

AS THE CENTURY CHANGES

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COMMUNITIES OF 1900

This same little 32 page booklet pictures the communities of that day very nicely. "The county seat of Morrow County is at Heppner, which is also the terminus of the railroad line and the principal distributing point not only for Morrow, but for parts of adjacent counties as well. Heppner has about 1000 people. The town is lighted by electricity and has a good supply of water for domestic use and fire protection. There are two Methodist churches, and Episcopal, Baptist, Christian and Catholic. All of the prominent fraternal orders are represented. The public school system includes a high school course with graduates on the accredited list of the state colleges.

"In the amount of wool shipped, Heppner ranks second among the towns of Oregon. There are two large warehouses, a flour mill, many mercantile establishments and two substantial banks at Heppner, and the residences are comfortable & attractive.

"South of Heppner is Hardman, with a population of 300--the center of a large grazing and agricultural section.

"On the railroad to the north of Heppner are Ione and Lexington, in the center of the great wheat growing district. Ione, with a population of 400, owns its own water supply and electric light plant. The Baptists and Congregationalists both have churches, and there is a strong bank and a number of stores. Lexington, between Heppner and Ione, is the center of the creamery interests and is deriving a degree of prosperity from that source. The population is 270. Both Ione and Lexington have good schools with full high school courses.

"In the northern part of Morrow County there is a district in which irrigation has been successfully introduced. Water is brought from the Umatilla River, and with the moisture artificially supplied large crops of tree fruits, berries, alfalfa and vegetables are produced. Here intensive farming is practiced with excellent results. The owner of 10 or 20 acres of land, with a sufficient water supply, has an assured income. Irrigon, on the O.W.R. and N. Railroad is the center of the district, with a population of 200.

"A survey of the Umatilla irrigation project under the U.S. Reclamation Service has been run across the northern part of the county, and there is no doubt that, in time, most of this district will be irrigated by this and other means.

"Coal of marketable quality has been mined in Morrow County, but awaits the action of capital to develop it into a source of great wealth.

"In the vast forests of Morrow County there are six sawmills in operation. But timber is so great that it will be many generations hence before it is exhausted.

"Throughout the entire county mail delivery and telephones are found.

"There are 45 organized school districts in the county. A minimum of six months' school is taught and in many districts seven, eight, and nine months' instruction is given."

THE OLDEST BUSINESS

Many reports of business ownership show that constant changes took place in Heppner and throughout the county. The one Heppner Main Street firm still operated by a founding family is Thomson Brothers Grocery. Called the Orange Front Grocery in 1897, it was established by Biber and Ring who sold it after six months to Thomson and Thomas. In 1899 Mr. James George Thomson, Sr. bought out Mr. Thomas and greatly expanded to include drygoods and clothing as well as groceries. The son of this founder, James G. Thomson, Jr. owns and operates the business today. It is the only pre-1900 business that has continued under one family, the Thomsons.

LOCAL BUILDING MATERIAL

An old book describes a special building material being used about 1900 and just before then. "On the sides of the hills surrounding the town is an abundance of blue basalt equal to the best building material to be found, and out of this and Elgin red sandstone Kenney and Roberts have just constructed a substantial and beautiful block." The Odd Fellows Building (including Murray's Drug store, presently) and the county courthouse are good examples of the use of

this locally grown building block. The old account concludes, "It needs not the eye of a prophet to discern that a movement has been inaugurated which will eventually result on the substitution of stone blocks for all the wooden business buildings in town."

THE FALL REUNION

"A very pleasing and kindly custom had its inception in Morrow County in the fall of 1900, that of holding an annual oldfolk's reunion. The

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*Good Luck
to Heppner*



Groceries
Meats
Lockers

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Len Ray Schwarz

Heppner

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For 60 Years Of

Wonderful Life

During Its First

100 Years

Cornett Green Feed

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on Heppner's Centennial!**

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For Past Patronage**

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- Heating and Air Conditioning
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