

Rogue River Courier.

VOL. XXI

GRANTS PASS, JOSEPHINE COUNTY, OREGON, FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 1906.

No. 49.

GRANTS PASS TO BE A RAILROAD CENTER

Preparations Now Under Way for Building a Railroad to Illinois Valley and Coast

It can now be definitely announced that Grants Pass is to have a railroad to the Illinois Valley and that grading for the roadbed will be begun within the next 60 days. Wednesday the local committee having in charge the securing of capital for the construction of this railroad received a telegram from J. O. B. Gunn, of San Francisco, stating his company had secured the capital sufficient to at once build the railroad from Grants Pass to Takilma and its construction would be hastened with the greatest possible speed.

This railroad leading from Grants Pass to the rich mining, timber and agricultural section of the central and Southern part of Josephine county was first undertaken three years ago. Colonel T. W. Morgan Draper, having secured capitalists to put in a smelter at the Takilma copper mines, set about securing railroad communication from the smelter to the Southern Pacific at Grants Pass. In this undertaking he was backed up by the progressive citizens of Grants Pass. He organized a company in San Francisco, where he resides, of prominent men of that city, who placed at the

head of the organization John O. B. Gunn, one of the prominent capitalists of San Francisco. This company, known as the California & Oregon Coast Railroad Company, had a survey made of the route from Grants Pass to Crescent City. This route crosses Rogue river at White Rocks in the east suburbs of Grants Pass and traversing the level bottom of nine miles between Rogue and Applegate river and crossing the latter stream near the mouth of Slate creek will follow that creek up to Love's Station where a tunnel will carry the railroad through Hay's hill, as that section of the divide between Applegate and Illinois Valleys is called. The Illinois Valley will be reached at the head of Clear creek down which the route passes to Selma where Deer creek is crossed and the route runs through the low divide east of Eight Dollar mountain and out on the Illinois river bottom near Kerby. The route follows up this Valley past Kerby to the forks of the river near Waldo. The route here branched one turning up the right fork of the Illinois and on across the divide at its headwaters to Smith river in Del Norte county

and the one to Crescent City. The other branch of the route follows up the left fork of Illinois to the Takilma smelter and will be extended on to the headwaters of that stream to the Preston Peak copper district, known to be one of the largest and richest in the United States.

Ample terminal grounds were secured adjoining the Southern Pacific track in the east part of Grants Pass, the purchase of this land being partially borne by a number of the citizens of this city. A number of right-of-way contracts were secured on the route between Grants Pass and Takilma and then all apparent activity on the part of the Company ceased. The general hesitancy then prevailing of moneyed men taking up new railroad ventures was assigned as the reason for the California & Oregon Coast Railroad Company not being able to interest capital and build their road.

An era of railroad building having set in all over the Pacific Coast the citizens of Grants Pass decided this past Winter that it was a most propitious time to infuse new life into their local railroad venture. A company was organized in January known as the Grants Pass & Western Railway Company, made up of some of the leading citizens of the city. Some \$38,000 in stock was subscribed to secure funds for surveying a route for a railroad to Illinois Valley and for securing terminal grounds and right-of-way. Correspondence was opened with a number of capitalists, who were railroad builders, to interest them in the proposition and to take it up and build the road. Consider-

able encouragement was received and the outlook was good for getting a company to take up the venture when Mr. Gunn and Colonel Draper revived their project and again appeared on the scene. With the backing and co-operation of the local Grants Pass company they were able to make such a showing of tonnage and feasible route that they are now able to secure ample capital for building the railroad. On an agreement to this effect the local company will turn over their stock so soon as a section of this road is constructed and retire from this field.

Encouraged by their success in getting it made certain that Grants Pass will have railroad connection with the rich territory to the south, the managers of the local company have turned their attention to getting a railroad into the great undeveloped region to the east of this city. With that end in view the articles of incorporation will be amended to enable a change of route to be made. This route will be from Grants Pass to Woodville; thence up Evans creek to near Bybee Springs thence through a low pass across to Sams Valley and on in a northeasterly course to Rogue river near Prospect, where the Condor Power & Water Company are putting in one of the biggest electric power plants on the Pacific Coast. The route will then be up Rogue river to its head at Crater Lake thence on into Eastern Oregon.

This road would be even a more profitable one than the one to Crescent City for it would tap one of the finest timber belts in Southern

To Build Road to Crater Lake, Thence East Connect With Transcontinental Line.

Oregon, largely of sugar pine, that covers the country from Evans creek almost to the summit of the Cascade mountains. The extensive coal fields of Big Meadows would be made available and prospect work has proven that there is a vast deposit of good coal in this district. There is along the line of route extensive deposits of asbestos, cinnabar, copper and gold, that railroad transportation would develop. The tourist travel to Crater Lake, one of the greatest scenic wonders of the world, would bring a large traffic to this railroad. Eastern Oregon would be a traffic field of enormous proportions. In that section connection would be made with some one of the Eastern railroads now heading towards the Pacific. The building of the two roads above mentioned would make Grants Pass the Spokane of Southern Oregon and be the beginning in transportation development that would make this city one of the big railroad centers of the Pacific Coast.

Active preparations are now under way for the construction of the railroad from Grants Pass to Takilma, and so soon as it is certain that a

smelter is to be erected at Blue Ledge copper mines a branch line will be built up Applegate to that large and rich mining district. The Company has a deed to ample terminal grounds in Grants Pass adjoining the Southern Pacific line, where a union depot will be built. Right-of-way is now being secured, that matter being attended to by the Company's attorney, A. C. Hough and by Thos. Galvin, who is doing the field work. Where the right-of-way cannot be bought condemnation suits are being instituted and the owners of the land made to allow the railroad to pass through their property. It is expected to have grading begun by May 1st.

A meeting is called for next Thursday evening in the Opera House to consider some matters in connection with the railroad to Illinois Valley, and also to take up the question of securing a railroad from Grants Pass to Crater Lake and on to Eastern Oregon and connect with some transcontinental line. It is expected that every stockholder in the Grants Pass & Southern will be present and also all other citizens of Grants Pass who are interested in making this city of 35,000 people.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF GRANTS PASS

Interesting Facts of Early Days as Told by a Former Editor of the Courier.

By an oversight I have failed so far to mention the "Press" of Grants Pass, which is in marked contrast to the struggling Courier of '85 and '86. The Observer weekly is firmly established as one of the levers for good in the city and county; it is a paper of which any community should feel proud. J. F. Galbraith is its editor and publisher. The Mining Journal, published by the M. J. Publishing Co., Arthur Conklin, editor, is a zealous friend to the miner and has been established about nine years. The Courier, Observer and Mining Journal all have job printing and book binding plants complete and their press rooms are full of the latest appliances in the art preservative.

When J. H. Stine issued Vol. 1, No. 1, of the Grants Pass Courier on Friday, April 2, '85, it was a seven column, patent outside and gave its readers but four and a half columns of reading matter, subscription price "one copy in advance, \$2.50 per year." Its head line said "An independent paper devoted to the interests of Josephine county and Southern Oregon."

As a matter of fact, the very first print to make its appearance in the town was the "Argus," an infamous sheet not worthy of the name newspaper; it was six inches, irregularly issued, devoting considerable space to attacks upon our best citizens. The writer bought the entire plant for \$10, using no part of it in the Courier office excepting a railroad cut. Hon. H. B. Miller was the person who suggested the name "Rogue River Courier." Meeting Mr. Miller

on the street I brought up the subject. He favored the present name because in the Valley of the Rogue.

Mr. Miller was not consul-general to Japan in those days, but he was consul-general of Grants Pass and whatever he said was apt to go, so on June 4, '86, the Courier came out a home print as the "Rogue River Courier, Wimer & Stine, publishers." The objection to the original name was that it implied a narrow pass, whereas the townsite is in one of the most beautiful valleys one ever sees, and the Rogue river from the bridge in the edge of town when clear, is the prettiest stream between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Its beauty is of the poetic sort and many is the song that will be sung of it. July 2, '86, the Courier came out with W. J. Wimer publisher and on December 6, '86, the plain style of letter for the headline was dropped and the present style with a very slight difference appeared at its head.

When Stine landed in Grants Pass he was broke; he looked about for aid to start a paper; the merchants were willing to help him some and Dr. W. H. Flanagan was willing to loan him about \$400. He could not see his way on this so came to Waldo and asked me to stand behind him when pay day should come, about a year ahead. I promised that if he would publish an independent paper, devoted to the interests of the county I would. He had not been long in business before he had some trouble with his wife and took an overdose of morphine—more than usual. Dr. Flanagan was called in and by hard work for a whole night, pulled him through. Good and faithful nurse that the doctor is, I have always believed that he worked harder to save Stine's life than he would otherwise have done, for as he stated to me afterward, he "did not want that paper." In due time Stine came to me for the promised aid. I had heard of his troubles, his whiskey and mor-

phine and was not anxious to make the loan, but the poor fellow had been doing some business on that promise. In my straits I went to Davis Brower for advice. He informed me he was Stine's lawyer but would advise with me; his advise was that it was not safe to make the loan and that in order to avoid the possible loss of the money I had better buy a half interest in the business and take the business management of the paper. But I objected to Stine's whiskey and morphine. "Bind him up in an article of agreement which I will write," said the article said, was to abstain from the use of whiskey, and he kept his agreement just three weeks. Under this purchase I paid Stine \$800 for a one-half interest in a broken hand press and the office was without a jobber. There was the usual amount of well worn type. A new outfit complete could have been bought for less money. I had no use in the world for a newspaper. I did not know a column rule from a galley and had never studied grammar. Stine she. This was done and Mr. Stine, and I remained partners long enough to get out three issues of the home print; during our co-partnership Stine and I had bought an entirely new dress for the paper and a Gordon Jobber and all necessary job material; this cost me another \$800. At the end of three weeks, Stine went on a big spree, breaking his article of agreement and resulting in an abrupt dissolution of co-partnership. I was left entirely helpless. Sam Smith, brother of Robert G., was our type but he could not get out the paper. At this juncture I thought of my old friend Leeds of the Tidings, and to Ashland I went. After hearing my story Mr. Leeds said: "I see how you are fixed; I have got a good man in the office who can do your work and if you can make a bargain with him I will let him go; if I get pushed I can get in and set type and that you can't do." In very short order I made a bargain with B. A. Starnard, who immediately removed to Grants Pass, family and cow, and at once took full charge of the press room, remaining with me as long as I owned the paper, giving the best of satisfaction, getting out, as my files prove, a very neat print and he was always on time and no whiskey mixed up with it.

For this kindness when Mr. Leeds ran for state printer, though he was a republican and I a democrat, he wrote me to know if I could support him—he got my vote and several of my friends at my suggestion besides. I sold the Courier to G. G. Wickson, dairy machinery dealer, San Francisco (who bought it for his brother-in-law, A. A. Allworth) for \$1500. Wickson sold it to Mr. Shepherd; Shepherd to Curry; Curry to Jerry Nunan; Nunan to its present owner. While I owned the Courier, Miss Cora Smith, daughter of Edwin Smith and

sister to Hon. R. G. Smith, and F. W. Chausse, gave me no little anxiety; they were determined to break into the Courier office and become printers. There were but 500 voters in the county at that time and they did not rush to the support of the county's first paper. I could therefore not afford to hire extra help.

Miss Smith came quite often; I had no notion whatever of employing her but did not tell her so. One day while I was standing in the office door she hesitated, as she was passing, to plead for that "case." She would try, she said, and if she did not give satisfaction she would gladly quit. I put her off; as she walked away I noticed her closely; she was dressed plain but neatly; her dress was of good material; in the back of the waist on one shoulder, was a very neat patch about two inches square—that decided her future; I said to myself, "I will give that girl a case" and I did and though she was rather delicate as to health, she dropped into the paper business as a duck does into water and proved a valuable acquisition to the Courier force.

I had now disposed of Miss Smith, what was I to do with that slender boy, whose father had recently died, leaving quite a large family struggling against the tides? Going down the street to the office one day with a dozen lead pencils in my hand; I met the boy who in a playful mood snatched one of the pencils from the bunch—that was the first editors pencil he ever wielded but not the last one; soon after that he was running the inkler in the Courier office.

W. J. WIMER.

RAILROAD MANAGER VISITS GRANTS PASS

General Manager Craig Well Pleased with Possibilities of Rogue River Valley.

A. L. Craig of Portland, general manager of the Harriman lines in Oregon, which practically includes all the railroads in this state, was in Grants Pass all of Monday, he arriving in his private car with the morning passenger train and remained until 10:30 p. m. when his car was taken to Ashland by No. 11. Mr. Craig was accompanied by J. P. Jones, traveling passenger agent for the Southern Pacific and O. B. & N. lines in this state. The object of this visit of Mr. Craig to Rogue River Valley was that he might familiarize himself with conditions here as related to the development of a larger traffic for his road. While Mr. Craig has been a resident of Oregon for several years, this was the first time that he had been in this section of the state, except to pass through on the cars and he was most agreeably surprised at the extent of Rogue River Valley and at the many and immense

resources that it contains. During the day, he, in company with Mr. Jones and with the Southern Pacific local agent, Mr. Jester, called on the business men of the city and gained from them much of the information he desired as to the methods and possibilities of developing the latent wealth of this Valley.

Mr. Craig expressed himself to a representative of the Courier as a result of his investigations that the greatest resources of Josephine county was being the least developed, that of agriculture which he held would in time bring in a greater wealth than the mines or the timber. He, did not speak disparagingly of the latter industries but credited them with being great factors in the prosperity of Rogue River Valley. Such had been the showing in the markets of the world and at the Lewis and Clark fair of Rogue River fruit that Mr. Craig was certain that the time was not distant when this valley will be famed for its apples and berries quite as much as Hood River now is. In quality and productiveness; Rogue River apples, pears, peaches, grapes and cherries were excelled by no section of the United States and Mr. Craig thought it would be a safe venture for farmers here to grow these

fruits. The dairy business, the raising of large horses and diversified farming was commended by this all-round well posted railroad man. Of the movement now under way to establish rural telephone lines and organize Granges in this Valley Mr. Craig stated that the telephone had proven

itself to be one of the strongest factors yet brought to take away the loneliness and monotony of farm life and to make especially the young people contented to stay on the farm. The Grants, now that it had become a farmers club instead of political organization, had become a power of great good to the farmer and his family. On good roads Mr. Craig is an enthusiast and thinks the foundation of the farmers prosperity is dependent on the condition of the roads to his marketing point. As most roads now are it costs the farmer from 25 to 75 cents per ton per mile to haul his produce to the railroad, yet this expense could be cut down one-half by building hard surfaced roads. Mr. Craig stated his company would more than ever take up the systematic advertising of Rogue River Valley as he was fully convinced that it was one of the most promising sections to homeseekers and investors that was reached by an Oregon railroad. The Southern Pacific was now giving the same freight rate from Rogue River points as from Portland or San Francisco on fruit, hops, wool and other farm products to the markets of the East.

Declamatory Contest.

We again call attention to the declamatory contests to be held Wednesday and Friday, March 28th and 30th in the High School Assembly room. These contests should be patronized largely and generously by all who have the interest and welfare of our schools at heart. Doors open at 7:15, program to begin at 7:45.

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A TIMELY TOPIC

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