

VOLUME XXX NUMBER 16

HERMISTON, UMATILLA COUNTY, OREGON, SEPTEMBER 17, 1936

## WESTLAND AREA STRUGGLES THRU

### MCKAY DAM BUILT

New Settlement Follows  
Summer Irrigation;  
Messner Stays.

The Westland Irrigation District contains 13,000 acres, of which 5,000 are now being cultivated and 3,000 under distribution canals, 2,000 more under main canals and 3,000 acres requiring a pipe line from the highline to the land to supply water.

The Westland district is one of the oldest in history and one of the latest in fulfillment of its development.

In 1881 G. W. Hunt filed water rights on the Umatilla river and built a ditch from the present location of the diversion dam and headgates of the Westland canal five miles west to about the Hawley Bean ranch. The canal was 30 feet wide on the bottom. Hunt was a railroad builder and his fortunes failed to the extent that he could not complete the work.

In 1903 the Hinkle Ditch Company was formed by J. T. Hinkle, O. D. Teel and Dr. H. S. Garfield. This company set up that the Hunt filings and works had expired for want of use and relocated new water rights. It extended the canal with

J. W. Messner.



District manager of the Westland Irrigation District in which capacity he has served for a quarter of a century.

a ten foot bottom to Butter Creek and bought 7,000 acres of the Hunt lands west of Butter Creek. In 1908 the Western Land and Irrigation Company was formed by J. W. Messner, then of Baker, Dr. W. J. Stapish of Walla Walla, and Elmer Cleaver and Clifton Cleaver of Pendleton. This company paid the Hinkle Ditch Company \$150,000 for its interests and assumed all obligations. It then made a contract with H. G. Newport to complete the present system of main canals, at a cost of over \$100,000. The irrigation system has cost, including diversion dam, gates and distribution ditches over \$300,000. The main system is sufficient to carry water to all the lands of the district.

The district owns 40 percent of the storage water of the McKay reservoir storage. Within its boundaries are 55 farms with an average size of over 90 acres each now operating. A large number of these farms are 150 to 400 acres, but tendency is toward smaller tracts of not over 40 acres, on which basis homes for over 300 families could be supplied instead of the 55 that now live there.

The system also now carries the waters of the old Courtney, Allen and Pioneer ditches which are diverted from the main canal to the lands supplied in the Umatilla Meadows.

The general manager of the district is J. W. Messner, who took charge in 1908 and has occupied the position for 28 years. He is the only man remaining of the group who formed the Hinkle or Western Land

& Irrigation companies. In 1918 the Westland Irrigation District was formed under the direction of a board of directors composed of J. W. Messner, Clarence Roberts, Herbert Strohm, J. M. Prindle and A. D. Smith, and in 1925 the new district organization took over the assets of the district water system and lands. The newly chosen board consisted of J. W. Messner, Hawley Bean, J. M. Prindle, Roy Attebury and Lee Savely. Later under state law this number was reduced to a board of three composed of Hawley Bean, J. M. Prindle and Roy Attebury and J. W. Messner was made general manager.

The lands are now owned by 55 farmers with about 5,000 acres; Western Irrigation Company, composed of stockholders in Cincinnati, Ohio, 700 acres; Northern Pacific Railway Co., 1,200 acres; Mortgage Company of America, 600 acres; Umatilla county, 2,000 acres; with the remaining 3,500 not supplied with water or requiring a siphon pipeline service belonging to Uncle Sam, the N. P. Co., state and others. These lie mainly west of the Westland school house and compose a fine body of arid lands.

The main canal from the headgate to Butter Creek is 13 miles long and with a capacity of 300 second feet of water. At Butter Creek it is divided into the high line, covering the lands due west of Butter Creek into Morrow county six miles in length, and the low line, seven miles long, which covers the lands northwest of Butter Creek and west of Hermiston two miles. Under the main canal to Butter Creek and in the Butter Creek valley are some of the oldest and best improved farms in Umatilla County and the newer lands give promise of equal qualities for future development. Land values are low and opportunities for farmers under the Westland district are no better anywhere else in the Pacific northwest.

Delays in settlement of the lands in Westland have been caused during the years by an insufficient summer water supply, or want of storage. The McKay dam in 1928 gave that necessary supply of water.

The early promoters of this project, like those of the Irrigon and Furnish projects, had witnessed the high production on Butter Creek and the Meadows with spring or flood water supply. Winter irrigation 30 years ago was much talked about and its value proven by neighborhood results. But the factors of soil, water table and crop varieties were not given sufficient investigation or consideration. Alfalfa with a long tap root grew prolifically in the rich deep soil of Butter Creek with a six foot impervious water table along

which the drainage of lands above from the then plentiful water supply on the upper watersheds flowed most of the summer season. Capillary attraction from the six foot water table depth reached easily the roots of alfalfa, also produced grains and some gardens in selected places. These features did not prove out in the lands of the higher tables. Winter irrigation and even late flood waters were found insufficient. Some beautiful orchards were grown to maturity on the west side 20 years ago with flood water until June, but would not mature fruit. Alfalfa would make one crop and maybe a light second, but it was difficult to hold a stand. Only early gardens were possible.

It was then that many of the settlers abandoned their lands. The fact of failure was faced, and this resulted in the demand for storage and the final construction of the McKay dam, which cured these early evils.

But by this time the depression had set in and land settlement had ceased or become nearly impossible, and many acres of the Westland District still lie idle, awaiting the handiwork of good farmers.

With the impulse that is being given the Pacific northwest through great public works and the movement of drouth stricken farmers this way, and the growing demand for irrigated lands where crops are insured, settlement of these vacant lands should proceed more rapidly. In addition to these factors, conditions have greatly improved locally through crop and marketing developments which insure success to the newcomer on new lands. With the advancement of the dairy, egg and turkey industries, the adaptation of corn and other proven soil crops, and through the benefits of the many cooperative institutions here, the lands across the Umatilla river now with abundance of water should be transformed into successful farms.

## ALFALFA SCENES ON WEST SIDE.



Upper View—Looking northeast from near the C. A. Corliss place toward the Jess Prindle ranch. Twenty hay stacks were in sight.  
Lower View—Looking eastward from near the Roy Attebury ranch across the Ralph Richard place on Butter Creek.

### Growing Wine Grapes.

During the days just before prohibition went into effect, wine makers were considering the Columbia river valley for growing wine grapes. They sent a Swiss wine maker to investigate the territory between The Dalles and Lewiston, which he reported favorable. His name was Albert Angermayer, superintendent of wineries in California. His report said: "The quality of wine grapes that will successfully rival the best products from the Rhine and Moselle districts in Germany, the Bordeaux, Gironde and Medoc in France, can be grown in the sandy soils here, which would be free from disease. The flavor would be free from all taints of vinegar. The elevation and latitude were special factors." Prohibition was declared and all development of the industry here, dropped.

### Justice of the Peace.

In 1908, new voting precincts were created at Hermiston and a new Justice of the Peace district, previously all such duties being attended to at Echo. F. C. McKenzie was the first Justice of the Peace. E. P. Dodd succeeded him and resigned after eight years. He was succeeded by R. C. Todd, who held the position three years. "Dad" West then became the justice and after he was in office seven years was succeeded by P. P. Sullivan, the present official.

### Hermiston Postmasters.

The first postmaster was J. K. Bland. The second was J. H. Williams. President Wilson appointed John Young who was succeeded by C. H. Skinner. President Harding appointed Mrs. L. A. Phelps; President Roosevelt appointed H. J. Stillings, who resigned. Harvey DeMoss is present postmaster.

## Jack's Cafe

Open All Night

Compliments the Herald on its Thirty Year Anniversary edition and service in the community.

Jack House, Prop.

## JIMMIE'S Barber Shop

Experienced Help

L. A. LOVERING,  
Assistant Barber

JIMMY MONTGOMERY,  
Manager



## Boys' Shoes

BOYS' BLACK KIP OXFORDS—Popular wing tip style. No-mark composition sole. A big value! **\$2.49**

BOYS' BLACK CALF OXFORDS—Has trouser crease vamp. Fine calf uppers, leather soles, rubber heels. **\$2.98**

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YOUNG MEN'S BROGUES—Just the thing for school wear. Brown pebble grain uppers. Two full double soles and leather heels. **\$4.95**

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Sturdy whipcord longies, Sanforized shrunk. Sizes 6 to 16. **\$1.19**

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Heavy, narrow wale corduroy that will take a lot of wear. Full cut. Navy and castor. Sizes 6 to 16. **\$1.98**

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Warm jersey knit, long sleeves. Just the thing for fall. Plain colors with fancy collars. Hurry for these! **79c**

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Mixed mohair and wool. Full zipper front and fancy back. **\$1.98**

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NEW! DUKE OF KENT  
Deep-Tones. Fine broadcloth, button down collar. Navy and brown. Sizes 6 to 14½. **69c**

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Hermiston, Oregon  
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renders service to its  
Members and Customers

## Read these prices!

|                                      |        |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Macaroni or Spaghetti, 4 lbs.        | 25c    |
| Crackers, graham or white, 2 lb. box | 25c    |
| Peanut Butter, Hoody's, 2 lbs.       | 25c    |
| Pickles, sweet, quart                | 35c    |
| Deviled Meat, ¼'s, 6 for             | 25c    |
| Salmon, Alaska pink, 3 cans          | 35c    |
| Salt, 8 pound sack                   | 20c    |
| Soda, 1 pound pkg.                   | 5c     |
| Coffee, 3 pounds                     | 45c    |
| Matches, 6 box carton                | 18c    |
| Flour, 49 lb. sack                   | \$1.39 |
| Tomatoes, size 2½ can                | 10c    |
| Catsup, per bottle                   | 10c    |
| Sugar, pure cane, 10 lbs.            | 57c    |
| Shortening, Swift's, 4 lbs.          | 43c    |

Phone 401

Harry Connor, Mgr.