

## WEST EXTENSION GIVEN BY LANE

### LONG BATTLE WON

**\$800,000 Authorized at Hermiston During Western Tour.**

The order for construction of the West Extension was signed by Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, on November 7, 1913. This was done after a review of the lands of the West Extension and the East Division of the Umatilla project made by Secretary Lane the previous summer, soon after he was appointed to the president's cabinet.

For four years preceding, strenuous efforts had been made by the Hermiston Commercial Club and many local citizens to secure irrigation for the West Extension and a much larger acreage west of the Umatilla river, including a part of the proposed John Day project.

It was proposed to build a dam in the Umatilla valley at or near the mouth of Butter Creek and create a very large storage reservoir, the site of which included a large part of the Umatilla Meadows. Complete surveys were made by the Reclamation Service, including measurements of the runoff of the Umatilla river, and in many ways the project then appeared feasible. Canal surveys showed a large body of land under gravity in Western and Northern Morrow county as far west as Willow Creek and beyond. The average runoff of the river for a 15 year period was shown to be 540,000 acre feet, of which only 125,000 acre feet were appropriated and could be used by the other projects. Soil conditions on much of the land of the higher levels were also such as not to require such a heavy duty of water as the lower and more sandy lands along the Columbia.

The Reclamation Service was ready to approve the enlarged Umatilla project when much opposition arose to its construction from land owners in the proposed reservoir site and of old water rights along the river and its branches above. The controversy grew intense and the result was that the strip of land along the Columbia now known as the Irrigon and Boardman units

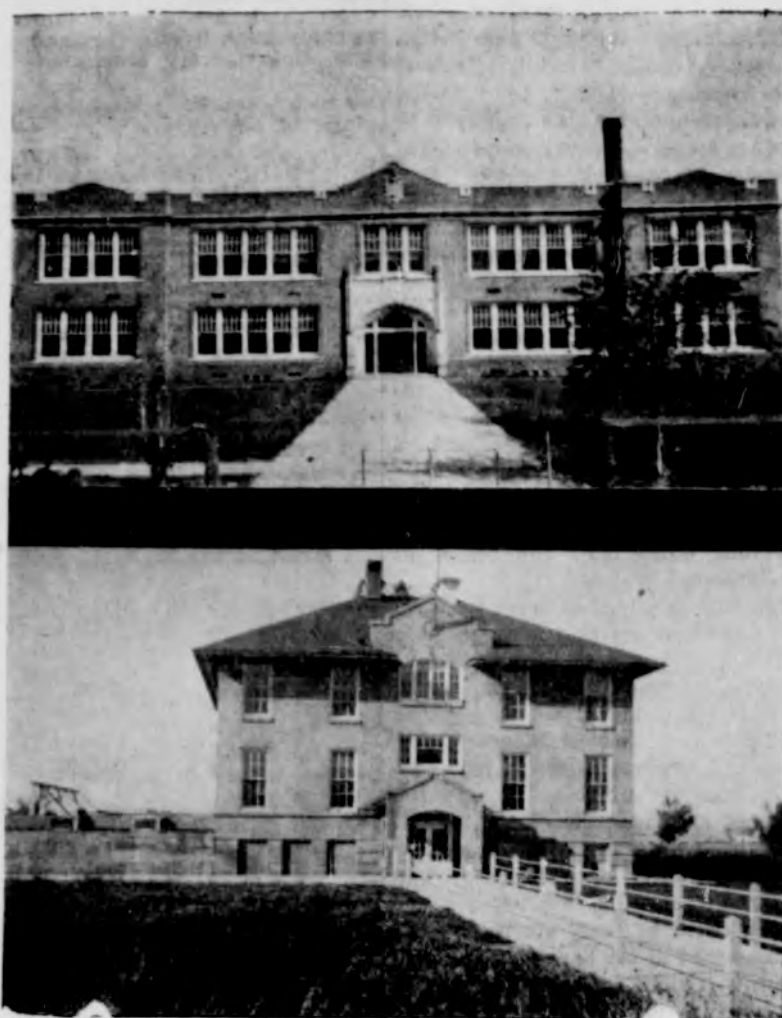
was all that was included in the November 7th, 1913, order of the government.

This order was based on the supply of water from the drain canal from the East Division of the Umatilla Project and such reasonable expectations of a return flow to the river from increased irrigation above the West Extension diversion dam site at Three Mile Falls. The large storage reservoir was abandoned for ground storage and drainage of the adjoining lands above the new project, the Umatilla drainage alone supplying 135 second feet of steady flow. Secretary Lane set aside \$800,000 for the West Extension to which other funds were added until the project cost exceeded over a million dollars.

It was during the controversy that the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce was asked to hold a public hearing on the matter in 1911. Hermiston citizens, led by the Commercial Club, chartered two passenger coaches and an engine and attended the hearing in a body 100 strong. Speeches were made by both sides, and much argument and bitterness ensued. The meeting was held in the old Frazer Opera house and was attended by 400 interested citizens from all over Umatilla county. The whole matter was aired, but the fight continued.

At that time the adjudication proceedings of all the water rights of the Umatilla was before the courts, instituted by the U. S. Reclamation Service, and the government was accused of trying to take all the waters of the Umatilla for the new unredeemed lands. It was held that the lands to be flooded by the storage were worth more than the larger areas of sagebrush in far western Umatilla and Morrow counties. Oregon's irrigation laws were new and untried in the higher courts, and much litigation was in sight. The controversy became involved in county and state politics, and was becoming embarrassing to national officials. Land values were high and the ambitions of irrigationists were unbounded. Under the proposed new project were large land owners seeking water for irrigation, and above the dam site were other large interests which did not want irrigation. To give the details of this long drawn and contentious struggle would require more space than is permitted in this newspaper, but copies of speeches and other data will be

## STANFIELD DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL. IRRIGON SCHOOL BUILDING.



UPPER—Stanfield high school.

This building was erected in 1924 at a cost of \$60,000. Within it is a large auditorium and gymnasium. All class rooms are large and well lighted. Large buses are used in transporting pupils to and from school from all country districts.

LOWER—Irrigon school building.

filed in the Hermiston Library for the use of those who may desire to go further into the subject.

When Secretary Lane and his assistants and members of congress came to Hermiston in the summer of 1913, he was met at Bend, Oregon, and presented with maps of the West Extension, and asked to review the lands. At Irrigon a large display of fruits and vegetables grown under the old Irrigon ditch was shown him, and Mr. Kicker, principal of the schools made a very able address on the merits of the project. This was at breakfast time. The Secretary was then brought to Hermiston and after a review of this project was honored with a largely attended banquet in the dining room

of what is now the Osborne apartments. Here again the whole argument for the West Extension was presented, and the good features of the lands here were shown in talks by such farmers as James Gent and Thomas Haddock and others. This banquet was attended by citizens from Pendleton and Portland, among whom were the late J. N. Teal and the late Sam Jackson, founder and builder of the Oregon Journal. Both these men were old friends of the Secretary when Mr. Lane was a newspaper man in Tacoma, and their influence was important. After all local and state speeches were made, Secretary Lane was introduced.

He spoke briefly, but humanely and powerfully, and, it may be said here that probably no man who ever filled the office of Secretary of the Interior was better fitted, or had better and broader ideas of the duties of that office than was Franklin K. Lane. Not only may we give him the credit for the authorization of the West Extension but also for the final OK on the McKay dam.

After speaking several minutes, during which he stated the observations and results of his investigations, he then authorized the expenditure of \$800,000 for diversion dam and canals for the West Extension. When he returned to Washington he confirmed his public statement with official records and that fall, work was commenced. When he made this order he stated further investigations would continue to be made of the larger project and the Umatilla Meadows reservoir, but nothing was ever done toward its construction.

It was not long after that those who desired irrigation expansion turned attention to the McKay dam, which in storage facilities became partial reservoiring of the waters of the immense lake proposed through the Butter Creek dam.

The only men now living in Hermiston who were members then of the Commercial Club and connected with this movement, a quarter of a century ago, are F. B. Swayze, Thomas Campbell, F. C. McKenzie, E. P. Dodd, Thomas Fraser and W. J. Warner.

One interesting fact worth relating in connection with the above described controversy is that Secretary Ballenger of the Interior, under President Taft, one evening during the Congress of 1911, promised the director of the Reclamation Service and part of the Oregon congressional delegation that he would sign the papers for the large reservoir and project the following morning. At that time a bill for a loan of \$20,000,000 was before congress and slated to pass. Just before the vote an eastern senator rose and made a severe attack on the measure and delayed its passage. Ballenger became scared lest funds would not become available, and when the bill became law it contained compromise restrictions that discouraged the secretary from issuing the order. It may be far reaching to suggest that had that senator that morning, missed roll call through some committee meeting or other small incident, the Umatilla Meadows would now be a large lake and the North End of Morrow county a small empire.

## PART OF CHRISTLEY DAIRY HERD.



The Jersey cow on the right is "Marie" with a year record of 525 pounds of butterfat. The large Holstein-Jersey on the left is "Pet" with a record of 637 pounds in one year. On her left is "Gertrude" with 40 pounds of butterfat the first month of her first calf. The fourth cow from the right is "Waunita" producing 73 pounds last August and the first cow in the Umatilla Herd Improvement association to exceed a monthly record of 70 pounds. The Christleys have 40 dairy cows and 45 heifers, all of high grade breeding.

## Jerseys for Feed Lots and Holsteins Follow.

The Jersey was selected in the beginning when pastures were small and when dry lot feeding was the chief method considered. The daily chore of cutting green feed and feeding dry hay soon aroused consideration of pastures. Lectures on sweet clover and other grasses were frequent while blue grass was steadily gaining ground and taking place of numerous alfalfa fields. From this time the annual records show a gradual diminution from alfalfa acreage and tonnage to larger pastures and more and more butterfat. The increase of herds brought about greater demand for grain feeds and mash which became the original basis of the organization of the Farm Bureau Cooperative, also the Cooperative Creamery and other cooperative organizations. As improvement in herds and marketing and feeding and knowledge of dairying grew, the other institutions became larger and more important to the welfare of the entire locality. As pastures became more certain other breeds of dairy cattle were introduced and now we have Holsteins and Guernseys contending for supremacy with the Jersey. To the dairy business more than any other is the credit due for the success of this irrigated region from Boardman to Echo during the last two decades or more.

## W. T. Reeves and Horses.

W. T. Reeves of Stanfield and the Meadows has been a resident there for half a century or more. He is one of the solid citizens. Has served in all local, civic, school and church building programs when called upon. The grade school at Stanfield was given his name.

He owns a large farm called Meadowsview. During many years he has been outstanding as a producer of heavy horses of the best Percheron type. Through the tough days in the horse business, he kept good breeding stock and now has some of the very best in the west.

## How Turkeys Grew.

The first commercial turkey growing on the Umatilla project was done by T. W. Botkin, on the North Hill, 15 years ago. He developed around 1200 birds annually for several years. He was followed soon by Merle Potter and "Shorty" Sanders, the DeMoss family, Mrs. A. W. Purdy and others. When the Eastern Oregon Turkey Growers' association was organized and markets improved the industry grew more rapidly.

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THIS QUANTITY BUYING FOR TWO FEED MANUFACTURING PLANTS AND LARGE DISTRIBUTION THROUGH OUR NUMEROUS RETAIL STORES AND OUR EXTREMELY LOW COST OF OPERATION ENABLES US TO SELL OUR FEEDS CHEAPER THAN OTHERS OF EQUAL OR EVEN INFERIOR QUALITY.

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