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## HE IS ON THE WING

E. O. MAN TRAVELS FROM PILOT ROCK TO COMAS PRAIRIE

Tells About Beautiful Country and Important Citizens and Stock Raisers—Mountain Roads.

(By a Staff Writer.)

Pilot Rock takes its name from the sentinel-like butte, which rises at the edge of the town. The volcanic crag usually designated merely, "The Rock," is a prominent landmark for many miles. The surrounding country is almost entirely a sheep country. C. Cunningham's ranch is located near the rock and the J. E. Smith Livestock Company's ranch is also here, the buildings being located on Bear creek. These two firms are two of the largest in the sheep business in this part of Eastern Oregon. Mr. J. E. Smith, in addition to his Pilot Rock ranch also owns a large ranch at Barnhart. In all he owns 44,000 acres. He raises and sells many hundreds of blooded bucks every year.

The John Day-Pendleton road is the great highway of Eastern Oregon for the territory as far south as Burns. Much of the freight that goes into the John Day country goes from Pendleton and by this road. It is also the great cattle and sheep trail so there is a constant stream of travel in both directions. Up, steadily upward winds the road till the summit of one of the spurs of the Blue mountains is reached. From the summit the view is very extensive. Mile on mile of timbered mountain side, rock strewn hills and bunchgrass slopes can be seen. To quote a stranger who passed and looked at the panorama spread out beneath him—"Gee Whittiker! Why you can see most of the United States and part of Missouri from here can't you?" While his remark is rather exaggerated, one can see a good part of Umatilla county from the bare hill top.

Night time found me at the Half-way house. It is almost midway between Pendleton and Ukiah. Mr. Hascall the proprietor, is a Vermonter. I was the first to arrive. Team after team turned in 'till there were 36

horses belonging to travelers. The teams were mostly freighting outfits. They camp in the yard and have their horses put up and fed. As a rule the freighter carries a grub box and prepares his own meals, sleeping under his wagon. It was a picturesque sight to look out and see the gleaming campfires and the dark figures sitting by them or moving about preparing supper; the freight throwing grotesque caricatures of the moving figures upon the wagons and buildings. Long before daylight the men were astir. Before the sun rose many of them were on the road.

"This is my busy season," said Mr. Hascall. "I take in \$250 a month through the summer and fall. But I am going to try to sell out. It is too hard on my family. Sometimes just at meal time, four or five travelers will stop for dinner. We often have a dozen stay over night and the work is disagreeable and continuous."

"It would suit a man who has several sons and daughters to help."

The half-way house is just at the foot of another spur of the Blue mountains. A long steady pull up and a very rocky road and you gain the summit. Quartz and flint crop out in many places. The prevailing rock seems to be a rock of volcanic formation. It looks like slag and is full of air holes. Some hill sides are literally sowed with it so that the bunchgrass has but scanty room for growth. Many of the summits of the hills are crowned with ledges or bluffs from which the rock loosened by the process of weathering, drops down and forms long slides of talus, similar to scorpion rocks near Mt. Jefferson.

Lying between the encircling hills, is the beautiful valley called Camas Prairie. Alba is the first little hamlet you come to. Ukiah is the other village in the valley. Ukiah has a few stores, blacksmith shop, livery stable, and an excellent hotel. It has no saloon, which seems rather surprising for a cattle town, but there is a strong sentiment against one, and so far no saloonist has been able to muster the 62 signatures or a majority of the legal voters which it requires to procure a license.

The bench land near Ukiah sells at about \$1000 per quarter section. Some of it may be bought, however, at \$2.50 per acre. The valley land sells for about \$12 or \$15 per acre.

Camas Prairie is entirely devoted to cattle. Sheep are tabooed. "Dead lines" are established over which the sheep may not graze. "We live by our cattle," said one of the cattlemen. "If we allowed herds of sheep to come in they would devour us and we would have to move away. We have a large number of cattle in here, in fact, we have all the valley can support. Our valley is about 15 miles long by six or seven miles wide." Jacob Born is one of the heaviest cattle owners. He owns about 2000 acres of land and a large bunch of cattle.

At the scale yards a bunch of cattle were being weighed. The whole bunch averaged about 1062 pounds. They were two-year-old steers. The price at which they were sold was \$3.75 per hundred. This made the price \$39.80 each.

The average crowd of men in Eastern Oregon has more money than a similar crowd of farmers in Western Oregon. For example, at Ukiah, when a man pulls out a handful of change to pay for his purchases you are apt to see a good sprinkling of gold in the silver.

I talked with Mr. Hilbert, one of the heaviest owners of cattle in Camas prairie. "This valley is well adapted to cattle raising," he said. "At present prices most of our 2-year-old steers will bring from \$37 to \$40. We not only raise a prime quality of beef, but our butter is in demand."

C. N. McReynolds has one of the largest dairies in the valley. The butter is sent by stage to Pendleton. The transportation charges being very reasonable.

The butter averages a price of 22½ cents a pound the year around. Most of it is sold in Pendleton. Granite taking the rest. The principal dairies on Camas prairie are owned by C. Hale, Alex McKenzie, Jacob Born, J. H. Mettler, W. Fetter, Sam Clark, Ben French, Tom Gilliland, Ed Brehm and G. E. Stocker. Hale runs about 25 cows; McKenzie, 35; McReynolds, 50.

"We have green feed seven months in the year, the rest of the time we have to feed hay. We have sold over a thousand cattle from Camas prairie this fall, some for the market and some as feeders. They will be wintered at Butter creek."

At the hotel I talked with a gentleman who said: "I got top price for my yearlings last year receiving over \$22

a head. The man I sold them to has just disposed of them. They are good fat two-year-olds now. He got a little over \$40 a head for them, so you see he made a good thing out of them. I have seen men hold steers 'till they were five-year-olds and receive the same price as for two-year-olds—\$40 a head. They ate three year's range at a loss. In other words, he could have sold them if in good flesh two or three years sooner and gotten just as much. It isn't the size of your band nowadays. It is what they will tip the scales at "that counts."

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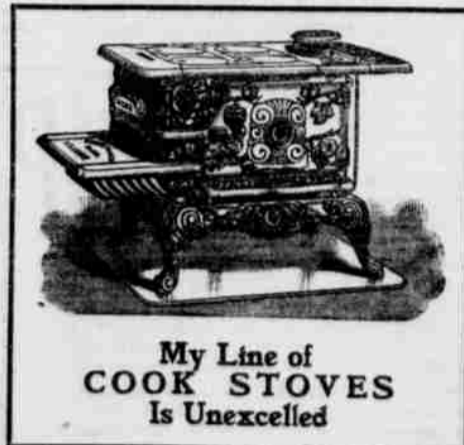
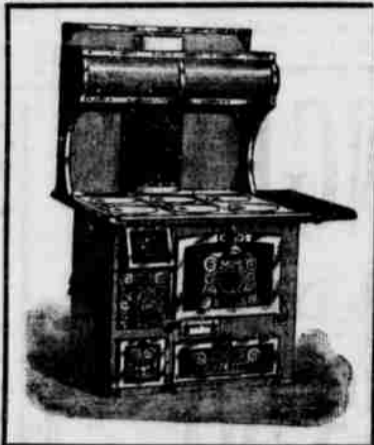


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