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## OUR PIONEER IRRIGATIONISTS.

A Short Account of the Successful Work of the Deschutes Reclamation and Irrigation Company.

Of all the Deschutes river irrigation enterprises, the Deschutes Reclamation and Irrigation Company has thus far been most successful in its aim to accomplish the purpose of its promoters. To this company must be given the credit of being the pioneers in irrigation on the Deschutes river. The scheme originated with G. W. Swalley (now deceased) and James R. Benham, who in 1898 succeeded in interesting others in the project, and in October of the next year the company was incorporated. The shareholders at that time were W. H. Gann, C. B. Swalley, W. R. McFarland, W. H. Birdsong, Wm. Johnson, B. C. Low, G. W. Swalley and James R. Benham. Mr. Gann later sold his share to the company and some time afterward Frank Glass, purchased it, making him one of the shareholders. C. M. Elkins, of Prineville, also acquired a half interest in Mr. McFarland's share after an organization had been effected and at present is the executive head of the enterprise. Mr. Johnson is secretary and treasurer, Mr. Benham general manager and Mr. McFarland chief engineer, he having been selected for that position by the state land board in the fall of 1900, when the company decided operate under the Carey act.

The survey had been made in September, 1899, and the work was already well under way when application to select lands under the Carey law was made. The original intention of the promoters was to select land under the Desert Land act and to encourage other settlers to come in and acquire an interest in the canal by doing an equal amount of work or by purchase of rights from the company. The appropriation of lands immediately contiguous to theirs, by larger concerns that afterward came in, forestalled their plans, however, and caused the little company to select a small area of its own and carry out the work without further aid. The first construction work was that of the flume something over a half mile in length and for which lumber was hauled from Benham falls. The flume is seven feet wide with fourteen inch side boards and is built with a grade of three-eighths of an inch to the rod. In the ditch work, considerable rock was encountered which necessitated hard labor for these plucky irrigationists. This was all overcome and at the present time the company has eight and a half miles of ditch carrying water to their lands, some twenty-three acres of which have already been tested to show its productiveness.

Three acres of well-matured oats

were raised last summer. Sixteen acres have been seeded to alfalfa and seven acres of rye has been sown on the Swalley and Benham places. Indications point to a good crop of alfalfa next season and several shareholders are preparing the soil for seeding. Mr. Low has twelve acres cleared. The lands selected by this company are of the very choicest and lay to the north, south and west of Long Butte. About \$8000. has thus far been spent in money and labor to push this work to a successful conclusion and a crew of eight men and two teams are now engaged in widening and deepening the ditch. Besides the eight quarter-sections held by the members of the company, several have homesteads and Frank Glass has purchased 400 acres of state school land which can be easily irrigated.

There is a considerable depth of soil on the lands held by the company and Messrs. Benham and McFarland are of the opinion that it is equally as good as that in the bottom lands of Crooked river, where alfalfa raising is an unquestionable success. It is estimated that the cost of maintenance of canals will not exceed forty cents per acre irrigated.

The upper floor of Steidl & Reed's new barn will have a capacity of from twelve to fifteen tons of hay. This part of the structure, extending out over the rimrock, is several times as large as the ground floor.

F. G. Connelly, the forest ranger who has been stationed at Crane Prairie during the past summer, was in Deschutes Thursday on his way to The Dalles. Mr. Connelly was formerly a partner of Nick Smith in the locating business.

Brother Kennedy, of the Prineville Review, was a visitor in town last Sunday, having come over to visit friends and incidentally to try his luck with the rod. He succeeded in landing 116 of the finny tribe and took them to Prineville the next day to distribute among his numerous friends. Mr. Kennedy was accompanied by his faithful dog, Ox.

A protective tariff would greatly benefit English landholders. Of late years the value of English lands has dwindled down nearly to a prairie basis and the landholders have in some cases become bankrupt. The aristocratic landholders would gladly welcome a tariff but the hordes of city laborers would be driven to desperation. Chamberlain's speech would indicate that Englishmen are not afraid to acknowledge that the country is in a critical state.

**C. W. BARNES,**

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