

Significant Developments

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managed in a manner evincing progressiveness and efficiency in the mayor and council.

COMING OF THE RAILWAY

From 1887 through 1888 negotiations were carried on with several railways. Several propositions were made and finally one was worked out with the O.R. & N. people. Construction was started in 1888 and completed from Willows to Heppner on Dec. 7, 1889, a jubilant day. The railway brought new life and energy into the county. It especially invigorated the wheat raising industry as it had been impossible to transport the yield by wagon to the main line of the railroad for the prevailing prices. Heppner real estate rose fifty per cent.

"The entire mercantile business for the year 1888," says the Gazette supplement of 1889 "scarcely exceeded \$300,000. Recent summaries from the books of merchants show that three dealers in general merchandise have sold goods to the amount of \$160,000 in six months. The seventeen firms doing business have a trade of over \$273,000 for half the year. The flouring mill, brewery and other manufacturing establishments have doubled capacity and are unable to meet demands of increased busi-

ness. A conservative estimate of the entire trade for 1889 would exceed \$1,000,000 or three times that of the year previous."

The community became very concerned about its water supply and about the possibility of a disastrous fire. Otis Patterson of the Gazette was asked to gather information about artesian wells. Which led to the drilling of an expensive test well some 530 feet deep but no flow of water. So the city continued to use springs and small wells.

After the advent of the railway and the increase of traffic and business the Palace Hotel Company was incorporated on Oct. 26, 1889 by Thomas Quaid, J.W. Morrow, C. A. Rhea, Henry Blackman and J.B. Natter, who soon began the erection of a three-story brick building so that the next year the town could boast of as fine a hostelry as was to be found in any other town of twice the size in the Inland Empire. It was leased to Will Van Cadow and business flourished. 1889 also saw the construction of the Fair building and the opening of one or two more places of business.

A MOST UNUSUAL DISASTER

During the time of the construction of the railroad, in the spring of 1888 a rare and unusual disaster, a devastating cyclone struck Lexington. It formed just north of town and struck first at

the trees with a remarkable evenness. It caused a great deal of wreckage in Lexington, leveling and moving homes and town buildings and killing four persons. It continued out to Sand Hollow where it picked up several houses and strew them about. It terminated at a point beyond Pine City where it had demolished the schoolhouse.

During 1889 some excitement was generated by reports of mining successes on Upper Willow creek. Croppings were found assaying over \$160 in gold and silver, and

many hoped that coal mining would prove profitable. The mines were abandoned later on.

EARLY UPS AND DOWNS

The winter of 1889-90 was an unusually severe one and thousands of head of stock perished for want of food. This slowed business somewhat but business still seemed to increase, being somewhat stimulated by the improvements made by the state on the Monument road. 1891 was a fine harvest year, prices were very good and general prosperity prevailed.

Mr. Overholtz who had been operating the flouring mill was drowned in Clark's Canyon about 1885 and the mill changed hands several times from W.B. Cunninghame & Co., to John W. Morrow, to Nelse Jones and others. It passed into the hands of J.B. Sperry about 1887, and he built a large structure which cost about \$32,000. Mr. Sperry's interests became scattered and his energies fettered by lack of funds, but he kept the mill in operation until fall of 1891, when

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HEPPNER'S PALACE HOTEL

(Courtesy Lois Winchester)

Willie Wirehand Says:

"Congratulations to Heppner on its 100th birthday."

Umatilla Electric Cooperative Association has served the northern part of Morrow county since 1938. In a continuing effort to provide dependable service to the rural areas, UECA is continually expanding its electrical network. Recently UECA constructed a new sub station and transmission line to provide dependable service to the expanding northern Morrow county area.

UECA will continually play its part in the future development of northern Morrow county.



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