

Rogue River Courier.

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GRANTS PASS A BUSINESS CENTER

MANY FACTS RELATING TO ITS PROSPERITY AND GROWTH

THE ROGUE RIVER DISTRICT

Its Many Natural Advantages Are Apparent to All Observant Visitors.

Grants Pass has a water front which affords opportunity for the use of gasoline launches, row boats and canoes. It is the only city in the Rogue River valley that has these very desirable advantages.

Grants Pass has nine church edifices, built of brick, and a high school. The enrollment is 925 and there are employed a superintendent and 26 teachers. The educational advantages are in every respect most excellent and many people select Grants Pass as a residence because of the reputation of its public schools.

Grants Pass will soon have enough alfalfa and other hay grown under its own ditches on the Applegate and Rogue river to supply forage for the city, mines and farms and large quantities for shipment to other points. Irrigation is revolutionizing the forage question.

Grants Pass lumber market is supplied with the product of thirty-five sawmills which send to this center annually more than twenty million feet of lumber for manufacture and shipment.

Grants Pass has around it 60,000 acres of fruit lands, 20,000 of which are now being put under a perfect system of irrigation and as many more acres will be supplied with water within the next three years.

Grants Pass has near it 15,000 acres which have been cleared and planted with grapes, apples, pears and other fruits within the last two years and as many more acres will be cleared and planted during the next two years.

Grants Pass has two large box factories which manufacture for the fruit trade of Southern Oregon and California, two large sash and door factories and two extensive lumber yards which handle all kinds of building material for a rapidly expanding district.

Grants Pass is a city of about 6000 inhabitants and is a commercial center for several flourishing mining districts, large lumber interests and extensive fruit and farming sections, besides extensive fishing interests.

Grants Pass has a vineyard near it which contains 65 acres of bearing grape vines and these are of the choicest varieties. This fruit is shipped to the great markets of the east in carload lots. More grapes are raised in this vineyard than in any other of the same size on the Pacific Coast.

Grants Pass is an important city on the Southern Pacific system which receives and ships large quantities of freight of all kinds, supplying the needs of a vast inland territory, accessible only from this point, which trade is very extensive and constantly increasing. As a railroad point it is one of the most important on the line between Portland and San Francisco.

Grants Pass has never had what is commonly called a boom but has enjoyed a continuous growth for many years. It is fast becoming a city of beautiful homes and fine business blocks. Contracts will be let within the next month for the paving of the entire business center with bituminous pavement and it is the intention to extend this pavement many blocks during the next year.

Grants Pass has an electric lighting system which is in every respect equal to that of any other city in the state and the cost at which lights are supplied is quite as low, and the result is that the system is popular and everybody uses this kind of light.

Grants Pass has an up-to-date telephone system such as is found only in prosperous municipal centers. Fortunately within the last year the company resolved to improve the system and make it in every respect worthy of this progressive city and Grants Pass enjoys the advantage of the best telephone service to be found anywhere.

Grants Pass has a water system which supplies the entire city with water for domestic purposes at a nominal expense and next year irrigation water for gardens, lawns and small fruit farms within the city limits will be furnished by the Josephine County Irrigation & Power company by a system of cement pipes. The general irrigation will add greatly to the beauty of the city at a very moderate expense.

Heavyweight Wrestler Here.
Leo Rockler, of Minneapolis, Minn., on a month's vacation from his regular duties, arrived in Grants Pass Thursday and will spend some time looking over the mining section. Mr. Rockler is a heavyweight wrestler and is anxious to meet any one in the state in a wrestling match. He will back himself for any reasonable amount, and enough to make it interesting. He is a finely built man, weighing 190 pounds on the mat, and a trained athlete in the best of condition.

FOREST FIRES NOW RAGING

ROGUE RIVER VALLEY IS NOW ENVELOPED IN SMOKE

VALUABLE TIMBER LOST

Supervisor Anderson Talks About Destructive September and October Fires.

The smoke of great forest fires burning north of this city fairly fills the Rogue River valley and hides the mountains on every side. The sun is veiled and when it shines at all its color is deep red with a carmine shading. There have been days and nights of this weather until we are ready to call for a change. At the present writing the wind is from the west and there is every indication of rain, which, if it comes, will put out the fires. M. J. Anderson, the supervisor of the Siskiyou forest reserve, has been out for several days giving directions to the fire fighters, returning Wednesday night. When seen by a representative of this paper he talked interestingly, not only of the present fires, but of those which have occurred in the past. He said:

"This is the second season for many years that Oregon has been unfortunate enough to have September forest fires and the southwestern part of the state alone is now a sufferer. (Though California is still burning.)

"Nearly every year July and August show more or less smoke, but in these months it is not every fire in the woods that does serious injury to standing merchantable timber, and for this reason many persons who have seen a burned area where brush and debris have been cleared by fire, without injury to the large trees, are led to believe that it would be perfectly safe to annually set fall fires.

"If the old inhabitants will search their memory, or their records, they will discover that the famous fires of Oregon took place in September or October.

"The disastrous fire of 1902 near Portland, that destroyed Bridal Veil, causing such terror and some loss of life, and destroyed some of the Columbia river timber in Oregon, was a September fire, and there has never been a similar season since that time until the present, and, as I have said, this is really only local.

"The great fires of the 60's that burned the vast forest from Bandon south to the California line (an area of probably 20x100 miles) are shown by all records to have been in September and October, though full details about these fires are hard to secure.

I am not scientist enough to say just why fires are more disastrous late in the season; but I do not believe it is altogether the result of the dry condition of the ground and underbrush. During the past two weeks I have paid particular attention to the way a September fire attacks green trees, and am led to believe that after the growing period is over and the season's growth more firm, the wood is more inflammable. One thing is certain, that the percentage of green mature pine and fir being ruined by the large fire is much greater on the same area than has resulted from fires in the same vicinity, and similar timber, in past years.

"There is another peculiar thing about late fall fires that is not probably recognized by the casual observer. It is well known by fire fighters in the woods that the best time to put up a fight is in the evening or early morning. This is because, as a rule, forest fires begin to die down about 4 p. m. and do not revive until 9 or 10 a. m. This falls in late fall forest fires, though it would seem that cool nights would make the burning hours shorter. In late fires, and the later the more marked (especially in heavy timber), the fiercest burning is from 9 at night to 3 or 4 in the morning, and if

the fire is dormant it is from early morning to noon.

"The largest single fire I know of in Southern Oregon this season is on Cow Creek and its tributaries near West Fork station. This fire has now a boundary of probably over 30 miles. It is burning in private timber and a force of Forest Service men, under H. B. Hills, have successfully kept it outside the boundaries of the Siskiyou forest. The odd sections burned belong to the O. & C. R. R. and the rest of the timber belongs to private parties. This fire has done great damage, many claims valuable before the fire would not now pay to cut. This, like every great fire, struggled along for days in a way that made it look harmless (especially so late in the season), and could have been put out by a few men, but it later took nearly a hundred men working day and night to save the railroad buildings and mill property near West Fork, and thousands of dollars worth of timber close to the railroad is ruined. This fire is rumored to have been set by a careless hunting camp fire.

"There is now a large fire burning south of Waldo. It is in charge of two experienced Forest Service men, J. A. Gasin and M. M. Lewis, with a crew of fighters. This is supposed to be mostly private timber owned by Grants Pass people. The scant reports received are that it is a very stubborn fight and is in keeping with my experience with late fall fires.

"Williams Creek has been the scene of several large fires, and the cost of these has been considerable in the aggregate, but the damage done has not yet been great on account of the area being largely brush lands.

"The coast side of the Siskiyou range has been remarkably clear of fires up to the last report (last week). The only fire set was sighted by Ranger Walter J. Jones, of Crescent City, and R. A. Dean, of Grants Pass, who made so successful a twenty mile ride that the fire was extinguished and the firebug ran down and had made confession before he had created smoke enough to really make it worth while. It is likely he will be taken before the U. S. court at Portland later.

"Nearly all the large fires of this season, at least, have started outside the government forest boundaries and by days of neglect became so large before it became apparent they would endanger the Siskiyou and thus make it possible to use government funds, that the fight to control was much greater. There should not only be a strict enforcement of the present state fire law, but a liberal appropriation to care for these outside fires by paying a patrol force similar to that of the government. Fire wardens without salary will never protect the timber interests of the state."

Pilgrimage No. 3.

The pilgrimage of the members of the Commercial Club and business men of Grants Pass to the Williams, Provolt and Murphy districts of Josephine county will take place next Wednesday, September 22. The committee on arrangements consists of T. P. Cramer, H. C. Bobzen, Jim Gibson and Secretary Andrews. All business men desiring to accompany this excursion should make the fact known to some member of the committee. This section of the county is one of the most interesting and the good people there are famous for their hospitality and good cheer, therefore, a large party is expected to partake in this pilgrimage.

The many fine orchards, fields of alfalfa, dairy ranches, etc., including the creamery, are all matters well worth the inspection of the boosters of Josephine county.

Fred Mensch returned Tuesday night from Teller, Douglas county, where he has been for the past six weeks making a survey of government lands. He was assisted in the work by Dan McFarland, W. M. Harvey and Earl Allen, all of Grants Pass. The latter, not yet having enough of the mountains and wilderness, is remaining for a few days with his kodak, gathering some of the many interesting scenes. Mr. Mensch will leave in a few days for Deer Creek, where he has a small fraction of a townsite to subdivide under the same contract.

RAILROAD FACTS AS THEY ARE

TRANSPORTATION BUSINESS IN THIS PART OF OREGON

THAT EASY MOUNTAIN PASS

A Tribute to the Long-Headed Boosting Men of the City of Medford.

The Pacific & Eastern has let a contract to the Porter Brothers for the construction of an extension of that road from its present terminus at Eagle Point to Butte Falls, a distance of 18 miles. This contract was signed on Saturday of last week and on Monday Johnson Porter of the above noted firm appeared in Medford and went over a part of the proposed line of construction. Some of the newspapers have been trying to make it appear that the Hill interest has taken the Pacific & Eastern, but this was mere supposition; almost anything in the way of railroad building is grasped now-a-days with avidity and a plausible story is easily made for the gullible public.

John R. Allen, who controls this little road, says that eventually it will be extended to Crater Lake and that the only connection it has is with the Southern Pacific at Medford. The Medford Mail on Tuesday published an interview with Johnson Porter which gives the situation as he sees it. Here is what he says:

"Work on the Deschutes railroad is going ahead as fast as it possibly can and we are well satisfied with the progress. We are placing on men as fast as the engineers can cross section the work, and that at present is all that is worrying us. Everything else progresses smoothly and we have had no trouble so far with getting supplies and tools to work with. Our teamsters are the best in the country and although the roads are dangerous and steep in places, yet we have had no trouble.

Called To Portland.

"I left the engineers somewhere near the terminus of the proposed Deschutes road and hurried over to Crater Lake to look at the country. Here I was caught by a telephone message telling me to come to Portland as quickly as possible. I have traveled from Crater Lake here as fast as an automobile can go and I am tired out.

Has No Significance.

"Yes, we have taken a contract to build the Pacific & Eastern, but that doesn't signify anything, as we do construction work for any person or concern.

We will have dirt flying here within a week, as all our outfit is on the way here now. We were in a good position to take this contract as we had some of our outfit in Portland which we were not going to use on the Deschutes for some time, and we did not want it idle.

"I am called to Portland on some urgent business and will not stay in Medford tonight, but will go on as soon as I can leave. Some one of us will be here next week to get things to move as quickly as possible."

In the past this valley has been unfortunate enough to be in the grasp of the Harriman system, but at the present time there is a ray of hope. Harriman is dead, and it is possible that the new manager will see the necessity of developing this country and thus prevent rival corporations entering the field.

If the Grants Pass Commercial Club will now take up this matter of railroad building there is a chance to interest parties in the construction work. The time is ripe and if we do not get a railroad it will be our fault. Call the attention of railroad men to the situation and the great opportunity of building a coast line. Do not say to yourselves and your neighbors that these railroad men know the conditions and will build when the signs come right without any urging. That is neither good business or good logic. Cap-

italists are constantly looking for railroad investments and if you have all the facts in shape and will submit them there is at least a chance to succeed. If no effort is made, of course, we will get nothing and in fact deserve nothing. What is the railroad committee doing? We hope these gentlemen are busy.

We have waited for Harriman long enough, now let us go after some one else. Be prepared to furnish all the information that will be required to show that a road built to the coast will pay; that is, will have tonnage. Please, gentlemen, get up and do something and it will astonish you how easy it will be to find someone who has the means, the ability and the disposition to build the road we so much need.

Medford is to be congratulated for its persistence in this matter. It will undoubtedly have a railroad, but to get to Crescent City it must build by way of Grants Pass. From an article published in the Oregonian of last Sunday we clip the following:

"From an authoritative source it was learned yesterday that two available routes, providing excellent grade, were discovered across the mountain range. Some years ago railroad surveyors on a reconnaissance worked southwestward from Medford and found a satisfactory route to the Pacific Coast, terminating at Crescent City."

This is hot air pure and simple. No such route from Medford has ever been found for the very good reason that there are mountains of high altitude to cross and these must be tunneled at a cost of millions of dollars. Yet we must say that the article from which this clipping was taken and which was republished in the Observer this week, was one of the best newspaper attempts at booming we have seen for many a day. It was well calculated to deceive even the elect. That is one of the things that Medford can do to perfection. It has a system of newspaper exploitation that is equaled by few towns in this or any other state. It knows the importance of employing printers' ink, also how to welcome strangers and to put them to work booming their city and the orchards which surround it. They are not snubbed and kept out in the rain because they have not lived there a long time. Note its wonderful article on its orchards published in the Oregonian of September 5. The next article, the one above mentioned, appeared Sunday the 12th. Look out for more next Sunday. This sort of thing makes Medford talked of and believed in.

The long-headed men who plan this newspaper work are full of enterprise and will bring about railroad construction. In fact, there is only one thing they, with all their faith, cannot do and that is to remove the mountains in their path to Crescent City.

The Courier has no desire to injure Medford, but facts are facts. The Pacific & Eastern will be extended and this will be of no little advantage to our neighboring city. Medford will have railroads, and for its spirit of enterprise it deserves them. The place is full of men of broad minds with sense enough to hang together in all matters that relate to the welfare of their place. In this respect they can give Grants Pass a few pointers, and if we are wise we will accept them.

Grants Pass has many resources, such as lumber, minerals and a great distributing commercial center and a rapidly growing fruit industry which, by the aid of irrigation, will soon rival any other fruit growing district in Southern Oregon. Not only has it irrigation, but it has many thousands of acres of the best lands to be found in any country. Yes, there will be a railroad built, for Oregon is in the swim now and railroad building is in order, but builders of these modern conveniences always go through natural passes, in fact, when necessary rival interests will fight for these natural advantages as the Harriman and Hill interests have been doing. No railroad builders will go 40 miles out of their way for the sake of running up against two or three mountains which require million dollar tunnels each. The route from Grants Pass to the sea is an easy grade between mountains and every mile of the way there has valuable tonnage for a railroad.

School Teachers' Association. 1909.

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