

Termination is shown by the fact that for years they toiled in blasting a tunnel through solid granite. With only crude appliances and little knowledge of mining, they hewed, dug and blasted an immense tunnel through the hardest of rock which they hoped to get through and find the coveted prize, but their labor was of no avail. The early miners knew but very little about mining and less about locating prospects.

While these prospects did not amount to anything, there were many people who clung to the idea that certain portions of the Blue Mountains were underlain with coal.

Willard Herren was the first discoverer of coal in the Willow creek basin. The discovery came about by the operation of running of sheep in this district. In the fall of 1895, Mr. Herren was upon Ditch creek flats, the plateau lands above the Willow creek basin, and in clearing out a spring to procure water, noticed small particles of coal mixed with clay that was taken from the spring. Being a man of close observation and having some knowledge of the phenomena associated with coal fields, Mr. Herren quietly commenced to investigate and became convinced that coal existed somewhere in that neighborhood. He told his brother, D. A. Herren, a prominent stock man who owned land and was running sheep in that vicinity about the result of his investigation. At this time he rested for some time, until

proving. A churn drill was purchased and put to work near a promising coal blossom in a deep cut canyon on the headwaters of Willow creek. The churn drill was a poor machine to say the least and coupled with bad management in running, the machine was not a success for everything that it brought up was in a pulverized state and the strata penetrated was brought to the surface in such a mixed up manner that this machine was discarded. Even with this imperfect machine, the records were encouraging.

The next move by the company was the purchase of the very best diamond drill that money could buy, and to run it an expert was brought out from Chicago.

This was about the first smooth sailing in the Morrow county coal prospecting. The drill hole was put down 700 feet. The records of this drill showed the penetration of seven seams of coal. From this the owners were convinced that there was plenty of coal if the measures could be located.

Prospect work has been going on ever since, and nine seams have been found. Surface indications indicated that these seams were all the way from six to nine feet in thickness.

The first active prospect and development work was commenced during the summer of the past year. Experienced coal miners were employed and the work was concentrated on three tunnels. In

care of capital, but for perseverance and enterprise, the company has been rewarded with success.

In the latter part of the month of November, 1902, the true measure was discovered in what is known as tunnel No. 5. This was welcome news to the people of Morrow county.

The field has been examined by a half dozen or more experts, and all reports have been of a most flattering nature. There is every evidence that this field will ultimately be one of the greatest coal fields in the west. The existence of the coal has been proven and the quality is of first quality.

For this locality, the demand is and will be for a steam producing and domestic coal. Tests have proven that this coal is unexcelled for the above mentioned purposes.

The discovery of coal in the Willow creek basin will mark an era in the history of this county. There could be no greater influence in promoting the rapid development, progress, and prosperity of the country in general than the operation of extensive coal mines in this territory.

Nowhere on the lines of the O. R. & N. or Union Pacific railroads are there extensive coal mines, from Portland to the Middle West. It will only require 21 miles of railroad building to connect the Morrow county coal mines with the O. R. & N. system. The rapid denudation of the forests will increase the demand for fuel supply which will cause the most extensive operation of great coal mines that will be developed in Morrow county for the existence of coal in large quantities is now no longer a matter of doubt.

The discovery of coal in the Columbia River basin is a matter of no small importance to the state of Oregon, and the effect will be to increase the commerce of the state. In the opening and operation of the mines it will mean the investment of capital and the employment of labor to dig out the black diamonds that will bring a return of wealth of which this section will get no small share owing to the existence of the mines in our midst.

There are no malarial fevers in Morrow county. A case of typhoid is very rare. The climate is very healthful, which is an important feature in any country.



one evening while in Heppner, D. A. Herren accidentally became engaged in conversation with a mining expert by the name of Birch. The conversation naturally drifted into mining matters and Mr. Herren related the facts concerning the coal blossoms at the head of Willow creek and on the Ditch creek flats.

Mr. Birch, realizing the great value of a coal field in this locality immediately became interested, and the conversation culminated in a visit to the locality mentioned, by the expert and Mr. Herren. Mr. Birch made an examination of the territory and from the formations and geological appearance was very much impressed with the outlook. He wanted an interest.

This being about the time of the Klondike gold excitement, Mr. Birch got the gold fever and went to the frozen north in search of the precious yellow metal. This ended another chapter in the history of coal prospecting.

Mr. Herren could not get the idea of the black diamonds out of his head and kept on prospecting during his many trips in looking after his sheep interests. He found pieces of coal and was satisfied that hidden under the surface of the mountains there was coal, but how much there was and how to locate the measures was a problem not easily solved.

In the spring of 1901, Mr. Herren decided not to put the matter off any longer and came to Heppner to get some one interested with him in the matter and to prospect the promising coal blossoms to an extent that would settle the question. Mr. Herren had no trouble in performing his mission.

Banker Geo. Conser and Attorney C. M. Redfield of Heppner were anxious to look into the matter.

A company known as the Oregon Railroad & Coal Company was organized. Not being acquainted with coal prospecting or mining methods the company for several months worked at a disadvantage, but the prospects kept on im-

penetrating the crust overlying the true coal measures undisturbed by surface slips or slides at the base of the mountain, it has taken time and the expendi-

Heppner's Churches.

Heppner Makes a Fine Showing in Houses of Worship.

The model American community is one of homes. A family with all its sacred relationships, pleasantly domiciled, surrounded with peace, a comfortable provision for present necessities, and a hopeful outlook for the future, is the honest ambition of every thoroughbred, normal American citizen. To be sure, there are other institutions in the model community outside of the homes proper, educative, formative, lying at the foundation of the model home making it a possibility and imparting to it tone and character. The public school that looks after the intellectual and physical culture of the masses, and the church that seeks to lay a broad and safe foundation in moral character, fashioned after the very best of models, are ever found leading their influence and aid in developing the very highest type of American citizenship.

We are glad to say that in these things the city of Heppner is not wanting. Our public schools are the honest pride of every citizen worthy the name, and the spiritual, or religious wants of the city are amply provided for by the six comfortable and commodious chapels conveniently located, inviting the people to worship the one ever living and true God. The only regret is that the people do not more generally and regularly avail themselves of the opportunity so freely offered.

This country of ours, with all of its greatness, its just laws, its civil and religious liberty, owes its existence very largely to church of God. It is good to remember this fact, and to cultivate and cherish a rational respect for the most sacred and holy of all institutions.

We have here a Roman Catholic church, Rev. Father Kelly, Priest; an Episcopal church, Rev. Potwine, Rector; M. E. church South, F. C. Adkins, Pastor; M. E. church, H. L. Beightol, Pastor; Baptist, J. W. Mount, Pastor, and a Christian church with J. V. Crawford, Pastor. The Roman Catholic and Episcopal bodies hold regular services each month and the four last named every week. These bodies are ministered to by devoted, Godly men, of good average ability, who are held in high esteem by their several congregations. We think upon the whole, that Heppner makes a fine showing in the matter of churches, and offers in this respect splendid inducements to the prospective settler.

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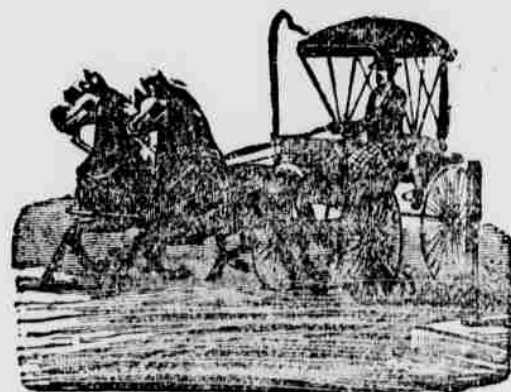
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