

A Christmas Morning Breakfast



MORROW COUNTY LANDS OFFER BIG OPPORTUNITY TO THE HOME SEEKER

By E. M. Shutt.
Editor Gazette-Times:
Responding to your request, I am herewith submitting a few off-hand observations of my own, concerning Morrow County real estate values, and the future prospects of enhancing the same.

In the first place I will say that the railroad gateway into this rich and diversified belt of wheat, alfalfa, pasture and timber land (consisting of some 57 townships, or 2000 square miles) has been one of the chief means of retarding our development. There is no remedy apparent for this, but the fact remains. The home seeker from the East, or from the Willamette Valley, or from Canada is not very likely to go wild over the scenery and the agricultural possibilities at Heppner Junction.

Judging Morrow County by its river frontage, it is the natural thing for the stranger to pass on in disgust, never stopping long enough to learn of the broad, rich fields of the former bunchgrass prairies, the fertile and beautiful valleys, the well-watered stock ranches and the vast timber belt lying immediately South of this rough exterior. Morrow County as yet has received but little exploiting, and its intrinsic merits are not known much beyond its own confines.

To illustrate: The writer personally knows of an outsider with plenty of money who recently came into Morrow County looking for a safe investment in wheat land. He was shown several tracts of our best land and was offered one fine tract at \$20 per acre. This land had not been farmed intensively and the buildings were not modern by several degrees.

The adjoining farms were very much in the same fix, and not knowing what he was actually passing up because of exterior appearances, this gentleman went over to Sherman county and paid \$125 per acre for a large farm of which the soil was precisely the same quality and the annual rainfall just the same as the Morrow County farm which he passed up at \$20 per acre.

There you are. This man got a farm that will not produce a bushel to the acre more than will this tract of Morrow County soil when farmed in like manner, but the buildings were good, the farm itself had been kept up and the neighborhood looked inviting. Here is a hint for the man who wants to make his farm pay the maximum revenue while he is operating it and who will get the top price for his farm when he gets ready to sell it and retire.

Morrow County wheat farms are now selling at from \$25 to \$50 per acre; pasture land and timber land at from \$10 to \$12.50 per acre. Our alfalfa land is usually embodied in a larger tract of wheat or pasture land so it is a hard matter to determine the value of the alfalfa land, exclusively. Suffice it to say, however, that the same rule applies as in the case of Morrow County wheat and pasture land—it is being sold at from one-third to one-half what exactly the same class of land is being sold at in Umatilla, Sherman and Wasco counties, and the Walla Walla and Palouse countries.

This condition of course cannot long exist. In spite of our isolation homeseekers and safe investors have learned and are gradually learning of our diamond in the rough, and are headed this way for cheap land. The writer is willing to be quoted as predicting that within the next five or six years present land values will be doubled in Morrow County.

While the majority of the Morrow County wheat farms have not been made to produce what they are capable of producing, yet we pioneer citizens in traveling over the county are gratified to see the large and growing number of fine farms—clean summer-fallowed fields, big white houses and spacious red barns, good

outbuildings, good fences, water piped to the house and barn, and many other evidences of a higher standard of agricultural life. Add to these the telephone, the auto, the truck and the coming roads, and is not the farm the best and most independent place on earth to live? From such homes as these the boys and girls have little desire or temptation to leave and rush to the cities as in times gone by.

And right here I want to say that if the bright, husky, wide-awake farm boy would only make up his mind to stay with Dad a few years longer and learn the farming game perfectly, and then later on acquire a farm of his own, and pay no attention to those who would encourage him to seek a professional life, he would, in the great majority of cases, be ten times better off, and this would soon be a land of universal prosperous, contented rural homes—the foundation of the government itself. I. W. W.'s, Bolsheviks and anarchists generally receive mighty few, if any recruits from men who have acquired and who live upon a good piece of Mother Earth. The prosperous farmer has no patience with the agitator, and is usually found the most earnest and consistent defender of the flag of his country.

One more thought briefly: Observation will prove to anyone that farmers in this semi-arid belt can operate too many acres and that others make an equally bad mistake by farming too small a tract, for either to succeed. The man who is making the velvet has struck the "happy middle." In spite of what high-collared and long-haired theorists claim, this is not a small-farm country, unless one happens to have an irrigated tract on a creek bottom or in one of the government projects. For wheat raising and stock purposes a larger acreage is demanded.

The man who is trying to scratch in all outdoors is not as a rule succeeding. Neither is the man who has buckled down to a quarter section or a half section of wheat land. It is just enough to keep him poor. He must have a large enough tract to keep him and his horses and his machinery and his hired man busy. He ought to have at least 250 or 300 acres sowed in good, clean summer-fallow ground every year, and this requires of course about one section of land. Spring sowing and volunteering should be completely abandoned. They are a waste of effort.

Morrow County farm land is composed of the same ingredients as the volcanic ash soil of Steilly—land that never wears out but actually improves with intensified cultivation and conservation of moisture. Hundreds of farmers, the ones who are succeeding, are complying with Nature's demands, and when their example becomes more universally emulated then will the Morrow County soil command the same values to be found in the other communities above referred to.

Thanksgiving Program

A Thanksgiving program was given Nov. 26th by the teachers and pupils of the Gooseberry school. A copy of the program prepared and presented, was appreciated by all. The pupils rendered their parts in a very pleasing manner, which shows there is some talent in Gooseberry.

After the program there was a pie sale. The proceeds from the sale will be used to buy pictures for the school.

DRY SLAB WOOD

A car of Dry Slab Wood is being shipped out from the Ione yard for Heppner and also one for Lexington. Those wanting good wood will do well to put their orders in early. The price will be regulated upon arrival of the wood, which is now being loaded out of Ione.

Heppner Boy Enjoys Trip to State Fair

Heppner, Ore., Dec. 10, 1919.
Editor Gazette-Times,
Heppner, Ore.

Dear Sir,
Will you please publish this story of my trip to Salem. When I enrolled in the Club work I did not think I was going to win a trip to the State fair.

I left Heppner the 22nd day of September and arrived in Salem that night about 10:30. My bed did not get there until a day or two later, but I slept with one of the other fellows. Two or three of the boys' beds also failed to arrive on time.

The first day I spent looking about the grounds. The next day I went over to the forestry department and saw all the tools and instruments used to prevent forest fires. The next day we all went up to the penitentiary and other state buildings.

Saturday I packed up my things and started for home, thinking, that after all, the Club work is a good thing for the State.

Yours truly,
OREN HILL.

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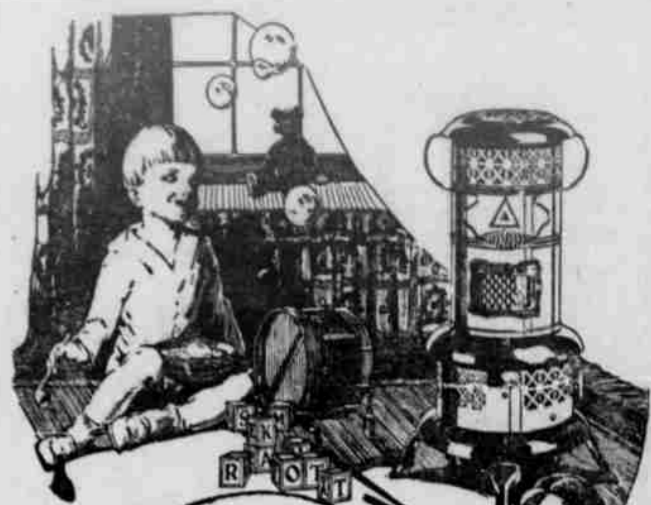


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