

# AGRICULTURAL AND OTHER INDUSTRIES FLOURISH IN THE GRESHAM TERRITORY

## CANNERY HEAD GIVES HISTORY OF OPERATION

Gresham, Oregon, Dec. 8, 1925.—  
Editor Outlook:—In response to your invitation to give you some copy for the Christmas number of the Outlook, we are pleased to submit the following brief summary of the progress of the industry.

During the winter of 1914 there was a movement started to encourage the building of a cannery by the late W. W. Cotton, with the object in mind of stimulating the fruit and particularly the berry industry in the Gresham territory. The response was generous and the cannery was built and operated in 1915 by James Sterling and H. E. Davis. These gentlemen could be called the pioneers of the present project.

The season's experience did not prove very profitable but it meant a start, and while the balance was on the wrong side of the ledger, which was probably to be expected, it was a start at least.

### New Officers Appointed.

For the season of 1916 H. E. Davis, James Elkington and D. E. Towle were delegated to operate. They made a stock sale drive, sold \$2500 worth of stock, paid the most pressing bills, and with a loan of \$5000 made by D. E. Towle to the association and a packing contract made with Mr. Cotton, the fruit crop was handled with more or less success. Some 10,000 cases of berries and pears were packed and the season would have shown a small profit, but during the month of November the cannery burned, with considerable loss over the insurance, which was quite ample but not enough to cover. So the association had two bumps and the members became somewhat discouraged, but concluded to rebuild and used their cash balance to build the present cannery building, but were short \$1500 of cash to pay for it, and no money to buy equipment. So a deal was made with Mr. Cotton to pay the association \$600 annual rental and he would put in and own the equipment and loan the association \$1500 at 6 per cent and operate the cannery for two years, and would buy the growers' fruit, and pay cash for it, the red raspberry price being fixed at 5c per pound which was half cent better than the price paid in 1916. (In those good old days the picking price for red raspberries was 1½c per pound).

Mr. Cotton operated the cannery in 1917, but passed on into the Great Beyond early in 1918, when a new lease was made with the A. Rupert company on the cannery for a period of 10 years, at \$500 per year. This lease expires in May, 1928, and is owned by the present association, which was organized in February, 1919, as a protest against the fellow in the city dividing the crop with the grower on a 50-50 basis without doing any of the pruning or hoeing or tax paying.

The Rupert interests operated the cannery during the years 1918, 1919 and 1920, but could not withstand the cruel deflation that was forced on the country by the Wall street banking interests. The Rupert business, along with thousands of others in all walks of life, was closed out by its creditors. (Incidentally, wars are a good thing for the financial undertaker in more ways than one).

### Courage Saves Industry.

But getting back to the cannery topic, while the present association had operated in 1919 and 1920 by selling their products to the highest bidder, the price had jumped to 15 cents and 25 cents in 1920 for the raspberries. They approached the berry harvest of 1921 without a buyer in the field, but they had a little cash and lots of courage, which is usually developed when the necessity is great enough, and by some hustling and straining of every nerve, bought from the bankrupt court the Rupert equipment and got an assignment of the lease. (This was a short time after the strawberry season had opened and H. G. Andrews had started to receive berries in the back room of the Bank of Gresham, which K. A. Miller, cashier, generously donated the use of). The association members heaved a sigh of relief and thankfulness and absorbed a lot of the Santa Claus spirit early in June 1921, and, incidentally, while the best offer we received from other canners was 4½c, we did pay the grower 9¼c for the red raspberry and saved the industry.

The developments since have been very gratifying as we have made a steady annual growth in membership and volume of business, and in this our seventh year we are inclined to look back and point with pride to the growth and progress made. And while it is too early to report on the 7th year as it does not close until the 31st day of March, 1926, we expect to make a fair showing considering the bad weather conditions of the past year with the winter injury and a dry summer.

### 1921 Season Successful.

The season of 1924 was closed showing an annual turnover of \$467,-

331.95 and a payment to members of \$251,858.96; and the overhead expense of operating including investment, depreciation and salaries to heads of departments was 1-7 10 per cent or 2-¾ per cent on the net cash paid to members for their products, and at this time we wish to offer a challenge to the world to make a showing of more economical operation. While Dame Rumor brings us echoes of criticism by those inquisitive Janes of what they find for six people to do at the cannery after the harvest is over, please explain to them that we have a membership of 430 that our cooperative plan of marketing involves making many payments during the year and an immense amount of detail work in book and record keeping in handling the various pools. And to the street corner critic who says cooperative selling is no good because it takes so long to get a settlement you, our members, can reply that we can afford to wait when it means a gain of from 25 to 40 per cent in price. This being true, we are not so all-fired anxious to get the cash, as what we received last year that we would not have had coming only for pooled selling, tides us over, and we can well afford to wait for a part of the sale price of our products.

### Company's Assets Satisfactory.

The assets of our company consist of a 51 per cent equity in the old cannery, ownership of all of the equipment, the receiving shed and field equipment and fertilizer shed and mill, office building and lot, and three additional lots west of the old cannery site. And we hold a purchase contract on the balance of the cannery stock at par, which insures the original investors their money back, plus all the investment earns under the lease referred to, and we look forward to the time when we can say to those people who generously subscribed to the enterprise back in 1914 that we return you herewith the dollars you loaned the industry and in doing so will establish a record for one Gresham enterprise of a community nature that paid in full.

In taking stock of the assets of our enterprise we wish to say we have many millions invested that are paying daily dividends in gratitude expressed by at least 90 per cent of our members representing at least 2000 human souls who are directly and as many more who are indirectly benefited by the spirit of helpfulness that cooperative work develops, resulting in a use of the Christmas spirit throughout the year of "Peace on earth, good will toward men" and on behalf of our membership we extend to all this expression of that spirit.

This expression is tendered by the board of directors and other officials of the company, who are as follows: W. D. Fraley, president; C. T. Ryan, vice president; E. P. Schedeen, director; C. M. La Follett, director; D. E. Towle, manager-treasurer; C. B. Green, secretary-cashier; J. J. Fisher, assistant manager and superintendent of cannery; May Nelson, general bookkeeper; Ruth Schedeen, growers' bookkeeper; Mrs. Frank Gibbs, forelady, of cannery; Roy Burton, foreman, of cannery.

In the matter of length of time in service, Miss Green, Mrs. Gibbs, Mr. Fisher and Mr. Burton were members of the Rupert staff and have been employed almost continuously at the cannery for seven years.

The Cooperative Berry Growers were organized nearly eight years ago by Charles P. Tallman, H. G. Andrew, Ed. Spath, D. E. Towle and Walter F. Robinson, who applied for a charter in February, 1919.

D. E. TOWLE.

## PICKLE PLANT GROWING INDUSTRY OF GRESHAM

A visit to the plant of the Oregon Pickle & Canning company a few days ago found them so busy down there it was hard to arrange an interview, which in itself speaks well for any industry.

In July of this year an addition of 50 x 200 feet was made to the factory on the west, the front 50 feet of which on the lower floor was added to the canning room, and on the second floor storage room was provided, also the office was moved from downstairs to commodious quarters above. New machinery has also been installed, last week witnessing the finishing up of this work. Sealing machines are now being used which seal a full gallon of pickles. The pickles, either sweet or sour, are placed in lacquered tin cans which prevents any danger of infection from acidity. The work recently has been confined to the packing of sours and dills. The various sizes are packed with the number of pickles in each can correctly stated on the label. The operations of the factory at all times are made to conform specifically to the exactations of the pure food law, both national and state.

### 1925 Pickle Crop Largest.

The 1925 cucumber crop was a bumper, although it did look for a time as though it would be a decided failure. Just as the farmers were be-

coming overly anxious, a fine rain came along in August followed by extreme heat, which was just the climatic condition that was needed to produce an unprecedented crop. The pickle output throughout the United States during the past season was the largest in the history of the business.

The season just closing netted the growers in and around Gresham the neat sum of \$35,423.87. This was distributed among 278 growers with a total acreage of 315. This average of a trifle over an acre apiece does not hold good in all instances, as some growers had in much more than this acreage. One grower alone handled six acres and it is reported is thinking of planting five times this amount the coming season, if a suitable location can be found. The patrons of the Gresham pickle factory are scattered within a radius of 20 miles, although there is one grower at Cascade Locks, a distance of 50 miles. Ninety per cent of the cucumbers are raised within ten miles of Gresham; there are a number of growers at Estacada.

### Plant Shows Rapid Growth.

When the pickle enterprise sprang up in Gresham about five years ago, but 75 acres were contracted for and 27 tanks were installed. On account of being unable to sell the first year's crop, but 50 acres were contracted for the second year. However, under the efficient management of the elder Stafford and the present manager, J. L. Stafford, the plant has prospered until today the plant at Gresham is the largest in the state of Oregon devoted exclusively to the manufacture of pickles. There are 86 tanks and every tank is full this year. The buildings at Gresham cover two acres of ground and the company owns an additional three acres adjoining the present factory site. The payroll for the Gresham plant averages between \$2,000 and \$2,500 a month and this is to be materially increased in the future, according to present plans.

The business has also branched out and in addition to the factory at Gresham, which, by the way, is the only manufactory of the Oregon Pickle & Canning company in the state, the company has 225 acres at Monitor, Oregon, in cucumbers and a plant there containing 57 tanks. The payroll there during the past season amounted to \$45,065.59. This is simply a salting station, the pickles to be brought to this place from the brine and manufactured into salable product.

The company has handled cucumbers from about 100 acres at Molalla, and is planning the erection of a plant there the coming year. The cucumbers are received there in the green state and brought to Gresham for brining and later manufacture.

J. L. Stafford is the manager at all three places. He is assisted in the Gresham plant by R. H. Luethe who came the first of July from California; John Lovegren, who is foreman of the factory; Miss Grace Stilger, of Portland, stenographer, and six women and eight men employed in the manufacturing department. It is expected that the force in the factory will be increased soon. Also from all indications the acreage will be increased this coming year, calling for corresponding expansion. The shipments of material from the Gresham factory extend to all parts of the United States and are made only in carload lots.

Mr. Stafford has traveled 18,000 miles since the first of April of this year, calling on individual growers and visiting other plants. The trips were made in his reliable Dodge touring car, the original set of balloon tires being still in use.

### Write-up of Industries continued on page 3.

### Gresham Grange Elects Officers.

At the meeting of the Gresham grange Saturday the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: J. C. Hodge, master; J. E. Gates, overseer; Mrs. M. E. Parsons, lecturer; George Sleret, steward; George F. Honey, assistant steward; Mrs. Emma Manning, chaplain; George Leslie, treasurer; Mrs. Theodore Brugger, secretary; George Sleret, gatekeeper; Mrs. William Hornecker, Ceres; Mrs. H. W. Snashall, Pomona; Mrs. F. Volbrecht, Flora; Mrs. Arnold Ruegg, lady assistant steward; Mrs. F. C. Hodge, pianist; Mrs. Euda Niblin, from the Evening Star grange, was elected installing officer for the officials elected Saturday who will be duly installed with appropriate ceremonies at the January meeting.

The session of the grange on Saturday was interesting and instructive. George Paimiter, state master, was present, also J. G. Kelly, master of Pomona grange and other visitors.

### All Wool.

"My dear sir," said the salesman, courteously, as he handed his customer his package and no change, "you will find that your suit will wear like iron."

And sure enough it did. The man hadn't worn it two months when it began to look rusty.—Exchange.



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### HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR DINNER

Bananas, Oranges, Lemons and Citron Peel, Celery, Lettuce, Cranberries, Nuts, Sweet Potatoes, Dates, Mince Meat, Figs, Raisins, Fig and Plum Puddings, Etc., Etc.

Many things besides these listed above are offered for your Christmas Dinner

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