

OREGON HAS EXPENDED OVER 40 MILLION DOLLARS ON ROAD IMPROVEMENTS SINCE START OF HIGHWAY PROGRAM

Over 600 Miles of Hard Surface Paving Laid; Almost 1000 Miles of Macadam; Total Grading Mileage Reaches 1920 Miles.

Oregon's activities in road building are brought to the attention of the public in the following article by R. A. Booth, chairman of the Oregon State Highway Commission. The article appeared in the Oregon Motorist for August, 1921.

A recent request for an article on the Oregon Highways asks for emphasis on the progress of the work and the probable status in 1922—the date proposed for the Portland fair.

Responding in general terms and approximately, let it be noted first that for work now completed or under contract there has been expended or approximated \$41,700,000, covering 626 miles of paving, 993 miles of macadam and 1920 miles of grading. The mileage involved under present con-

tracts is 209 paving, 486 macadam and 552 grading. These figures are the totals at the close of the first half of the year 1921.

Mileage Increases.
Expressed in cost it means \$12,000,000 under contract July 1 and \$2,500,000 required to meet the July payroll. Compared with 1920 it is an excess in mileage of about 20 per cent. This does not include 65 miles of improvement by paving, macadam and grading at an approximate cost of \$550,000.

To date there have been contracts let for bridges totaling \$2,500,000. What further contracts there may be let for the calendar year is problematical. A large percentage of the road building equipment in the state is now engaged and is making good

progress at favorable comparative cost. Harvesting is taking up the most of the slack in labor.

The highway commission is committed to further contracting for 1921 on the John Day, Dalles-California, Douglas-Coon, Coast and Mt. Hood highways in cooperation with the counties traversed by these lines, but may be limited in carrying out the proposed plans because of the money market that at this date prevents marketing through the usual channels county 6 per cent bonds at par. In some cases this hindrance, which doubtless is temporary, will be modified by local sales.

State Aid Provisions.

The legislature at its last session authorized loans by the state to counties, directing that the county bonds be taken as security for such loans. The purpose of this was to temporarily aid counties that cannot sell their bonds at par as required by law. The interest rate on the county bonds varies from 5 to 6 per cent.

The state commission has offered aid in a number of instances in conformity with the provisions of the legislative act, but some of the counties are declining, under counsel, to pledge their bonds as security for loans, that are to be paid at stated times, because it might result in sale of the county bonds at less than par. The state commission is offering loans to the counties for twelve months' time and at interest rate of 5 1/2 per cent. The attorney general advises that loans thus made are legal, but if a controversy develops, as now seems probable, some delay will likely be occasioned in letting further work until the bond market improves, for the commission does not feel warranted in agreeing to extend loans beyond one year, for repayment will be needed to carry forward the 1922 work.

Nineteen hundred and twenty-one witnesses an immense increase in the use of highways. A census is now being taken at various points in the state. On April 16, last, 582 vehicles passed a given point on the Pacific highway just north of Salem. Of these, 732 were classed as light and 30 as heavy automobiles; 42 were trucks and only 20 were horse-drawn. For the same time the average of 101 stations in California was 1287, classified as 472 light and 674 heavy autos; 173 trucks and 32 horse-drawn vehicles.

In the plan of building good roads the legislature of 1917 committed the state to its most extensive enterprise and subsequent sessions and county and municipal action has continued



At the Pendleton Public Natatorium.

and heartily supported the work. With a constitutional bond limitation of 4 per cent there has been made available for state expenditure, based on the 1920 assessment \$41,633,500; \$2,500,000 of this, under present laws, must be used on the Roosevelt highway provided the federal government matches the same by February 1, 1922. In the event of failure of the federal government to thus act in harmony with the state on the road named, the amount of fund restricted in its use, as stated, will become or could be made available for the general system.

Most Counties Bonded.
All of the counties in the state, except Harney, Washington and Josephine, have now bonded for road betterment. Lane leads with \$2,000,000 and the total county authorization is \$21,397,944.

The constitutional limit of county indebtedness for road work is six per cent, and the most of the counties have reached it.

There is so much of interest in connection with the improvement and use of highways that an article devoted to the subject may be almost indefinitely extended, for now and hitherto new and unthought of phases are continually presenting themselves.

Construction for modern highway transportation is new and is not yet understood or far advanced. Many mistakes have been made and others will follow, but great improvement is noticeable and will continue.

People Show Interest.
When the people commit themselves to unusual or large undertakings it is natural for the interest to develop and intensify as the projects progress. This is especially true in public matters that intimately concern a large percentage of the population. This tendency is very marked in the highway work. The interest of all classes in our state is now so keen that inquiry and in some instances demands are daily occurrences. It is therefore not only natural but entirely proper that you should ask for the probable status of the work at the beginning of 1922.

This can not be definitely answered, but, speaking in general terms, it may be said that the roads are built on the theory that they are worth more than they cost and hence the benefits should extend as widely as possible and as quickly as can be reasonably done. Our highways are built very largely from proceeds of bond sales. The bond market now is not good. The interest rates for the state securities for the past few months have been from 5 1/2 to 5 3/4 per cent and somewhat higher for county bonds. The higher rate now demanded, however, is not deemed sufficient reason to delay the work now well toward completion on roads that are of first or general importance. The depression that is reflected by the interest rate points clearly to the need in our state of providing employment for labor, of increasing the producing capacity so clearly marked in communities which have benefited by good roads already built, and of attracting tourists who are annually coming in increasing numbers.

Program Is Pushed.
The highway commission does not believe that the conditions that have disturbed markets, lessened production and depressed general business now call for public expenditures on state roads, but rather demand vigorous progress in this public work, and the commission believes this view is common to all who are charged with the work in hand and firmly supported by the people.

The Pacific highway at the end of the present year will probably be 85 per cent paved and it is planned that the job will be finished by the end of 1922.

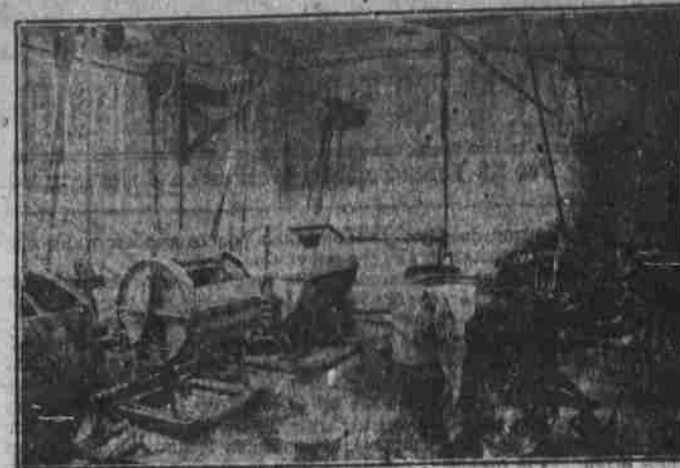
Work on Oregon Trail.
The Old Oregon Trail is far advanced in grading and considerable surfacing has been done. The work will be rushed to completion and it is hoped will be finished next season.

The Dalles-California highway will be finished next year through Jefferson and Deschutes counties, if present plans do not fail, and the work far advanced in Wasco and Klamath.

The John Day highway will be in good condition for travel from Prairie City to the Columbia river highway before the close of next season.

The Douglas-Coon county road will be finished from the Pacific highway to Coquille by the close of 1922 and a large amount of work will have been done from that point south, with a view to early connection with the California coast line.

The Mt. Hood loop will doubtless all be under contract for grading within a year and likely finished before the close of 1921.



Jackson Sundown.

Fell's

PENDLETON CLEANING WORKS

GED. D. FELL, Prop.

Cleaning Pressing Repairing

Men's Suits, Ladies' Suits, Dresses and Fancy Gowns; Furs, Gloves, Waists, Etc.

Hats Cleaned and Blocked.

Only Thoroughly Equipped Plant in Pendleton

206 1/2 East Alta Street

Telephone 169

The Crater Lake road is well advanced and work will be vigorously continued through another season. And thus the story might be continued to other roads important to the sections they traverse. Work is being done on every state road on the map and the plan is to push steadily forward as the legislature may direct and as funds are provided by the federal government, state and county. The volume and progress of the work depend almost wholly upon the contribution of funds from the various sources and the funds in turn are controlled by federal and state legislation and to an extent by the marketability of the securities offered.

THE AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK

of PENDLETON, OREGON

Member Federal Reserve System.

Does a General Banking Business, such as receiving deposits subject to check, and issuing of demand and time-certificates of deposit.

Sells domestic and foreign-drafts, and travellers checks.

Opens savings accounts for small or large amounts on which liberal interest is paid.

Acts as executor, administrator, guardian or trustee.

Accepts escrow agreements.

Has for rent boxes in Safe Deposit Vault for the safekeeping of securities and valuables.

Makes loans on improved farm lands.

CAPITAL AND SURPLUS

HALF A MILLION DOLLARS

JAMES JOHNS, Pres.

C. H. MARSH, Secy.

Capital \$25,000,000



HARTMAN ABSTRACT CO.

INCORPORATED

Loans Insurance Bonds Real Estate

The Only Set of Abstract Books in Umatilla County

Main and Court Streets

PENDLETON, OREGON