

The Polk County Observer

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HOP INDUSTRY IS GREAT

RIVER BOTTOM DISTRICT PRESENTS SCENES OF ACTIVITY.

Picking Machines Operating in Horst Company's Yard—Wigrich Ranch a Model—Other Fields.

The hopyards of the Independence district have attracted the attention of hundreds of visitors during the past week, many coming from a considerable distance to view the manner in which the harvest of this vast crop is made. The hop-picking machine in the E. Clement Horst company's yards has this year made an added attraction, and automobiles from various sections of the valley, loaded with the curious, are to be seen daily wending their way through the extensive acres of the company to the location of this modern wonder, produced by the inventive ingenuity of Mr. Horst himself, and similar patterns of which are doing all the picking in the California yards of his company this season, thus wholly eliminating hand pickers. Contrary to general opinion the machine is not used in the field, but is housed conveniently to the yards and the hop vines hauled to it by teams, dozens of teams being thus employed in order to keep it supplied. The vines are laid one way on a platform wagon in order that they may be handled by the feeders rapidly and without rearranging. The vines pass over large cylinders making sixty revolutions per minute, the teeth of which separate the hop from the vine. Mr. J. G. Wiggins, a Californian in charge of the plant at the Horst yard, in explaining the machines entrusted to his care, told a representative of The Observer that each vine was struck by 3,200 teeth in the picking process, thus making it practically impossible for waste to occur. Following the picking by means of these cylinders, the hops are separated from the leaves and twigs by passing through revolving screens, the openings in which are of graduated dimensions in order to permit the refuse to waste away and leave the cleaned product. This, however, is not the process in its entirety, and neither could it be given in the amount of space at command. There are two of these machines, besides which are two arm picking machines, which separate the hops from the arms of the vines, and two overflow machines, the capacity of which is approximately 60,000 pounds, or close to 1000 sacks of hops, daily.

But these machines, notwithstanding their enormous capacity as compared with hand picking, are insufficient to gather the harvest from the more than 600 acres planted to hops by this company, and in addition about 1,500 men, women and children are there employed throughout the season, many of the pickers comprising large families known to the company and who are annual workers in the yards. The camps are sanitary, special provisions having been made with this important feature in view. Mr. H. N. Ord, the superintendent of this, the most extensive hop yard in the world, expects an average of ten bales to the acre. In one small tract thirteen bales to the acre has been harvested, but this is an exceptionally good yield under most favorable conditions.

The Horst company probably has the only hot air blast system for drying hops in the state, and 2,300 boxes of hops are turned off daily by the employment of this modern method. Not only are practically twice as many hops cared for during the twenty-four hours as by the old plan, but the danger of damaging the product is entirely eliminated, while it is claimed that hops dried by the process are better value. H. Landon, the engineer, piloted The Observer party through the dryer during the temporary absence of William Buffman, who is the real thing about the plant, first visiting the sulphur burning room, the fumes from which reach the hops on the dryers by forced draft, and then on through the various departments. Between 130 and 140 degrees of heat only is necessary to cure the crop by this process, which is considerably less than under the old system.

The Wigrich Ranch.

"Is Major Rose about the premises?" inquired the manipulator of the festive fester as he approached a young Englishman at the office on the Wigrich ranch of 800 acres, located four and a half miles southeast of Independence. "E is, sir; who shall I announce, sir?" After having paved the way the scribe was ushered into the presence of Major W. Lewis Rose, a typical Englishman of perhaps fifty-five, who was ensconced in a huge easy chair of English pattern enjoying his afterlunch siesta in the quiet of his attractive den. The greeting was cordial, the information voluble and decidedly interesting, not only reference being made to the ranch, which most interests Major Rose, but to various other themes, including the present unpleasantness across the deep blue, which is followed closely from day to day by the

major, he having for nearly a quarter of a century been an officer of a British cavalry, resigning only four years ago. This ranch is the property of Englishmen, Messrs. Wiggins & Richardson, the former having been Major Rose's companion in the army for many years, and for whom the highest admiration is cherished. This explains why Major Rose, who has high connections on British soil, is manager for the company operating so extensively in Polk county, and still another reason why he is so vitally interested in the success of the undertaking by the Englishmen whom he represents. Last season this ranch yielded 350,000 pounds of hops from the 332 acres devoted to the crop, while this year's estimate is 480,000 pounds, which estimate is considered low. Six hundred and fifty people are necessary to gather the hop crop, and about 3,000 boxes a day are being picked. Experts say that Major Rose has the best crop in the valley this season; that the hops from the entire area will average a ton to an acre, but the major himself is more optimistic in his views, believing that the yield will exceed the estimate placed upon it by these authorities. This is accounted for by the fact that spraying was early, time being taken to do the work thoroughly and with the best of "dope."

The ranch is one approaching the ideal, and reminds one very forcibly of a southern plantation, there being the same "big house," surrounded by commodious buildings and warehouses, and "quarters" for farm help. There is a general supply store and restaurant, both of which are open the year through, butcher shop and bakery, a dance hall with a floor 150 x 50 feet, a moving picture show, besides sixteen dry kilns 30x30 feet each, and other buildings. Every other night during the picking season a dance is given, and oftentimes more than two hundred employes trip the light fantastic, to music furnished by the management, of an evening. Major and Mrs. Rose frequent the dancing pavilion, and not only enjoy indulging in the terpsichorean art but in mingling with the men and women, a goodly number of whom have picked hops on the place during the four seasons that the major has been in charge, and to whom more than \$25,000 will be disbursed for this season's work. This is one of the ways Major Rose has of studying the laboring class.

Hops are shipped direct to London from the Wigrich ranch, which is reached by a siding from Independence. In 1913 a train of fifteen cars went forward; in 1914 it required fourteen cars to deliver the product to the seaboard, but this year fully twenty cars will be necessary if expectations are realized, for 3,000 bales, or more, is the hope of the manager. In addition to hops the ranch this year had 300 acres in wheat, from which a bumper yield was harvested. There is 11 acres of orchard and 12 of loganberries. The berries from this field were sold on the vines at one cent per pound.

As soon as the crop is safely disposed of it is the purpose of Major Rose to commence preparations for next year's harvest by the erection of a number of additional cottages for the occupancy of pickers. The eight four-room houses already on the place will be doubled in number, and to these others will be added as the tents now used become worthless by usage. It is believed to be cheaper to build small houses and equip them than to supply tents, the deterioration of which is considered too great to be economical for housing pickers. These cottages are constructed along avenues, and are fifty feet apart, each having a porch, and modern conveniences, made possible by a splendid water system. The permanent help on the place occupies eight houses, built especially for the purpose.

The administration of the Wiggins & Richardson company is as follows: Major J. Lewis Rose, manager; Percy Goble, bookkeeper; F. L. Brew, assistant bookkeeper; Frank Luke, yard foreman; Algier Conger, riding boss; peace officers, Homer Mills and J. Hayes. These are the men who have made it possible for the Wigrich ranch to be characterized as having the best hop yard and the best plant in Oregon.

Gilbert & Patterson's Yard.

In approaching the headquarters of the Gilbert & Patterson ranch at Eola one finds it unnecessary to make inquiry for the chief high mogul, Mr. Isaac Patterson, for that individual has beaten you to it, and is awaiting your coming, even though it be unannounced, with a welcome that immediately puts the visitor in good spirits and good spirits in the visitor. Few are the Polk county residents who are not familiar with this ideal country home and fertile ranch, it being situated in one of the oldest settlements of the state, and came very near being not far removed from the capital of the commonwealth, for it was hard by that it was proposed in an early day to locate the statehouse. The ranch covers a large area, but only eighty-five acres are producing hops, which last year gave a yield of 153,000 pounds. The crop this year will probably exceed that of one year ago by a considerable amount. When the

(Continued on last page.)

TRIP FOR FAIR PRIZE

SCHOOL CHILDREN WILL CONDUCT NOTABLE CONTESTS.

W. A. Barr of O. A. C. Will Award Trip to Salem As Prize in Stock Judging Contest.

One of the most important features of the juvenile participation in Polk county fair this year will be the stock judging and canning demonstration by the boys and girls of the county. County Superintendent Seymour, in conjunction with the fair board, has arranged a list of prizes that are among the most attractive that will be offered, and should attract the young folks to extend their energy and ingenuity in an effort to make a creditable showing. Friday will be School day at the county fair and it is hoped that all schools in session on that day will close to allow the pupils a chance to visit the show and take part in these two important contests. Already Mr. Seymour has received word from school boards in various sections saying that their schools will close. The first prize in the stock judging contest will be a trip to the state fair at Salem with all expenses paid for one day. The next four prizes will be \$3, \$2, \$1 and 50 cents, respectively. Boys or girls residing in Polk county who have attended a school in the county during the past year are invited to take part in the contest. Four cows will constitute a class and there will be one class of each dairy breed exhibited, including Jersey, Guernsey, Holstein, Ayrshire and Brown Swiss. Each competitor will be given a blank card for each breed and will be required to record the number or letter of the animals which, in his judgment, he would place in first, second, third and fourth places respectively. Twenty minutes will be allowed in which to study the animals in each class and record their placing. All competitors must be present at the stock barns and report to the person in charge of the contest not later than 1:30 p. m., Friday afternoon. One hundred points will be given for the correct placing of the cows in all classes and a proportionate number of points will be given for such relative placing. The contest will be under the direction of W. A. Barr of the Oregon Agricultural college. The canning demonstration for girls of the county schools will also be held on Friday, September 24, and will be a novel and interesting feature of the day's program.

The Oregon state school for the deaf started its school year on Monday, with an enrollment of forty-three girls and fifty-five boys. During the last few weeks all the rooms in the building have been prepared for the coming pupils and the tables and cooking utensils are ready in the domestic science room, as a course in domestic science has again been added to the course this year.

UTTERS FORGED CHECKS

PAINTER PROCURES CASH AND UN CEREMONIOUSLY DEPARTS

Whereabouts of Harry C. Drake, Formerly Employed by Dungan Bros., Sought By Officials.

With thirty-four dollars of the capital of two Dallas merchants Harry C. Drake, a paper-hanger, has absconded, leaving no trace of his whereabouts. On Saturday evening Dungan Brothers, by whom the man was employed, issued a check to Drake covering his week's wages. Drake must have immediately copied the check and cashed it at Frank Kersey's confectionery store. A check issued in his own favor for \$20, and bearing Dungan Brothers' signature, was cashed at the Vassall grocery store. Both forgeries were turned into the Dallas City bank without question. That the checks were falsely uttered was not detected until Harry Gaynor, who knew Drake as an occupant of rooms above Gaynor's shoe store, wondered at his prolonged absence from the store and from his duties with the painters. Mr. Gaynor thought perhaps the man was ill and went to his room, where it was made evident that the forger had departed. Mr. Gaynor found a blotter which, when reflected in a mirror, showed the signature of Dungan Brothers and a "no hundreds" mark. Suspicions were confirmed upon inquiry at the bank which held the apparently legitimate checks for \$34.

Drake had been employed by Dungan Brothers for 15 months, and his actions were never questioned. In fact, he had been very careful and honest in all financial transactions, accepting his check each week for a carefully prepared time slip. He is about 43 years old, and came to Dallas from California. Drake cashed a legitimate salary check at Price Brothers' store on Saturday evening.

FRITZ ASKS DAMAGES

AFTERMATH OF TERRIBLE ACCIDENT AT BLACK ROCK.

August P. Risser, Guardian, Files Claim for \$30,000 Against Southern Pacific Company.

Alleging extreme negligence on the part of the Southern Pacific company in permitting the constant use of a dilapidated and unsafe bridge over the Little Luckiamute river at Black Rock, August P. Risser, as guardian for Joe Fritz, irresponsible, has filed suit in the circuit court to recover \$30,000 damages from the railroad company. Fritz was engaged as a freeman on the defendant company's engines when the bridge over the Little Luckiamute river gave way on July 10, 1914 and precipitated the locomotive to the river with the plaintiff in the cab. Escaping steam from the boilers of the engine severely burned the face, body and legs of the plaintiff. So serious were the burns, according to the complaint, that Fritz has been incapacitated, and his mentality has been affected. He suffered much pain and a great nervous shock from which he will probably never recover. On August 16 of this year, August P. Risser was appointed guardian for the injured man, who had no other income than the \$120 he earned each month as a fireman.

Fritz had been employed by the Southern Pacific company for a number of years and had crossed the same bridge many times with Engineer C. H. Faulkner, who had both legs broken and received severe burns in the same accident. The bridge that collapsed was near the "Y" at Black Rock, and when the engineer felt its timbers weakening he threw the throttle open in a desperate hope of getting the locomotive, hauling a freight train, across before it should give way. His action was in vain, however, and the engine, with its occupants, crashed into the river, a distance of twelve feet, turned over and stood up on end. Fritz has several brothers and sisters in Dallas, and is unmarried. A passenger train with many travelers had crossed the defective bridge not more than an hour before the accident in which Fritz was injured. Oscar Hayter's attorney filed the complaint.

Over the Breakers in Row Boat.

Lowell Stubblefield was in the city on Thursday and returned to Newport Friday afternoon. Mr. Stubblefield is said to be the first person to go out into the ocean from Nye beach in a row boat. It is an almost daily diversion for the young man and one companion to go two or three miles over the water trolling for salmon and from some of the pictures displayed it is evident that the foolhardy venture is a success. The only protection against accident are life belts worn by the adventurous young men.

LOSS IS GREAT BY FIRE

GROWERS SUFFER FROM MYSTERIOUS FIRES.

Governor Will Probably Be Requested to Protect Hop Growers From Lawlessness—\$50,000 Loss.

An intoxicated loafer is blamed for the destruction by fire on Thursday night of two barns, five horses, several tons of hay, a number of sets of harness and some farm machinery on the Wiggins-Richardson hop ranch south of Independence. There were eight horses in the barns when the fire was discovered and by quick work on the part of hop pickers the lives of three were saved. Several growers have suffered within the past week by fire losses and it was their inclination at first to attribute the trouble to a band of I. W. W. agitators which are said to have been at work in the various wards, but facts disprove this idea and in each case the fire has been blamed to other causes. Major Rose, manager of the Wigrich yard is convinced that the loss in that yard was the result of a carelessly thrown match or cigarette from the hand of some intoxicated person who reeled his way into one of the barns. Some insurance was carried on the Wigrich property.

George Reuf suffered the loss of a hop kiln and most of the season's crop in a fire that visited his yard early Friday morning. Mr. Reuf had just completed the picking of the hops on his place and had stored them in the kiln house, which was a total loss. Some insurance was carried on the hop house and the crop, but insurance adjusters who were in Dallas on Friday and Saturday, soon after the fires occurred, believe that only about three-quarters of the insurance premium on the crop will be allowed. This, however, is not the official statement of the companies carrying the risk. The origin of the fire at the Reuf yard

is a mystery, although the owner is willing to attribute it to carelessness on the part of dry-house employes. If the fires had been the work of I. W. W.'s, Mr. Reuf thinks they would have been set at a time when the loss would have crippled him. Since, however, they were started after the crop had been picked and dried and the loss would be covered by insurance it is not reasonably supposed that the fires were set by members of that lawless band. In spite of this theory growers are discussing the advisability of asking the governor to do what he can to protect their property, in view of several threatening letters which, it is said, have been received by growers.

Four large hop kilns and approximately 7000 boxes of hops were totally destroyed by fire in the yard of Eph M. Young, four miles north of Independence, on Friday morning, and the origin of the fire is unknown. Mr. Young had finished picking his crop on the day before the conflagration and practically the entire yield was stored in the house. Men were working in the kiln at the time of the fire and to some carelessness on their part the destruction is attributed. About two thirds of this loss is covered by insurance.

The most disastrous fire that has marked the present season and last week's destructive series of fires was that which consumed seven hop houses and seven bales on Saturday, with a loss of approximately \$32,000 to T. A. Livesly and company. About 600 pickers and other employes were at work when the Livesly blaze started from the roof of a kiln house. Efforts were made to keep the fire from spreading to other buildings, but within a short time the blaze had jumped to each of the seven houses. One picker, J. Proctor, assisting in the fire fighting, was caught beneath a falling roof, escaping without serious injury. The fire spread to a stable-field and a patch of brush and burned over 15 acres and consumed two straw stacks before it burned itself out. Approximately 1250 bales of hops were destroyed when the store houses were burned, and the remainder of the unpicked crop will be dried at the two remaining kilns and at another ranch owned by Livesly near Salem. It is almost certain that this fire was started by a spark or from spontaneous combustion.

It is estimated that the total loss in the four disastrous fires, all within a period of twenty-four hours, was nearly \$50,000.

HELD FOR GRAND JURY.

John Krebs, in Mixup at Rickreall, in Clutches of Law for Shooting.

A seventeen-year-old boy, thinking that he would be doing something smart by joining in hop-yard bonfire merriment that kept many peaceful and tired pickers awake at the John Carroll yard near Rickreall on Thursday evening, stepped, with his sister, to the door of the tent the three were occupying and where his mother was asleep, and fired five shots into the air. He had noticed during the day that a young lady acquaintance for whom he had fervent youthful fondness was in the company of another boy. When the shots rang out about midnight a group of revelers about the bonfire sensed a tragedy. Within a very short time, John Krebs, the smart-aleck marksman, was in the clutches of the law, and early the next morning was an inmate of the county jail, hob-nobbing with five hardened criminals. On Saturday morning Krebs appeared for trial before Justice Holman and was held for the grand jury on a charge of attempted murder. One of the five shots fired by the youth had mysteriously come down out of the high air and penetrated a tent, a large oil can and had imbedded itself in a mattress within a foot of the heads of two little children sleeping thereon. The presumption was that Krebs had attempted to take his spite out on the young lady of his favor by ending a heart smashing career, but this is vehemently denied by the youth. Justice Holman placed bonds at \$100 and held Krebs for the grand jury which meets on Thursday. Mrs. Krebs, the boy's mother, and his married sisters, who stood at his side when the shot was fired, failed to arrive in time for the trial but their evidence was admitted by Prosecuting Attorney Sibley. Glenn Holman defended the young man, whose home is in Salem, and the young lady in the case, together with the "other man," were witnesses.

Exhibiting at Fairs.

David Riddell left Wednesday with twenty-five head of sheep and goats which he will exhibit at the Interstate Fair at Spokane, Washington. From there he will attend the Washington State fair at Yakima and then return for the State fair at Salem. Messrs. Riddell & Sons have a fine lot of sheep and goats and it is but fair to presume that their stock will bring home a good share of prizes given at these shows.—Herald.

Labor Day Not Observed.

Labor day was not observed in Dallas, except that some of the county offices were closed, as also were the banking institutions of the city, while the postoffice observed holiday hours.

OLD RELICS ARE WANTED

JUDGE TEAL WOULD SECURE MILL STONES FOR LAWN.

Congressman McArthur Will Assist in Getting His Uncle's Early Burrs For Polk County.

Two ancient burrs from the first grist mill in Polk county, and no doubt the first in the state of Oregon, are being sought by Judge Teal, that he may place them as memory stones on the court house lawn. The old burrs were made long before most Dallas people were born, the exact date being unknown. When Judge Teal came to this country forty-five years ago the stones were laying in desuetude in a fence corner on Judge Breece's farm near Ellendale. J. W. Nesmith, grandfather of Representative C. A. McArthur, owned and operated the pioneer mill where early day wheat growers brought their threshings to be ground. Mills had taken on a new and more modern dignity than that of a grist grinder as much as 50 years ago, so it is possible that the stones are more nearly 75 than 50 years old. From Judge Breece's farm, where the burrs had been for many years, they were moved to Portland after Judge Teal, as county commissioner, had requested that they be given to the county. In Portland they ornamented the lawn of the mother of G. W. Himes, until the property was sold. The new owner considered them as other than ornamental and turned them over to Mr. Himes, who, as assistant secretary of the Oregon Historical society, included them in the society's collection of pioneer relics. They now rest peacefully, but uninteresting, in the historical society's rooms.

The burrs were made of Polk county stone, from a quarry somewhere on Salt Creek, by a Polk county pioneer. They served an honorable existence grinding Polk county's early day wheat into grist for many of the county's hardy settlers in the historical old days of the west. By all rights the burrs are unquestioned property of the county. When representative McArthur was in Dallas late last week Judge Teal communicated his desires to him, and as a grandson of the original owner of the old mill stones the congressman has agreed to put the question of transferring them to Dallas before Mr. Himes. Mr. McArthur expressed the belief that there would be no trouble about getting the stones for Polk county. Judge Teal hopes to have the burrs brought back to Dallas, when he will arrange to have them set in conspicuous spots on the public square. The date of their origination and the name of their maker, together with any other historical facts that can be determined, will be cut into the stones. In the center of each is a hole where a shaft went through and these will be filled with flowers. When the lawn on the court house square is improved the stones should add an attractive feature, provided, of course, that Judge Teal's efforts at securing their return from the historical society is successful.

BABY SHOW NEXT WEEK.

Interest Being Manifested in Forthcoming Event.

A valuable list of prizes is to be offered by F. E. Davis for the prize winning babies in the show and eugenic contest to be held at his store next Thursday. Mr. Davis is in charge of the Polk county fair show and contest and is staging it at the store for the benefit of the better facilities there for the care of little children. It will be a dignified and properly managed exhibition and the prizes that shall be offered, together with the examination of the youngsters that three Dallas doctors will make, should prove enough inducement to mothers to enter their babies. The prizes offered will come principally from the Davis stock, but a number of local merchants have donated special awards. Dr. A. B. Starbuck, Dr. V. C. Stants and Dr. L. A. Bollman will be the judges at the eugenic contest. Entries should be made as early as possible although there is no rule against bringing youngsters in on the day of the contest. Some entries are already in, and with a little interest displayed by a few of the county's proud mothers the baby show should be an unqualified success. It is the official county fair show and contest and is under the direct and capable management of F. E. Davis.

Dallas As a Hunting Ground.

That territory embraced within the corporate limits of Dallas is fast becoming a game preserve, probably due to the abundance of game in this immediately vicinity. Only the other day a China pheasant was killed by flying against one of the bank windows, and on Saturday a jack snipe spent more than an hour cavorting along Court street. Rabbits are frequently killed in the town's outskirts.