

# Heppner Gazette-Times

MORROW COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER  
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## The County Extension Agents Of Morrow County

Last week we started a history of the county extension agents of this county and covered the years worked by L. A. Hunt, C. C. Calkins, and Roger Morse. This week we go on with the work of Charlie Smith, Joe Bellinger and Cliff Conrad.—N. C. Anderson.

By E. R. JACKMAN

Extension got into high gear and Charlie Smith was everywhere. The county's wheat crop in 1927 jumped to nearly 3,000,000 bushels. Wages were raised to \$4.00. T. B. testing started on a big scale. A cow testing association was started, and wheat certification was intensified and 15 or 20 miscellaneous varieties were cleared out.

Phosphate on alfalfa gave an increase for the first time. Deep furrow drills were brought in and tried on 15 farms. By now Federation was standard as a spring variety, as was Trebil barley and Markton oats — after many trials. Jack Hynd started to seed Meloy barley in the spring in his alfalfa.

Crested wheatgrass was brought in; strawberry clover started in the north end; morning glory control plots were stepped up.

For the first time 4-H work really got underway with organization and good leaders. The

county sent youngsters to the state fair and the P. I. Charlie gave a solid 15% of his time to 4-H.

He stopped a bogus lime salesman at the north end and the publicity and reasons Charlie gave were so sound that people began to look at the county extension agent as a sort of scientist, rather than a squirrel killer.

He tried nitrate on wheat on the W. W. Gammell and Otto Ruhl farms.

Other things introduced by Smith included ladino clover, ladak alfalfa, sweet clover for pasture, root varieties in the north end, sodium chlorate on weeds, liver fluke control, lamb fattening, control of scours in sheep, control of cattle scab, brucellosis (abortion) control, turkey branding, buying of Tillamook calves, cooperative marketing of turkeys, and herding turkeys in fields of badly shattered grain.

Wheat was selling for 35 cents or less. He helped organize the Morrow County Agricultural Credit Corporation — forerunner of the present P.C.A. Also helped organize the Morrow County Oil Company, forerunner of the Grain Growers.

The Oregon Wheat Growers League was also launched with Charlie as secretary.

He was a busy boy. In 1936, Joe Belanger took over. His mind ran to erosion control and to mechanical things. He helped to spark the diversion of water from Ditch Creek into Willow Creek up at the top of the divide, and the county has benefited ever since.

He helped greatly to get 250,000 acres of the north end into a grazing district to keep it from becoming a desert. This injured

some itinerant stockmen but it held the soil, and stabilized the operations of other stockmen.

He helped to organize the Lexington Blow Control project—the first real Conservation District in the Columbia Basin and in some ways superior to the present districts. With Vawter Parker, he wrote a bill to present to the '37 legislature to make this district legal.

He dinged away on trashy fallow, and in '36 there were 30,000 acres of it, and 70,000 acres the next year.

He called 15 meetings on soil conservation in 1936 alone—more the following year.

He put in a week at one ranch on control of lamb scours with a cultured milk and worked out the how, where, and when of control.

He helped with the REA at the north end.

Among the 4-H winners from the county to go to the state fair while Belanger was here were: Guy Moore, Ellwynne Peck, Gordon O'Brien, Jack Van Winkle, Mabel Cool, Donald Peck, Jack Healy, and Donald Campbell.

By 1937, with Joe's enthusiasm behind it, there were 11,000 acres of crested wheatgrass.

By the end of the depression year, Cliff Conrad came, son of a well known Union County farmer — and a former distinguished 4-H member.

There were, in 1941, 80,000 acres of trashy fallow and the blows were pretty well stopped. Contour seeding and strip cropping were well on their way. Crested wheatgrass occupied 37,000 acres in distinct contrast to conditions in many counties in other states.

He devoted weeks of time to the organization of the Heppner Soil Conservation District, newly authorized by legislature.

Wheat varieties by then were well standardized; 80% of the fall wheat was Rex and 80% of the spring wheat, White Federation.

Cliff was interested in weed control, and with the wheat prices strengthening and better crops, he helped in getting some form of control started on the farms with noxious weeds. At least he located them on 67 farms, made a fairly complete map, and helped to interest 53 of the 67 owners.

Sheep numbers began to fall off as sheep prices stayed consistently under cattle prices.

War clouds were gathering, the bombing range and Ordinance lands were withdrawn from the grazing district. The county agent began to function as a leader of defense projects.

## TO THE EDITOR . . .

Heppner, Oregon  
May 8, 1961

Dear Editor:

Senate bill number 1643, usually referred to as the Omnibus Farm Bill, is before the Senate Agriculture Committee for action. At present this bill is being widely discussed both pro and con.

Proponents of the measure see it as the Farmers Magna Charter while opponents see it as increasing government control over the farmer, some as a surrender by Congress of its powers to the Secretary of Agriculture, and others as a dodging of responsibility to furnish specific remedies by the same Secretary.

Perhaps the real truth is somewhere between the extremes. This is merely an enabling act not a farm program. The act itself certainly will decrease rather than increase government control over farmers. The farmers own committees must first come up with a program for any individual commodities needing assistance. After the farmer-elected committee offers a program it then must be examined by the Secretary of Agriculture, both Houses of Congress and the President. Anyone of these examiners may veto the program should they feel it to not be in the country's interest. After 60 days have passed a vote by the farmers effected will be held, providing the plan was not vetoed, and to be put into effect the idea must receive a vote of at least two thirds of the farmers voting. This would appear to leave plenty of safeguards for any contingency.

For many years wheat farmers have been trying to have a two-price plan adopted. Under the proposed law such a plan could be offered for a farmer referendum, subject to first having been reviewed by the Secretary of Agriculture and both Houses of Congress and not having been vetoed by either of the reviewing agencies. Thus it appears that Senate bill number 1643 offers the best hope of final enactment of the so-called Domestic Parity Plan for wheat.

The National Wheat Growers, The National Grange, The National Farmers Union and seven other national farm organizations are supporting the enactment of the Omnibus Farm Bill. One large farm organization is on record opposing it.

It seems to me that any farm organization opposing this bill would be indicating a great lack of faith in the intelligence and integrity of their own members. This is a "Do it yourself kind of farm bill" and will therefore call for no more controls or supports than the growers themselves want. They must call for them through their own elected committees.

Being an enabling act the bill would allow growers of various crops to take steps to limit supply to expected demand. That is if they want to and the act is not vetoed by those reviewing the proposals. What is wrong

with doing that? Successful industry, business and labor unions have been doing just that for many years to their own financial advantage. Certainly that 81 per cent of the population aren't going to change their ways. Then if the remaining 9 per cent are going to remain first class citizens economically they are going to have to get in the swim.

This is a controversial subject

and there are at least two sides to it. I hope it is not adopted hastily but only after due consideration. To help bring all the facts out and in order that your opinion may be considered write

your Congressman and Senator as to your ideas and wishes either for or against the proposed legislation.

Sincerely,  
AL LAMB

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