syracuse, N. Y., helping to build first 1905 Franklin models of which he has a picture. 1907 found Mr. MacDonald employed by Packard distributors at Buffalo, N. Y., as a mechanic. In 1909 returned to Thomas factory when company built their famous New York to Paris racing car, which won the race defeating German, Italian and French cars, was the only American car in the race, only old time automobile men will remember this great race.

1910 Mr. MacDonald became distributor for Thomas cars at Jamestown, N. Y., remaining with them until Thomas Flyer Motor company ceased to manufacture automobiles.

1913 was dealer for Lozier autos at Jamestown, handling this line until they went out of business. 1916 Mr. MacDonald decided to return to Packard distributors at Buffalo, coming west in 1918 he has been associated with Packard at Boise, Idaho, Portland, Ore., and Salem. Recently he disposed of his Packard interests here, and desiring to remain in Salem spent three weeks looking over and testing out several high class cars and with his years of experience in building and selling automobiles decided upon the Marmon as one of America's best built and constructed, also powerful and most economical car on market today. Marmon still retains its famous six-cylinder motor and chassis improving the lines of its body which is the last word in comfort and elegance. Most every professional racing driver of today is a Marmon owner.

Mr. MacDonald will be glad to meet his friends at his temporary location 256 State street and with Marmon company wish all a very prosperous and happy new year.

Many Drug Stores in Salem

City Has Twelve Up-to-date Establishments—One Doing a Large Wholesale Business

At first thought it seems as though twelve drug stores in a city the size of Salem was going pretty strong, but upon consideration this does not appear to be so. There are twelve drug stores in Salem, and they are all doing a good business. The population of Salem is over 22,000, and if the rural trade was not considered that would still leave a possible number of patrons for each drug store of 1800 persons. The rural trade is a very important item, however, and would have to be figued in an accurate estimate of the number of patrons that the drug stores have to draw from.

Names and Locations

The names and locations of the drug stores in Salem are as follows: Capitol Drug Store, corner State at Liberty; Central Pharmacy, 410 State; Crown Drug Store, 332 State; Darby's Drug Store, Court street at northeast corner of North Liberty; Dan J. Fry, 280 North Commercial; Neimeyer Drug Store, 175 North Commercial; Nelson and Hunt, Druggists Inc., Court street at southeast corner Liberty; Opera House Pharmacy, North High at southwest corner of Court; J. C. Perry Drug Store, 115 South Commercial; Red Cross Pharmacy, 386 State; E. A. Schaefer Drug Store, 138 North Commercial; J. F. Tyler Drug Store, 157 South Commercial.

Have An Association

There is a retail druggists' association in the city, which meets once every month, for regular meetings, and upon call for special meetings. The association holds its meetings in the Chamber of Commerce rooms. Silas L. Darby of the Darby Drug Store, is the president of the association and A. S. Hussey of the Fry Drug Store, is the secretary. The association was organized to promote a spirit of cooperation among the stores and to assure a high standard of service to the public.

The Dan J. Fry drug store has an extensive wholesale department, doing business over a wide territory, and also has a line of its own proprietary medicines with a sale reaching every state and corner of the globe, and going throughout the North Pacific coast.