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**OREGON NEWSPAPER  
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**EDITORIAL . . . . .**

**A Happy Occasion**

One could not be present at a celebration such as that staged at Madras Saturday without being impressed with the spirit of joy and happiness that pervaded the very air. A cloudless sky brought the matchless Cascade skyline into full relief as a background for the setting of the stage where some 10,000 people gathered to participate in the festivities. The smiles on the faces of those who for thirty-five long years had looked forward to that very day, although it had not been calendar-ed all that time, were sufficient to repay one for making the effort to be present. The "great day" had arrived and early settlers and those who have been drawn to Jefferson county by the promise of irrigation joined in extending a welcome that only a people who have so much to be thankful for could offer.

The Central Oregon that is turned out in full strength to welcome the Central Oregon that is to be, for it remains only for completion of the North Unit project to the ultimate 50,000 acres to make that a highly productive region. In time, no doubt, extensions will be made to the project which will put in the neighborhood of 100,000 acres of fertile land under water, providing homes for double the number of people contemplated under the present limits. But for the present, a big work is ahead in building homes, leveling off where leveling is needed to receive the sparkling waters of the Deschutes, and the countless other things confronting settlers in a new land. The older residents, of which there are comparatively few, may find it difficult to adjust themselves to this more intensified type of farming, but newcomers are to a large extent people who have followed irrigation farming in other sections and their experience will go far towards making the project a success.

Years of patience and long-suffering have been paid off in the turning of water onto the completed part of the project and the people who have carried the torch for irrigation will now witness the realization of their plans in the growth of Madras and the communities of Metolius and Culver, a growth that is well under way and will expand as rapidly as building conditions permit. In a way, history is repeating in that region where some forty years ago two giants of the railroad world staged a race up the Deschutes gorge to gain possession of a territory rich in resources which they could see would one day become the center of a great agricultural development. That marked the first extensive settlement of what now is Deschutes and Jefferson counties. In the years that followed, irrigation pushed Deschutes ahead while lack of it caused Jefferson to decline. The picture has changed and Jefferson is experiencing a resettling backed by the assurance that drouth and short crops are no longer to be feared.

In truth the "great day" has arrived and the entire state will look on with interest as this section of so-called Central Oregon desert comes into full bloom.

**It Doesn't Look Right**

With the war over many people already have forgotten the part the railroads played in the greatest transportation problem with which any nation was ever faced. Every passable piece of equipment was pressed in to service to meet the requirements of wartime pressure. As a result of this unprecedented performance the roads are faced with a replacement program which may require several years to accomplish as well as the

In the face of all this—and the railroads are expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars, capable of looking after themselves—comes a re-

quest from river navigation concerns that they be given a twenty per cent differential, that is, granted a rate that much under the rail rates, so they can increase their tonnage from up-river points to Portland and Astoria. In other words, they want the railroads to engage in short haul business from points of production to dock sites along the river where the barges can pick it up and float it to the big terminals.

It is plain to see that if this request is granted it will not be long until the railroads will have to abandon their branch lines. Trucks already have taken over the short haul business and the revenue made by the railroads is derived from the longer hauls. The roads cannot realize an earning on wheat loaded at points like Heppner and Condon as far as Arlington to be transferred to barges. Their profit—and since when has it become illegal for them to make a profit—is found in the longer haul over the main line to the sea level terminals.

The railroads are not asking that the barge companies be held to the present freight level, but if the river concerns are granted a 20 per cent drop in rates they want to be in position to meet that cut.

We believe that fair minded citizens will see the injustice of such a rate differential and those not fair minded probably will be the first to set up a howl if the railroads start pulling up their branch line rails.

**You're As Young As You Feel**

If our readers will forgive us for saying so much about the Madras celebration we want to comment on one feature of the parade (By the way, we missed the parade, being held up by road work and one-way traffic in Sherman county, but saw most of the participants in costume and regalia after we arrived at Madras.) There was one character who rode a horse in the parade that seems ageless. That was Jim Blakely, once Crook county sheriff when that county embraced all of Central Oregon and later Willowa county sheriff. Jim is a mere 94 years of age now, but still stands erect and sits a horse as gracefully as he did nearly fifty years ago when the writer as a small boy first saw him. It was a great day for Jim and from all appearances he will live to see full development of a region that was wild and woolly when he first settled there.

**Way Cleared For Hospital**

With the substantial approval of the eight mill tax for construction of the proposed Morrow county hospital at the special election last Friday the way is cleared for immediate action. The vote showed that at least a majority of the voters who took time to go to the polls still desire the hospital and construction of the building is now definitely in the hands of the county court and hospital commission.

The authorities quite properly refrained from making a definite commitment relative to a site and with assurance of the entire fund it will be their purpose to make a selection and set the machinery in motion for acquiring the location and awarding construction contracts. In these uncertain times it may not prove easy to interest contractors and if delay is caused by reason of this we will have to exercise a little more patience. The court is charged with an obligation to get the greatest possible value out of the money and that purpose will not be accomplished through haste.

Mrs. Francis Nickerson received word Saturday that she has been selected for membership in Phi Beta Kappa, national collegiate honorary society. Mrs. Nickerson took her four years of college work in three years, starting at the University of Chicago and transferring to Stanford for the last three terms. This is an honor not accorded to every student and Mrs. Nickerson is to be congratulated.

Mr. and Mrs. Chris Brown have turned farmers again this week during the absence of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Brown, who have gone to Fort Lewis where Paul will receive his discharge from the army. The young people may be gone a week or a month.

Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Davis have gone to Portland where Mr. Davis will consult a bone specialist.

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