

COOS BAY AND ITS GREAT RESOURCES

Brief Description of the Soil, Climate, Products and Possibilities of One of the Richest Sections on the Coast

In response to numerous requests for information with reference to the location, climate and resources of this section of the coast of Oregon, we have concluded to publish a reliable description of Coos bay and its manifold industries. In this instance our aim will be to avoid exaggeration and to furnish the reader with a truthful statement which the climate resources and position of Coos bay demands in an eminent degree.

Coos bay occupies an important position as the commercial centre for the surrounding country. The entrance to the harbor is situated in about 43 degrees north latitude and 124 west. By referring to a chart or map its position will be seen to the northward and close to Cape Arago, on which there stands a prominent lighthouse.

The channel at the entrance has a depth of 25 feet at low tide. Since the government improvement has commenced the depth of water at the entrance has been steadily increasing; this is owing to the construction of jetties which confine and deflect the current during the ebb tide which assures an ample depth of water for large vessels.

It speaks volumes for the entrance to the harbor to know that a large number of sailing vessels and four steamers are trading regularly between this port and San Francisco, California, and other ports, yet, an accident in entering or departing has seldom occurred.

The capacity of the sailing vessels trading here for lumber will be for each vessel, from three hundred thousand to a million feet, and the steam colliers, eight and nine hundred tons of coal.

Coos bay is about 12 miles in length and varies in width from one to two and one-half miles. A sharp bend in the middle divides it into the upper and lower bays. It has many tributary sloughs, extending ten to fifteen miles from the bay proper, and receives the waters of one river navigable by steamers for about 20 miles.

On entering the harbor and passing Rocky Point, on the right hand, we have the full sweep of the lower bay before us, about a mile wide and eight in length. The long sand spit with high dunes, which support a variety of timber, are on our left hand, a permanent barrier to the fierce waves of the great Pacific ocean. Here there is sufficient space for thousands of vessels to anchor in safety. Passing up the bay we observe the flourishing town of Empire City, the location where the Belt Line Railway has commenced work that will give the town vigorous impulsion. At this place is, situated the large sawmill, the property of the Southern Oregon Co., the cutting capacity of which is 150,000 feet.

Proceeding, we turn to the right at North Bend, where a magnificent sight bursts into view. The first object that attracts our attention, the channel of the bay passing close to it, is the North Bend saw mill, a busy hive of industry, for these many years. Shipbuilding in a prime feature at this place, some of the finest vessels on the coast and in foreign trade having been built here. The Simpson Lumber Co. are the owners.

We have now entered the upper bay, and the evergreen hills enclose us on both sides. To the south there is a high range called the Blue ridge; this is clothed with a fine body of timber, and contains beneath its surface an inexhaustible body of coal, which crops out in all directions. With the view from North Bend, the bay seems to extend to the foot of the mountain, but there are several extensive streams to ascend, among which, at the southeast corner of the bay, is Coos river.

TOPOGRAPHY.

The surface hereabouts varies in quality and appearance. The most of the country is broken and covered with timber, yet the largest portion of it is what is termed agricultural land. The marsh land is mostly taken up, and dyking is requisite before it is fitted for cultivation, then, it is chiefly devoted to the production of grass.

This work is being carried on to some extent, and large tracts are being brought into a tillable condition. The bench and bottom lands are in considerable quantities and are of the finest agricultural quality, capable of raising almost any of the products of a mild climate. The uplands are productive, and where the timber has been removed

grass grows luxuriantly and make splendid range for cattle.

While Coos river is the garden of Coos bay, all the streams which enter the bay contribute largely in farming products and timber, and all are occupied by thrifty and energetic people. There are fine farms in this section, and the orchards for beauty and flavor of fruit are unsurpassed. This country is unequalled for stock raising and dairying. The winters are so mild that cattle roam over the hills and thrive with but little extra feeding. There are large tracts of land from which timber has been cut, the chopping burned over and grass seed planted, in these and in the margin of streams and open places cattle find abundant feed. It is no uncommon thing for fine beef to be taken off these ranges in January, which have had no food furnished them except what they have found in pastures. The snow falls so light (many winters we have none) and lies so little time on the ground that it does not prevent cattle from finding the grass, while the dense woods afford abundant shelter from any chilling wind.

Among the resources of this section which have been partially developed the following may be mentioned.

TIMBER.

Immense and magnificent bodies of fir, cedar, spruce, maple, myrtle and hemlock abound. The following estimate of the amount of timber now standing in this county, is received from the county surveyor. An estimate made by a former surveyor agrees substantially with this:

No. of town	No. of ranges	No. of sections	No. of feet
23	2	12	108,000,000
24	2	60	540,000,000
25	5	180	720,000,000
26	6	120	1,080,000,000
27	6	180	1,620,000,000
28	6	151	1,359,000,000
29	6	100	900,000,000
30	5	70	630,000,000
31	4	60	540,000,000
32	1	30	270,000,000

This gives an estimate of the merchantable timber now standing and available for the market, of the quantity of 7,767,000,000 feet. Some of the logs are of immense size and it is no unusual thing for logs brought to a mill, measuring 16 feet in length, to scale from four to six thousand feet, and trees are sometimes found that will scale 20,000 feet. The bay is well supplied with streams tributary thereto, that the timber is easily reached and brought down to the mills in rafts.

SAW MILLS.

Southern Oregon Company. Location of mill, Empire City, R. E. Shine, Superintendent. This mill, when in operation, will cut 160,000 feet of lumber per day, and employ in and around the mill 70 men. The men employed in the woods will approximate 175.

North Bend Mill. Location of mill, North Bend, L. J. Simpson, Superintendent. The cutting capacity of this mill is 50,000 feet of lumber per day, and it employs 35 men. About 75 men are employed in the woods. The steam tug Columbia, Captain James Magee, is attached to this mill. A. M. Simpson & Co., of San Francisco, California, are the proprietors. This mill is running night and day.

Porter Mill. Location, Porter. This mill (at present shut down) will cut 80,000 feet of lumber daily. Sixty men are employed at this mill when engaged in cutting timber, and 150 men in the woods.

Oakland Barrel and Box Manufactory. Location of mill, Centreville, E. O. Hall, Superintendent. This mill produces each working day, 25,000 to 30,000 feet of lumber, 10,000 box shooks and 1500 keg shooks and staves. Twenty men are employed in the mill, but the total number of those who are employed in the various departments of this industry will be seventy men.

Bay City Mill. Location, Isthmus slough, Robert McCann, Superintendent. Dean & Co., proprietors. Sixty thousand feet of lumber daily is the output of this mill. Forty-five men are employed at this mill and 150 in the woods.

The Pleasant Point mill and shipyard, the property of William Ross, on the Isthmus slough, has not yet commenced

to cut lumber. Two sea going steamers have been built at that point.

From the above it will be observed that, excluding the Pleasant Point mill, the daily cutting capacity of mills combined is 400,000 feet of lumber, 10,000 boxes and 1500 kegs. Laths and broom handles not taken into account. The total number of men employed is 830.

The fact that some of these mills are shut down is not owing to a lack of profit in the lumber industry, but to the fact that they are owned by stock companies of non-residents among whom dissensions have arisen, with the usual result. The mills owned by lumbermen and properly managed run the year around. The Southern Oregon Co's mill at Empire, with large holdings of timber land, is in process of changing hands, and the new owners will undoubtedly develop their property.

Another large tract of timber land, the finest in the country was recently bought by Eastern parties and will be developed.

There is still considerable timberland in the county which can be bought of the government for \$2.50 per acre, though it is rapidly being taken.

SHIPBUILDING

The shipyards are situated as follows commencing with North Bend:

North Bend, Peter Loggie, builder; Centreville, Kruse, builder; Marshfield, Emil Heuckendorff, builder; Bay City, Hans Reed, builder; Pleasant Point, William Ross, builder.

This most important industry grows out of Coos bay's resources for shipbuilding. All the timber for every part of any kind of a wooden ship can be found here; from knees, which are shipped to California, in large quantities, to the finest finishing lumber. Masts and spars are found of the finest quality in an unlimited amount, considerable has already been done in this line, but the field is a large one and invites capital. Prior to 1870 forty-five vessels were built on the bay, with a total capacity of 20,000 tons. During the next decade a number of vessels of large capacity were built, chiefly at North Bend. The last three years have witnessed a steady output of vessels from the various shipyards.

Two four-masted schooners have recently been launched. Another keel is being laid at North Bend, and there is a vessel on the stocks in each of the other yards, excepting Pleasant Point.

A great number of mechanics are employed in these yards, and the industry is in a prosperous condition.

We have plenty of room for more shipyards, and the excellent quality of our fir, cedar and myrtle so essential in the building and finishing of a fine class of vessels is a point not to be passed over lightly, but to be carefully considered by those who are engaged in this line of business.

At the boat building establishment of the Holland Brothers, North Marshfield, a large fleet of gasoline launches have been turned out, and that business is progressing fluently and with rapid strides. The home craft dot the bay in every direction.

COAL.

The coal which is found in these measures is uniform. The strata owing to position are harder in some places than in others, but the invariable denomination is lignite. Some class it as brown coal, nevertheless, irrespective of nomenclature, it is the best for domestic use of any found on the Pacific coast. It carries but little dust or soot and burns well. It is not the best for ocean steamers although it is much used for that purpose on the adjacent coast.

The country has not been thoroughly prospected for coal and but few shafts have been sunk to any great depth, but it is estimated that in the Coos county coal fields there are four hundred square miles of coal strata. The amount of coal in such a vast field can hardly be estimated. All the coal which has been shipped heretofore from this section has not worked out two square miles of territory. Several mines have been opened on the bay that are prepared to ship coal as soon as rail connection with tide water is completed.

The Newport coal mine, Oregon Coal and Navigation Co., has continued work during many years, and the industry has been profitable; employing about 151 men. It has a railroad about three

miles long, from the mine to deep water where the bunker is located. The shipment of coal from the above mine averages 8000 tons per month. Since the bar improvement has proved successful and permanent, freight on coal has fallen more than one-half. Following is a list of other mines now open and ready for business: Beaver Hill, John D. Spreckles Bros. owners; Crescent Coal Mine, Maxwell & Co.; Lillian Coal mine, L. J. Simpson. The first named ships considerable coal now.

BUTTER AND CHEESE

Both soil and climate are admirably adapted to the production of butter and cheese. On the bottom lands and reclaimed marshes the grass grows throughout the year.

The Coos Bay creamery situated at the mouth of Coos river, made last year 23,000 pounds of butter, which brought the highest market price in the San Francisco market. This year that output will be exceeded by about 30,000 pounds.

Several smaller creameries are in operation, and a new one is being established in connection with the ice and cold storage plant now approaching completion at Marshfield.

It may be said that the creamery proposition has placed the farmers of this section on velvet, and those who have turned their attention to this branch of agriculture are prospering as never before.

In illustration of the manufacture of cheese, a table furnished by one of the best farmers in this county will show what can be done in this line. The table gives the result from the milking of 60 cows—30 extra milkers and 30 poor milkers:

MONTHS.	Lbs. Milk	No. Cheeses	Lbs. Cheeses
April	32,425	74	3,425
May	43,326	156	4,660
June	46,810	174	4,860
July	38,146	143	4,075
August	30,652	124	3,190
September	23,747	98	2,552
October	20,681	89	2,427
November	10,065	53	1,342
December	1,034	6	152
Total	236,256	924	25,934

Weight of cheese after shrinkage, 25-494 pounds.

This product sold here at prices ranging from 12 to 15 cents.

The manufacture of butter and cheese is increasing with giant strides.

STOCK

From the best authority it is estimated that about 6550 head of cattle are raised yearly in this section, and some of these are driven over the mountains into the Umpqua valley, while a considerable portion finds a market at Lome; the mines, mills and logging camps consuming a large portion.

While there are no large stock ranges, nearly every farmer has a bunch of beef cattle romping on his place or in the hills further back. Stock will winter in the green timber and come out fat and sleek in the spring.

Sheep, goats and swine also thrive and increase rapidly in this climate.

FRUIT

In the growing of fruit this section stands in the foremost ranks. This is true of the variety raised—apples, pears, quinces, plums, cherries, peaches and smaller fruits. Fruit trees will grow from six to eight feet the first year, bear fruit the second, third and fourth years according to variety. They thrive in the valleys as well as on the foot-hills, and up to a considerable height in the mountains, but especially in dry, sheltered soil. Yearling plum, prune and peach trees eight feet high, and yearling cherry trees seven feet high, have been exhibited. Apple trees commence bearing very young, sometimes producing fine fruit the second year after grafting; and if properly cultivated are always bearing when four years old. The fruit is large, highly colored and delicious flavor. It is free from the apple worm and bitter rot, and keeps remarkably well, many varieties lasting through the whole year.

This is an Eden for cranberries, strawberries, currants, raspberries and goose-

berries. Several of the hardier variety of grapes are successfully cultivated. Blackberries grow wild, also huckleberries, in vast quantities in the woods and are a natural product of the soil. The producers of fruit are not now, as formerly, confined to the local market; the trade has expanded, and a large shipment is made annually, by steamer, to California.

FISH

The bay, rivers and small streams abound in fish of all kinds, from the smallest mountain trout to the largest salmon. There is an abundance of sounders, perch, smelt, clams, crabs, etc. Outside the bay there are banks where rock cod and halibut can be obtained. Fishing on these banks progresses during the summer months and is profitable—Succeeding beyond the expectation of the owner of the vessel employed.

In connection with the preservation of fish, etc. we have two salmon canneries, one clam cannery and one for canning crabs. Two of these establishments are at Empire City, and two at Marshfield. A cold storage plant, lately constructed at Marshfield, is now about ready for business.

EDUCATIONAL

The towns and villages of Coos bay are well supplied with schools, churches, literary societies and buildings belonging to benevolent institutions. The schools are well conducted, the public taking an exemplary interest in the cause of education, and the churches are fairly well attended.

Marshfield, the emporium and distributing centre of the bay, possesses a fine school which occupies a prominent and a healthy position in the town, not only with reference to its excellent location, but in the facility offered to an extensive district for the education of youth. It retains a complete corps of teachers, under Prin. F. A. Golden, and is supplied with everything necessary to the care and comfort of the scholars. The building reflects credit on both the town and the architect under whose supervision it was constructed.

The climate is remarkable in its equability; and we are not afflicted with extremes of heat or cold. Scientific authority accounts for the mildness of the climate by the flow eastward of a warm current from the coast of Japan. People are able to camp out in any season of the year, with few trifling exceptions. In cold, dry weather a person can rest comfortably in the heavy timber, with a single blanket. The air is salubrious, and blizzards, cyclones and drought are unknown. There are no days in the year that labor of all kinds cannot be performed out doors. Three-fourths of the days in the winter months are as warm as the average of summer days. The nights are cool and free from troublesome insects; consequently, the blanket is indispensable throughout the year. The northwest wind prevails, and as it comes from the sea it is beneficial and invigorating to the system. Cases of pneumonia and typhoid fever are very rare. Ague, malarial fevers and dysentery are unknown. There is no prevailing disease. The people wear nearly the same clothing in winter and summer and enjoy unexceptional health. The location being below the cold belt, the thermometer never falls to zero.

The day is not distant when the margin of Coos bay and the contiguous bench land will be covered with the homes of the opulent and those who seek relaxation from the dust and toil of the interior. The invalid, also, will discover health and rejuvenation in the invigorating zephyrs of the summer period, and the tone administered by ablation in its cool, saline waters.

TOWNS OF COOS BAY

In selecting townsites on Coos bay the locators have shown in a clear manner the excellence of the various positions. Empire City, about five miles from the entrance, is admirably situated for a shipping point and a railway terminus.

For some time past, the town has born an inert aspect, and the magnificent saw mill within its boundaries has been more ornamental than useful.

Empire City is the port of entry for this district, and contains a collector and deputy collector of customs. The place has a future, and no doubt a prosperous one, the signs at present