

## THE STRUGGLE FOR IRRIGATION

THE STORY OF THE BIG ENTERPRISE

### MEN AND MEANS EMPLOYED

An Interesting Account of the Project from Its First Inception, and the Difficulties.

(By M. J. Anderson.)

As an eleventh hour contribution to your "Irrigation Edition" I would add a straggling sketch of the main incidents in the struggle to bring irrigation and prosperity to the Rogue River valley; and "lest we forget" will suggest for the roll of honor, names of your citizens who made an irrigation edition possible.

In July, 1908, when the days were so warm that the pleasant evening breezes failed to cool the city hydrants, and the pure water of the Rogue was hardly attractive as a beverage when not artificially cooled, ten men met by appointment at the Government Forest offices in this city. Their mission was to take up some one particular thing that would be of benefit to Grants Pass, unite on it, talk it to others, carry it before the Commercial Club, fight for its advancement and, without publicly announcing their agreement, force it to a successful issue. They were to choose their subject and devote their energy to boosting it. A motion to give the body a name was voted down; as was the proposition to elect officers. Anyone acquainted with different individuals would have known they would not hold together if tied by constitution or rules. An organization must be made of leaders and followers, but no member of this body would acknowledge he was a follower, consequently there was no leader.

There was no order of business, no member had a pet theory to advance or a favorite plan to endorse. They just met to talk over something—anything—that might be boosted to the advantage of the community.

The meeting was a pleasant one socially, and with smoking, story telling and pleasantry the evening passed along. One veteran newspaper man (a new comer) in the crowd who had added not a little to the entertainment with his experiences finally asked for a drink of water, and tasting of the uncooled beverage made a wry face. This expression of displeasure was not received with good grace by the others, and one called his attention to the fact that it was noted for its purity, that no fevers existed in Grants Pass. Others joined in praise of the water, and anyone but a contrary old newspaper man would have accepted the general verdict that it was good; but not so, he dramatically arose and in a tone of deliberation said: "Gentlemen, any man who

says that water in its present condition is fit to drink is not a good citizen. It is fit for irrigation and nothing else." Then followed a general discussion on irrigation, its advantages to the community, the abundance of water in Rogue river for that purpose. Our newspaper man had had much experience, others a little. There was not a unanimous irrigation sentiment by any means, however, but it was determined that this unnamed, un-officered club would boost for irrigation. The veteran newspaper man was, C. G. Coutant, present editor of the Courier, and his name should head the roll of honor, not only for his suggestion, but for the weeks and months of his time and energy devoted gratis for success of the project which will make Grants Pass a city of note, and the surrounding valley a community of prosperous farmers and orchardists. The ten were: C. G. Coutant, H. L. Andrews, J. G. Riggs, E. L. Churchill, W. B. Snierman, W. W. Walker, E. V. Ingels, O. S. Blanchard, H. M. Guthrie, and the writer.

There were no plans made at this time except not to discuss the proceedings publicly. The same old ten never got again together; but the first sod was turned that night and some of them have been digging ever since.

Mr. Coutant enlisted the assistance of H. C. Kinney, now mayor, L. B. Hall, president of the First National Bank, and H. L. Gilkey, cashier of the same institution, and G. H. Carner; these, with some members of the original ten, and other progressive citizens, held frequent meetings in the directors' room of the bank, appointed workmen, names were: C. G. Coutant, J. C. Coutant and J. G. Riggs held permanent appointment.

The meetings became so frequent and, being of a semi-secret nature, caused much comment and also considerable outside criticism, as it had become generally known that some kind of an irrigation scheme was being planned, and the public thought itself injured.

The public will never know of the many plans suggested, discussed and turned down as impracticable. How irrigation districts, government reclamation projects, plans to purchase lands to be deeded to private corporations as an inducement to undertake the work; how legal obstacles were found to exist, how water rights, once for sale reasonably, suddenly took on great value, how railroad holdings interfered and selfish interests prevented action. How can realize the disappointments and headaches that fell to the lot of these men while the chronic knocker kept busy whittling away the confidence of the public in as loyal a body of men as ever worked unselfishly for the benefit of a community.

At last a committee of six was appointed to crystallize the plans and get the farmers interested. The names were: C. G. Coutant, J. C. Riggs, H. L. Gilkey, H. C. Kinney, L. B. Hall, O. S. Blanchard. Again obstacles of all kinds arose; rival irrigation projects, monopolies in power and water properties began to fear opposition and got busy with promises to do things that they should have done long ago. Some condemned the system of semi-secret

meetings, others ridiculed the idea of a popular meeting—anything to defeat the plans.

On September 2 a meeting of farmers was called at the Commercial Club rooms and six farmers added to the committee: Geo. Sabin, R. Thomas, G. A. Hamilton, John Christie, E. E. Blanchard, L. D. Allen, and also by courtesy, the writer was added making "13" (supposed to be an unlucky number), and Mr. Gilkey, pretending there was enough to contend with without tempting fate with a "hoodoo," had Mr. G. H. Carner added, making a committee of 14. The hoodoo must have effectually conquered as Mr. Carner has done nothing but fight for irrigation, and has taken personal charge of the canal building at the sacrifice of his own business interests.

A committee of 14 is generally too unwieldy to do business; but it was not so in this case. The minority (as is not unusually the case) did the work; but, (as is not usually the case) every member backed the workers, and the earnestness, enthusiasm and confidence of ultimate success shown by these men won the public, and silenced the knocker.

The U. S. Reclamation Service was called upon for an engineer to look over the ground and A. P. Stover was sent here and pronounced any of several plans feasible. A mass meeting was called at the Opera house on October 28. To this date all expense of the several months' hard work had been met by the men doing the work without claim or expectation of reimbursement.

The meeting at the Opera house was a most remarkable gathering. Farmers, bankers, mechanics, merchants, professional men and clerks crowded the building, each eager to do his share. It was a meeting that would have been impossible a month previous, and was the result of a campaign seldom equalled.

When Mr. Coutant, as chairman, called the meeting to order, and Mr. Gilkey briefly stated that the committee had gone its length, that funds were necessary to secure an engineer to make survey and estimate of cost; that he and his fellow-workers desired to incorporate under the state law with a capital of \$10,000, so they could legally do business, an endless string of people in all walks of life came forward and subscribed to the stock until the \$10,000 was subscribed or pledged in this meeting; and then elected nine members of the board of directors from the workers, members of the original committee. It was an endorsement of which men should be proud, and doubtless did spur them on to overcome greater obstacles. This new and present board is: Directors, H. G. Kinney, R. Thomas, C. G. Coutant, O. S. Blanchard, H. L. Gilkey, G. A. Hamilton, E. E. Blanchard, G. H. Carner, J. C. Riggs. This board elected the following officers: H. L. Gilkey, G. Riggs, secretary.

I have stated the committee was almost in continual session. This was also true of the new board of directors. Incorporation papers were filed, a competent engineer secured, surveys and levels run, plats made of every possible source of supply, dams, and dam sites were examined, condition, cost and value reported in full. When all possible data was in, the board appointed three of their members a committee with full power to act, subject to approval of the stockholders. This was granted unanimously. This committee was: G. H. Carner, H. C. Kinney, E. E. Blanchard.

The result is well known. The Golden Drift Mining Co. and Ament Bros' proposition to furnish water was accepted. The capital stock increased to \$75,000 to build the ditches, and the necessary money subscribed—very simple and easy when one tells about it, but few realize the numberless propositions that were considered, the legal tangles to be overcome, the many future interests to be guarded, the intricate plans to go over that justice as well as water be given to each user, the responsibility and strain that is upon every honest man when acting as agent for his fellows in such an important matter.

It would be hard to select any one or more men who are entitled to most credit. Just now I have in mind O. S. Blanchard, the attorney, who drew up the legal documents

## GREAT WORK OF LADIES' AUXILIARY

FIRST YEAR OF ORGANIZATION  
ENDS IN MAY

### MEMBERSHIP OF OVER 164

Rose Festival Leads to Other Important Work—Betterment of City Parks.

The first year in the history of the Ladies' Auxiliary closes in May. The organization was effected through the efforts of Mr. H. L. Andrews, then secretary of the Commercial Club, its purpose being to supplement efforts of and co-operate with the work of the Commercial Club. An active woman's organization is always a necessary adjunct to the life of a town and the women of Grants Pass needed only the suggestion to complete the organization.

The Auxiliary began its career with Mrs. C. L. Clevenger as president, and too much cannot be said of the able manner in which she has filled the position. It was one that called for exceptional ability, for there were many discouragements to encounter. As the constitution provided for no dues, the body began work with an empty treasury. The season of the year, because of the heat, was not conducive to an enthusiastic attendance, and often the outlook seemed unpromising. Yet, with all the drawbacks, by unflinching faith, tact and patience of the president and the hearty enthusiasm of the few beginners, the first anniversary finds the club with a strong organization, a membership of one hundred and fifty-four and a record of good deeds behind it.

The first action undertaken was the giving of a rose festival, and exactly one month from the date of that first meeting called by Mr. Andrews to explain what a ladies' auxiliary was, there was held in the big skating rink a festival of roses that would have done credit to any place. Grants Pass awoke that night to the fact that Southern Oregon can produce roses the equal of any on the Pacific Coast and on that occasion was born the zeal to make of Grants Pass the Rose City of Southern Oregon.

Before the adjournment for the summer vacation, through August and September, plans were taken for parking the grounds about the railroad station. Though many hindrances came up to discourage the project, its successful realization is already evident to every passerby. In the level parking and the abundance and ably served on the board and gave much of his time to the free use of the company; and again, there was J. G. Riggs, the able secretary, who almost gave up his own business for weeks at a time to serve the irrigation cause. It goes without saying that President Gilkey, as the financial head and general manager did the work of two or three men for several weeks and months and is still devoting the most of his time to the project. But why mention individuals where every man was an earnest worker.

What is their reward? Some will use water on their lands—for which they will pay just the same as he whose name appears only on the stock books. Some will gain by advance in property values—just the same as he who had no time or money to give to such an enterprise, and was content as things were.

Fortunately, the men I have been talking about never work for praise or reward; They feel amply repaid by being of use to their community. They are of the class that have pushed American civilization and enterprise and moved steadily the center of population to the west. Such men are seldom rich in worldly goods, as riches are too often calculated, but they should be rich in the goodwill of settlers in this valley, and as we reap the harvest they have sown their names and unselfish efforts should not be forgotten.

of hardy young trees already planted lies the promise of good things to come, of deep shades, of cool breezes and the fragrance of flowers in a place which formerly has been dreaded because of its scorching sun.

The efforts to beautify the school grounds and church yards, and also to secure the planting of more roses, vines and trees on residence property has been the special object of the spring's activity. The town was canvassed with the result that nearly a thousand rose bushes, several hundred vines and many shade trees have been planted through the city this season. The rose bushes having two-year-old roots will bloom this summer, an immediate and constant witness to the enterprise of the Civic Improvement committee and its helpers. The school children have also been interested in the development of the "City Beautiful," and with the sweet pea seeds given by the Auxiliary each child has his own little garden to add to the beauty of the whole.

Two different sources have supplied the funds for all this work, the rose festival and the generous gift of Mrs. Gunnell, who offered the ladies one-half the proceeds from her recital. At no time has the work hung back for want of money, but it has gone forward steadily, for the organization believed the value of their undertaking would speak for itself and the where-withal would come.

One public reception has been given during the year. This was especially designed as a welcome to the many strangers who have settled among us in the last months. More social work will be done in the future as the new rooms will render this more possible.

The new administration will open with large promise. The pioneer work of organizing and of establishing the club as a regular thing in the community has been done. New comers from other states are bringing to us fresh vigor, new lines of and new sources for funds are being offered. The ladies have appreciated in the past the interest and co-operation of the citizens and will rely on the same for its success in the future.

## WORK ON THE RAILROAD GROUNDS

The improvement of the railroad grounds by the Ladies' Auxiliary is being carried forward and tree planting has been commenced. It is the intention of the ladies to have a double row of elm trees planted around the entire plat on both sides of Sixth street. The first row of elms is three feet from the outside boundary and the second row of elms 16 feet inside. A thick hedge of evergreen will be planted along the tracks to hide the inartistic box and flat cars.

The park on the west side of Sixth street is to be 80x300 feet, within which will be a flower garden nearly 80 feet square in which will be beds of blooming plants and a rose garden which will be surrounded by a hedge with three entrances, to the north, east and west. Beyond will be a spacious lawn. Within the enclosure will be groups of shrubs native to Josephine county.

On the east side of Sixth street the area of park is about 75x140 feet in the center of which will be pond lilies and other aquatic plants. The park in which the band stand is located is 101x71 feet and will be a lovely rose garden under the direction of W. H. Love, who arrived from Wooster, Ohio, last week, and for the past five years has been a practical florist, having had charge of the conservatories of the soldiers' home at Danville, Ill. In the center of the west end of the park will be a 50-foot rose bed in the center of which will be a sun dial. In the eastern part will be clumps of Rhododendrons and Azaleas, and the whole park surrounded with a hedge of privet.

The expense of the improvements of these grounds will be \$1000 or more, which the Ladies' Auxiliary have undertaken to raise, and when the Ladies' Auxiliary start into any enterprise it is sure to be a success.

Ladies' Hoes at Cramer Bros.

## FROST EXPERIMENTS BY PROFESSOR VINCENT

Temperature of a Three-Acre Orchard Raised Three Degrees By Burning Oil.

Prof. C. C. Vincent, assistant horticulturist of the Oregon Agricultural College at Corvallis, true to his promise made to the fruit growers on his visit to this place some two or three weeks ago, arrived Wednesday evening to conduct frost experiments in smudging for the protection of orchards. Wednesday he spent from 11 o'clock in the evening till 7:30 in the Eisman orchard, now owned by Shank & Hall, closely observing the temperature and the changes wrought by the use of the Fresno pots. An area of three acres was covered according to the rule of 75 pots to the acre, and in each pot was nearly a gallon of crude oil, which was burning from about 11:30 until morning. The burning oil makes a very dense, black smoke which forms a blanket of smoke over the orchard and prevents the radiation of heat which is retained within the area and thus reducing the temperature to such an extent as to prevent frosts. Close observation of thermometers placed at various points within the three-acre space and also at some distance from the burning pots showed a variation in the temperature of three degrees, the area affected by the smoke registering higher than that not so affected.

It was expected that Mr. Malboen, of the Southern Pacific company, would be here to witness the experiments, but was unable to attend. He may be here later and, if so, Mr. Vincent will arrange to come and conduct other experiments of the same nature.

The Southern Pacific company has donated 1500 gallons of oil for the use of the members of the Rogue River Fruit Exchange, to be used for the purpose of conducting frost experiments, the only stipulation being that they should be conducted under the direction of the Agricultural college.

Messrs. Shank & Hall have been for a number of nights past smudging with wood fires by first pouring coal oil on the piles in sufficient quantities to properly ignite the whole mass and then covering with damp saw dust, thus making a heavy smoke. By this means and the use of the oil pots, they have prevented any damage by frosts this season.

## ANOTHER ENTERPRISE STARTED IN THE CITY

James Trimble has just installed a hydraulic tire setter, hand power. It is a most wonderful device for cold tire setting, and the public is invited to call and inspect it. The old cold tire setter has been discarded and patrons will hereafter not only have their work done quicker, but more satisfactorily. Mr. Trimble informs us the addition to his present shops will be finished next week, when three departments will be conducted. Four jobbing furnaces will be in operation, and a customer can have the woodwork for his wagon or carriage shaped at the same time the other departments are making ready the iron work or shoeing the horses.

The wagon shop at the rear of the new building will be fitted out with modern equipment, and will be in charge of A. Coburn, who has recently arrived from New York.

Mr. Trimble has shown a progressive spirit in enlarging his establishment and there is no question but the public will thoroughly appreciate it. His force of five men will be the most expert in their respective branches and the proprietor was in earnest when he informed the reporter that he would continue his policy of satisfying each and every customer.

Don't fail to see the hydraulic cold tire setter. It's a revelation.

Last Sunday the local baseball team went to Jacksonville, where they met defeat at the hands of the Jacksonville bunch in a score of 8 to 2. Our boys account for the accident by the fact that they were short-handed, having several inexperienced players on the team.

Our new goods have commenced to arrive

THIS WEEK WE RECEIVED

NEW CARPETS  
NEW ART SQUARES  
NEW WALL PAPER  
NEW GO CARTS

See these goods before purchasing

We will continue to sell our last year's stock of Wall Paper at 25 per cent off for a short time.

O'NEILL The Housefurnisher  
South Side of Railroad on G St.