

# The Times-Herald.

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## HARNEY COUNTY IRRIGATION

GIVEN A PROMINENT PLACE IN THE OREGON JOURNAL.

Paul DeLaney Writes a Good Description of our Big Reservoir Site and the Valley in General.

Paul DeLaney in the Oregon Daily Journal, gives the Harney Valley irrigation proposition a most excellent writeup. He has been misinformed, however, in regard to some things. While the five gentlemen, to whom he has given all the credit for the work, have been most prominent and given much time toward bringing the matter before the department at Washington, the county court should have first credit. It was the court and the city of Burns that appropriated money to pay the expenses of the delegation, or a part of them at least. The county court also paid for the survey and making plats of the Silves valley reservoir site. The Times-Herald, as well as all our citizens, appreciates the good work of the delegation, yet in justice to all concerned, we desire to make this statement so that all may receive just credit. The county court appropriated \$223.68 toward the expenses of the delegates to Portland, \$266.10 for the survey of the reservoir site and \$90 for making the plats. The city council gave \$108 toward expenses of the delegates to Portland.

Following is Mr. DeLaney's writeup:

The government is hard at work on the Harney Valley irrigation project and the appearances are that 274,240 acres of the best land now lying idle in Harney Valley will be reclaimed so soon as the slow, but certain process of the government can accomplish it. A party of surveyors from the geological department of government, consisting of nine men, began work about the first of June and are surveying, staking and mapping the bed and dam of the contemplated reservoir that is to hold the water which is to supply thousands of people, and start and keep vegetation growing on nearly 300,000 acres of ground. Around an oblong circle, 15 miles in length and five miles in width white flags float in the breeze at intervals on the mountain sides indicating the high water mark of the contemplated water basin.

A valley now containing a population of about 50 persons, where beautiful meadows grow, and cattle and horses range, is to be converted into a vast sea of water which is to build up and populate a vast territory 30 miles below, the growth of which now consists of sagebrush and the population of which is principally jackrabbits and sagehens. A territory larger than many counties and almost as large as many states is thus to be reclaimed under the new irrigation law.

As a reservoir site and a territory to be reclaimed no better selections could be made. At no other point in Oregon could so large a reservoir be constructed at so small a cost, and at no other point in Oregon could so vast and rich a territory have been found in one body to be reclaimed at so low a cost. A level plain of rich soil, stretching out so far as the eye can see, that only needs water to bring from it anything that will grow, and that, too, in abundance. A natural basin 30 miles away surrounded by rock-ribbed mountains at every point save one, where by the construction of a few feet of wall enough water can be restrained to be used when needed to turn the arid valley below into a vast garden. The people of Burns claim that nature did the initiatory work and that it only needed a few finishing touches by the government to complete the job.

Silves Valley, about five by fifteen miles through which the Silves River flows from the mountains beyond, is 400 feet above the level of Harney Valley 30 miles to the south. It is already a com-

plete basin, with only one outlet and through this outlet, a deep canyon on the south, the Silves River flows on down to Harney Valley and into Malheur and Harney lakes. On every side save the outlet named, rocks and mountains extend high above the valley. By building a dam across the canyon the valley may be converted into a sea. There are two sites for dams; the site for the upper dam will require a wall 450 feet at the base and 1,050 feet at the top at a 60-foot level. The lower dam would only have to be 250 at the base and 450 feet at the top for the same level. With either of these dams the water would cover an area, as a basin, of 7,080 acres with capacity of 178,670 acre-feet.

In addition to nature's bounteous provisions she has placed right at the site of the two dams stone and timber, a sufficient quantity to build a dozen such dams, and has given a solid rock foundation upon which to begin the building of the dams. Then for a distance of 30 miles runs a cañon direct to Harney Valley through which the water may be conveyed to the land to be reclaimed.

The land to be reclaimed lies out south of Burns, the first point of which to be reached by the water from the reservoir being situated in the Northwest corner of Harney Valley and lying at the very door of Burns. Then on south to the mountains, that loom up smoky and dim in the distance, lies the at present unoccupied lands which are to be reclaimed. They foot up a grand total of 274,240 acres. Of these there are 19,000 acres of Indian allotment land; Carey selections, approved, 9,000 acres; Carey selections, not approved, 65,000 acres; road land, 44,000 acres; appropriated lands, 95,000 acres; vacant lands, 42,240 acres. The vacant lands and Indian allotments which come practically under the same head and which are subject to acquisition under the government land laws, give a total of 126,240 acres.

The present work by the government is on the same ground already surveyed and mapped out by local enterprise. When the irrigation association met at Portland last November a request was made of the representatives of different sections of Eastern Oregon to furnish plats and data as to what they had in their representative sections. In this work Harney County was in the lead. All other counties in Eastern Oregon yielded the palm to her, though she had several competitors. In this work it is proper to mention the untiring efforts of five prominent citizens of Burns. These men knew what they had. They had been studying the problem for years. They knew what wealth was hidden in the dry, but fertile soil of certain portions of Harney Valley. They realized that a great section of country was lying in waste, which with water thrown upon it would bring to this country a good citizenship and support it; a section that would make itself known to the outside world if it only had the opportunity. These men, backed by their local friends, met together and organized an aggressive campaign. They knew what they had and determined to "show" it to those interested in irrigation, and also to the representatives of the government at Washington.

Immediately after the meeting at Portland they employed a surveyor and placed him in the field. Although the snow was several feet deep at that time of the year, the work was pushed through from early until late, and within the space of 60 days, the allotted time, full reports were made, giving data and maps that showed the merits of the Harney County system for irrigation. The association acted slowly. The Burns "five" became impatient. They began a series of consultations with the authorities at Washington. This resulted in leaving J. W. Whittier, of the United States geological department sent to Burns. He soon grasped the situation and upon his report the surveying party was sent

out and it is still at work here. Besides making plats and surveying the country adjacent to the site, the party is also taking a systematic measurement of all of the water in the entire country. Water gauges have been placed in the streams and lakes and will be kept there and a record regularly taken until the government will be thoroughly informed as to the exact amount of water in this section and how to use it.

The reservoir will not be built with an escape water gate, as is the custom, but the site is so well favored by nature and dam-building is so easy that a dam of sufficient height and strength will be built to restrain all of the water that flows into the reservoir until it is needed. By this means the vast area of country to be reclaimed will be amply supplied throughout the dry season.

The men of Burns who have taken so much interest in bringing the project forward, are: I. S. Geer, N. U. Carpenter, Dalton Biggs, Morris Fitzgerald and William Farre. They have not only given their time but their money to the work, and they are now delighted that the prospects look prosperous.

The great obstacle that they have met has been the argument of outsiders that "nothing would grow" in Harney Valley; that it was useless to put water on land at a great expense that will not produce proper results. But a few of the enterprising citizens of Burns have already demonstrated the falsity of this statement. They came here under the general idea that nothing would grow except native meadow hay. Newcomers also came with this idea. It has been stated so often by outsiders that the people generally unacquainted with the situation unconsciously believe that nothing will grow here. A visit to the homes of I. S. Geer, H. E. Thompson, John R. Robinson and a score of others in Burns will refute this idea at once. Or if one still doubts, a drive through Harney valley will dispel the most sceptical ideas on this point.

All of the harder fruits, and nearly every fruit grown in Oregon may be found yielding extraordinary results in the town of Burns. The vegetables here equal both in production and quality any grown elsewhere in the world. Harney Valley promises to rival the famous Hood River country in the production of strawberries; these are no longer experiments; the living evidence is presented to the visitor every day.

Then grain and alfalfa thrive here, even without irrigation, to large yields. Crops have been harvested by a number engaged in the business for a number of years with satisfactory results. With water, these products will reach enormous proportions along with the other products of the country. The soil is here. The climate is here. The natural advantages are here. Give the people of Harney County water through the present contemplated

plan, and the railroad transportation facilities that must soon follow, and she will be one of the most progressive and prosperous sections of the country "where rolls the Oregon."

It may be well, however, to state that the plans of the government have not reached that point where there is a sufficient certainty to justify a rush into the country. Harney County has her advantages already and there is room for many more enterprising, earnest, home-seeking citizens, but a wild rush into the country by those expecting to take advantage of the present prospects under the government plan of irrigation, and grow rich "quick," would doubtless prove disappointing. The government works slowly. It changes its mind. The present work is only experimental, and it may be a number of years before anything is done, provided the government decides to carry on the work. Everything, however, points favorably to the conclusion that the project will be carried out, and when the lands are once thrown open for settlement it will be ample time for those seeking homes to file their claims.

A rush at this time would prove disappointing.

## ONTARIO WOOL SALES.

The wool market at the present time resembles the great American game of poker. The buyers are sealing from 10 to 13 cents and this figure the buyers are loth to accept. There are about 2,500,000 pounds of wool offered for sale in the Ontario market this year, the largest amount in the history of the city. The buyers seem independent in their attitude and think that the growers will yield to the terms offered them. If this will be true or not remains to be seen.

The sheepmen know the ravage of the storm in Montana and guess something of the consequence on the price of wool. They realize that the loss of a million or more sheep from the western market means much to the aggregate output of wool. The wool quotations have been strong and with condensation since the storm grows hope for a still stronger upward tendency.

The situation is if the buyers can make the growers believe that the market will not rise they will get the wool, if, however, the growers hold ashille, they hope to receive a better price.

The wool sales in this city were opened yesterday, Thursday morning with a good representation of buyers and growers present. The bidding was brisk and about 320,000 pounds were disposed of at prices ranging from 12 to 14 cents per pound. In the M. M. Co. warehouse, where there is stored about 1,000,000 pounds, the following sales were made: Isaac & Galien, 150,000 pounds, at 14 cents per pound; R. C. Goodwin, 21,000 at 13; King Brown, 11,000 pounds

at 13 cents; H. Allison, 13,000 pounds at 13 1/2 cents; E. Dugler, 11,000 pounds at 13 1/2; F. Parmer, 15,000 pounds at 13; D. Rusk, 12,000 pounds at 12 cents; J. Thompson, 3200 pounds at 13 cents; R. Smith, 8000 pounds at 13 cents; A. E. Brown, 18,000 pounds at 13 cents; R. H. Brown, 30,000 pounds at 12 1/2.

At the Forwarding Company warehouse the only sale so far reported is the clip of J. C. Gordon, 21,000 pounds at 13 cents.—Ontario Argus.

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## Religious Services.

Services at Christian Science Hall every Sunday at 11 a. m. and 8 p. m. Service Wednesday evenings at 8. Subject for Sunday, June 28, "Christian Science."

Rev. A. J. Irwin will preach at Harney the 2nd Sunday of each month at 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Sabbath school every sabbath at 2 p. m.

Sunday school at Harney the first Sunday of each month at 10 o'clock a. m. On the second, third and fourth Sunday of each month at 3 o'clock p. m. Preaching service every second Sunday at 8 p. m.

At the Presbyterian church Burns, Rev. A. J. Irwin pastor. Divine services the third and fourth Sundays of each month at 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Sabbath school at 10 a. m. every Sabbath morning.

Preaching services at the Baptist church every 1st and 2nd Sundays, morning and evening Sunday school every Sunday at 11 a. m. prayer meeting every Thursday evening.

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