

FOREWARD

This anniversary edition of the Hermiston Herald is published to commemorate its thirtieth birthday and to portray what has been done during the thirty years of contemporaneous life of courageous people in the reclamation of a desert.

Its columns of reading matter are therefore necessarily historical. As such, we hope that not only the many pioneers, who have had a part in this new western epic, here, will be interested in this summary of events but also that the many who are making their homes here now will be interested in what has been done during a generation to transform the rendezvous of coyote and rabbit, waste of land and water, into modern, highly civilized communities.

It is our pleasant duty to present the record as best we can. For months we have been gathering together from public records, from newspaper files and printed pamphlets, from old photographs, scrapbooks, scattered historical writings and the memories of men and women these stories of experience and movements of progress necessary to the task.

We want to express our warm appreciation to all persons who have so generously aided us in the gathering of data; and, also to the 100 percent of business interests who have so generously supported us in advertising space, from every town and district in western Umatilla and northern Morrow counties.

This edition was a big undertaking, fraught with doubts of success, by a weekly newspaper from the average resources in the communities we serve, and to their most liberal response in every way we ascribe the success of the publication.

One of our chief purposes is to give all our citizens a common knowledge of our several communities and towns, and to portray and encourage a common interest in each other's welfare. Our historical knowledge is the same and our future interests are the same. A common knowledge, a common pride, and a common pursuit should produce a united spirit for the duties and accomplishments of the future.

Many stories of personal and human interest have been necessarily eliminated from this edition. Some historical features have not yet been established. Some errors, doubtless, will be revealed. It is surprising, in many cases, how meager are the sources of history and how dim and incorrect are the memories. We propose to publish other articles in subsequent issues and urge all our readers to submit corrections, additions, and any interesting incidents that may have occurred during the years gone by. These will be added to the volume of history that will be preserved in schools and libraries, files and personal records. In the Carnegie library in Hermiston an historical section will be provided and all these features will be carefully preserved.

Again we want to thank communities of Boardman, Irrigon, Umatilla, Echo, Stanfield, Butter Creek, Umatilla Meadows and Hermiston, and officials of all the towns, irrigation districts, clubs, lodges, churches and numerous citizens for their assistance and kindly interest in the creation of this anniversary edition.

The Herald particularly urges the public schools to encourage interest in our early history, and in the history of the development of these irrigated projects. Much yet remains to be done. The experience we have had and the progress we have made will become very valuable in the guidance of future endeavors.

There are many small incidents or happenings which are of historical significance. Some are humorous, some are romantic; some illustrate endurance and sacrifice, but all are essential parts of the history of people.

PAULINE M. STOOP
ALFRED QUIRING
Publishers.
E. P. DODD,
Historian.

EARLY PIONEERS CONQUER INDIANS

HOME GROUND STORY

Umatilla Agency First White Settlement; Vast Cattle Ranches Flourish.

The Hermiston Herald has set out to tell the story of the march of time in this area as nearly as the records show. Some of the imprints are plain, some are dim and some have been obliterated. Nevertheless the remaining facts should interest us and should be recorded in file, and library, and vault, and in the home and multitude of places where men keep things that live like traditions in the archives of human existence, merely for the joy of keeping. History has its strange fascinations for all of us. We like to meditate on what has happened to our own selves, to note the milestones, to reflect on the road we took at the junction or crossroads and as a group of people in town, or country, or state, or nation, we like to know what has happened before us and why.

The lessons of history are the best guidance for men and the inspiration from a knowledge of what others did in success and pleasure of effort carries us forward to better endeavor.

With scarcely any other excuse the Herald has tried to tell you the story of the home ground. The main part of this story will have to do with wresting the desert from the coyote, and rabbit and rattlers, during thirty years, and making it over into modern homes and civilized conditions. Prior efforts to reclaim land were meager in results, but paved the way. The first strong efforts brought little good but through experience; and by continued faith and work the final achievements have been proven worth while. But we do not want to be commentators, merely record makers of events.

Geological.

In the beginning, we are told, "God created the heavens and the earth." Since then many geological changes took place. According to Dr. Thomas Condon, the Pacific ocean swept freely once over our plains and hills. Then a nucleus of the Blue Mountains appeared above the floods. Then the Cascades arose and slowly shut out the ocean and a great inland lake covered these spaces. Shores appeared and the John Day fossils show a vast mammalian life. Strange creatures roamed over the Blue Mountains, nothing like our present day animal life. A diminutive horse with 14 hoofs ambled over the plains and dogs similar to our own mingled with them. There was a plodding rhinoceros and the lake was full of water life. During that time came great flows of lava and all lake life was destroyed; these were followed by an alluvial period when the wash from the mountains was carried into the lake and life was renewed.

Dr. Condon's findings were shown in the drilling of the oil well on the edge of Hermiston in 1923-24. The bit drove through alternate strata of lava and alluvial formation, three of each, 80 feet in thickness. In the lower alluvial stratum drilled, were found smooth water worn stones and a petrified piece of tree limb at a depth of 280 feet, and below two strata of lava flow.

Later, it is said, that during some great torrential deluge or due to the melting of glaciers near Dry Falls and Grand Coulee, the waters of the lake beyond Wallula gap broke over and the lake of this region tore through the Columbia Gorge and destroyed the geological dam near Bonneville, or the Bridge of the Gods, and the waters of the inland lake returned to the mother ocean.

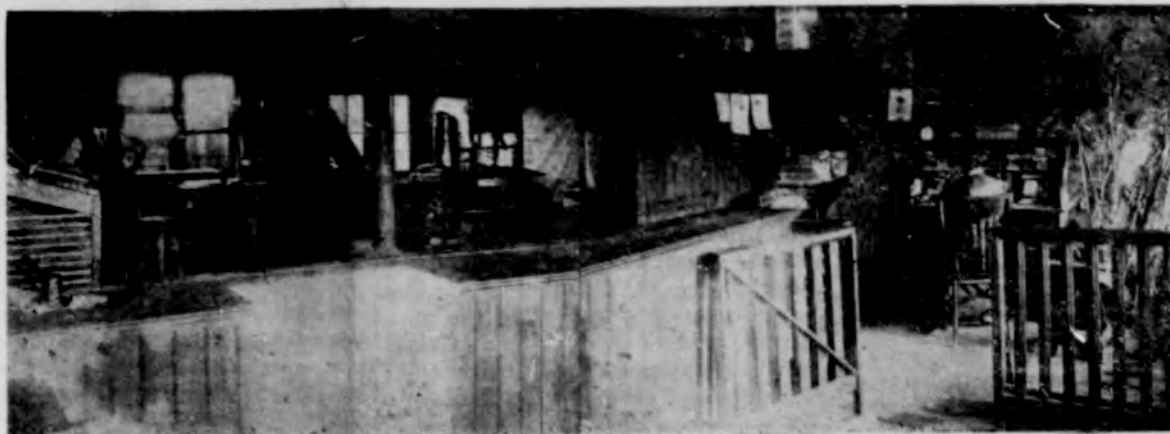
The Cascades rose higher and shut off the clouds and moisture and the desert condition was produced. That was how the Indians found it and that is how it was when the white man came on the scenes.

It is claimed that the Columbia once had its course through where Hermiston now stands and the crags and lava peaks nearby were caused by the erosion of the waters. During some upheaval or terrific flood it changed its course to the canyon north of us and wore its way down during the ages to its present bed.

E. R. Crocker said in his report of the Umatilla rapids base for a dam, that it was composed of the

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Herald Office In 1907.



Inside view of Herald office taken in 1907. C. E. Baker standing at type case. Mrs. Baker at news desk. Washington hand press in center background.

Town Name Selected by Mrs. J. F. McNaught.

Because one of the stockholders of the Maxwell Company was reading the well known Stevenson's novel, "The Weir of Hermiston", when the day came to give the baby town a name Mrs. J. F. McNaught christened it HERMISTON. The name of Clarkwis had been considered since the year was the 100th anniversary of the famous expedition of Lewis and Clark. But Hermiston was an unusual name and it proved a happy selection.

The fact that a Baptist minister by the name of Hermiston came here with a missionary railroad car and conducted religious services a year on a sidetrack in town had nothing to do with the naming of the town. This was a mere coincidence, but resulted in the first church being built.

The first plat of the town was filed by the Maxwell Company on the west side of the railroad track in 1904, but an error was made in the plat and in the following spring a new plat was filed. About the same time a plat for the East side was filed by Newport and Skinner, both under the name of Hermiston. Each townsite was 40 acres and additions were made to each.

A strife ensued known far and wide as the Hermiston townsite fight. A business of each kind was established on each side of the track. For three years this strife was continued but finally faded away. The townsite fight has no real historic value but is a good subject for a western novel. It resulted at the time in much competitive building, the results of which are yet seen in low values of several costly structures in each district. It also resulted in a costly water system and expensive streets and sidewalks spread over a larger area than is necessary or convenient to common uses, and numerous lots are still idle because the town was not held to a smaller area. Along with the townsite competition was also the general boom and a belief that Hermiston would become a city according to the slogan "Five Thousand in Five Years."

But Hermiston survived the bad effects through the good effects of its location and resources and the enterprise of the early day spirits who were always inspired by the belief the town would finally become a very important center.

The city domestic water system was first built of wood pipe, with a large reservoir on the Butte nearby.

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Templeton's Lake Lost.

Robert Templeton, father of Jasper Templeton, filed on a homestead in Columbia district in 1904. This filing included a lake which covered part of the land now in the H. J. Stillings, and Jasper Templeton's present ranches. From this lake the elder Templeton expected to pump water for irrigating the surrounding homestead acreage.

All went well until the early Spring of 1907 when the Government was building the Cold Springs dam. A spring thaw and chinook brought down such a flood that it carried away part of the fill at the dam and with other debris filled the lake and cut a channel through the lower embankment to the Columbia, which later was deepened as a drainage canal. The Templetons were driven from their home and spent the night in the sagebrush.

Delia Switzler's Tree.

There is a tree on Switzler's Island where the oldest daughter of J. B. Switzler hid one night in 1878 from marauding Indians while her father yielded to the persuasions of the reds to row them across the Columbia. The Indians wanted to hold a parley with the Yakimas to arouse a general uprising, and Switzler with needle gun in hand, held them off until discretion seemed the better part of valor and rowed them over. During this time the girl Delia remained hidden high in the tree tops. The next day she rode to Umatilla to join the rest of the family.

Old Umatilla Forts.

Resembling ancient remains are the evidences of two old rock buildings at Umatilla which were used for forts during Indian uprisings. Women and children were taken there while the men mustered into service to guard towns and settlements. One building was owned by the Kunzies and the other by Koontz.

Hungry Harbor Eddy.

Hungry Harbor is an eddy in the Columbia river just above Umatilla rapids, situated under cliffs where boats rested a week at a time until winds subsided before attempting the perilous descent. The harbor is near Hat Rock and Flat Iron basal pinnacles, seen so plainly from the Wallula Cutoff.

The whistling well, drilled while testing the Umatilla Meadows dam-site, is still blowing.

District Building Erected In 1915 Through Coop. Move

The district office building in Hermiston is the result of one of the first cooperative movements. This was among business men. When the Umatilla project was under construction a good residence was built for the chief engineer and a set of cheaper office buildings erected for the engineering headquarters. When the project was completed and the West Extension was authorized, proposals were made in 1915 to remove the Reclamation headquarters to Irrigon.

The business men of Hermiston immediately made a counter proposal to the Reclamation Service—that they would buy the old buildings if the service would erect a substantial office structure here. The service agreed to take \$1500 for the original buildings and add sufficient funds to do the work.

Twenty-three Hermiston citizens gave their notes for \$100 each and these notes were used as collateral to borrow funds to buy the buildings and rebuild them into residences. A contract was made with H. A. Frick to take over the property and do the carpenter work and refund the donations. R. S. Oldaker was made trustee and after he left Hermiston the trusteeship passed to Thomas Campbell. All signers were finally paid out and there now remains to their credit \$115 which may be used for some other public benefit.

The Reclamation Service performed its part of the contract with the result of the fine building and well kept grounds now used by the district officers, the county agent and various other useful, public enterprises.

Blalock Island Named.

Blalock Island, across from Boardman, was named from the once famous Dr. W. G. Blalock of Walla Walla. Also the little station below Arlington received its name from the same source. The doctor who became wealthy in Walla Walla in the eighties, was also a great believer in the future of the Columbia valley. He made several attempts at irrigation development, but was ahead of his time and died almost without a dollar. He retained the highest honor and respect from citizens all over the northwest for his integrity, vision and enterprise.

Hermiston never had a saloon except that a hotel bar was operated a year in 1907.

Early Project Settlement Scene.



Early settlement scene in 1908. Leather's cabin, A. C. Drop canal, now Alpha Christley ranch. View over Columbia district looking into unsettled district.

HISTORY

This anniversary edition is in celebration of the thirtieth birthday of the Hermiston Herald.

During its lifetime it has appeared every week for 1560 weeks. It has never failed to record the doings of its community each week, and has never been in financial distress, or been hindered in its progress.

Early in September, 1906, the townsite firm of Newport & Skinner felt the sudden urge to start a newspaper. The townsite squabble was in sight and a man named Brown, editor of the Echo News, who was unfriendly to Newport & Skinner, was preparing to issue a paper. One evening Col. Newport and Wm. Skinner had a meeting with Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Crawford. Crawford subscribed \$100, and the townsite company the remainder. Together they wrote the news of the whole country around and prepared advertising. The next day they went to Pendleton and reviewed the subject matter with Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Baker. Baker was then operating a linotype on the Pendleton Morning Tribune, then published by E. P. Dodd. That night the baby Herald was born and named, and its godfather, the late Col. Horace Greeley Newport, proudly carried it away in his arms from the Tribune hospital to the railroad station at nine A. M. and brought it to Hermiston. The name of each citizen of the new town was written on a copy of the paper and, bearing a green penny postage stamp, the issue was placed exultantly in the Hermiston post-office.

For several months news was supplied by Newport & Skinner, and Mrs. Crawford, who was a graduate of Stanford University. The Pendleton Tribune did the printing. In the meantime the townsite company transferred the ownership of the paper to C. E. Baker. During the winter of 1906-1907, A. A. Lathrop, an able man of the old time newspaper fraternity, kept the office of the paper open and gathered news, advertising and subscriptions. Early in the Spring of 1907, Mr. and Mrs. Baker moved to their home in Hermiston and continued the publication of the Herald for three and a half years. The cut published in this edition shows Mr. Baker standing at the type case and Mrs. Baker at the desk. The old Washington hand press was soon cast out for a modern cylinder press, and a good job printing plant was installed. The Herald was well established when the Bakers, because their land interests required attention, sold out to F. R. Reeves.

Mr. Reeves published the paper several years, and both he and Mrs. Reeves were very active workers in community life here. They live at Santa Rosa, Cal. They were succeeded by James O'Connell, who now publishes a paper on the Oregon coast. He was followed by Bernard Mainwaring, now editor of the Baker City Herald-Democrat. Bernard Mainwaring was followed by Raymond Crowder, now editor of the Arlington Bulletin. His interests were transferred to Athey and Kingsley who sold to J. F. Harvey, and Harvey sold to J. M. Biggs. The present publishers are Pauline M. Stoop and Alfred Quiring who have owned the paper six years.

The Herald now has a more modern plant, having installed a Babcock, four page cylinder press in May, 1935, six series of new type faces and various other equipment to make possible a more efficient plant.

Starting the first of August this year four pages of additional features were added to the Herald columns, making it an eight page paper each week. At times the business justifies ten pages or more. These new features include a continued story, national news, a page of timely pictures, Sunday school lessons, Oregon state news, articles by Irvin S. Cobb, and a page of comics, besides the news stories of local interest.