

## IRRIGATION IN ROGUE RIVER VALLEY

### Some of the Big Enterprises that will Water Thousands of Acres of Orchards



FIVE YEAR OLD PEACH TREE WHICH YIELDED THIRTY BASKETS



COMPLETED SECTION OF ROGUE RIVER VALLEY CANAL CO'S IRRIGATION CANAL TWELVE MILES EAST OF MEDFORD



ROGUE RIVER AT BAY DAY, WHERE THE WATER IS PUMPED ONTO THE LAND BY ELECTRICITY



ROGUE RIVER CANAL COMPANY DITCH RUNS THROUGH THE DISTRICT

THE question as to just how much benefit is to be derived from the fruit-raising industry of southern Oregon is a decidedly live issue in the Rogue River valley. There are many un-irrigated orchards in the district which produce high-grade apples and pears year after year. The Hillcrest and Burrell orchards are heavy-producing blocks of trees which grow large crops each year without irrigation. The Burrell orchard has dispatched 47 carloads of pears to eastern markets this season. The Hillcrest tract of 8-year-old Howells has been a tremendous producer for young trees during the last two years. Last fall their net production per acre was over \$400, and this year the crop is a third larger.

On the other hand, some of the most noted orchards in the valley are irrigated orchards. The orchard of Tronson & Guthrie, near Eagle Point, won the grand sweepstakes prize at the Spokane National Apple show. This splendid victory has without question had a strong influence in favor of irrigation. Other well known irrigated orchards are: The seven-acre orchard of A. D. Holms near Ashland, the Pellott orchard, the Snowy Butte orchard, the G. E. Marshall orchard, the J. E. Gore orchard south of Medford, the S. L. Bennett orchard, the orchard of A. Conroy Fiero and the orchard of Colonel R. C. Washburn near Table Rock.

These orchards all bear undeniable evidence in favor of irrigation and their record-breaking yields show what water will do when placed upon the land during the dry months of July and August, when the rainfall is not sufficient for proper production and development. This past season shows conclusively that irrigation is needed in the Rogue River valley, for during the period between June 13 and September 13 there was no rain in the Medford district.

Every orchard which has made a record of any importance in the raising of the standard varieties of winter apples has been an irrigated orchard. The splendid records made by the non-irrigated Bartlett pear orchards has been from the fact that these orchards have reached the picking season before the dry season had more than begun.

It is the belief of the majority of orchardists in the district that water is an important asset to an orchard.

Irrigated trees can produce heavier crops of uniformly sized fruit than can the un-irrigated. Dry farmers must thin their fruit more to gain size than must the grower who has a stream of water running through his orchard. Water lessens the chances of a crop failure, as it insures enough moisture not only to mature the fruit, but to develop the fruit buds for the following year.

The fact that land in western Oregon needs irrigation was first brought to the attention of Oregonians by the announcement of the result of experiments made by A. P. Stover in the Willamette and Umpqua valleys, as government irrigation engineer for Oregon, in 1909. He reported as a result of his investigation that water increased the production of the land in these districts from 60 to 300 per cent.

R. W. Rees and S. B. Hall, graduates of the Oregon agricultural college, who have been investigating the results of irrigation in the fruit-raising industry of southern Oregon this summer, state there is no doubt that water is needed to gain the best results in this district as well. Many of the orchards of the Rogue River valley are now being irrigated and if the projects planned are carried out practically the whole valley will be under water within the next two years.

The Cummings project is by far the largest and most comprehensive irrigation scheme in southern Oregon. The ditch which is in operation at present contains water enough to irrigate 27,000 acres. Three thousand acres of this area are now un-

der water. The plans which the Cummings project embraces include the expenditure of \$2,000,000 and will put under irrigation 55,000 acres of land, or practically the whole valley, with its 400 miles of proposed canals and laterals.

The Spokane capitalists, Mr. Patrick Welch, the railroad contractor, and Mr. R. K. Neill, one of the most prominent mining men in the northwest, associated with Mr. Fred N. Cummings of this city, bought their water rights, including practically all of the water at the base of Mt. McLaughlin, 30 miles east of Medford, and their irrigation canal system, known as the Hopkins lateral, from the Fish Lake company for \$425,000 on the first day of July last.

The Fish Lake company was formed seven years ago by Californians who saw that there was need of irrigation in the Rogue River valley. This company obtained all the water rights at the foot of Mount McLaughlin, including the natural reservoirs of Fish Lake and Four-Mile Lake. It was this company that sold Medford its splendid water supply prior to releasing its water interests to the Spokane people.

The buyers of the Fish Lake water rights and canal system have incorporated into the Rogue River Valley Canal Company and plan to construct two main canals, one termed the intermediate and the other the high line. The latter will run from Little Butte creek along the low range of the mountains east of Medford, circling south between Phoenix and Talent to Jacksonville. The

rapidity with which these additional canals are constructed depends upon the rate with which applications for water are turned into the office of the Rogue River Valley Canal company, as it will not begin construction work until there is a certainty that the undertaking will prove a success financially.

The Hopkins' lateral and the branch that runs across the desert north of Medford has already done wonders to increase the productivity of the region. The desert land which was 4000 acres in extent until the Rogue River Valley Canal company placed part of it under irrigation, has been considered worthless for agricultural purposes. The barrenness of the desert has been due to the lack of moisture, but with irrigation, there is little doubt that this area will be one of the most productive in the valley.

The Rogue River Valley Electric Power company has an irrigation project which also is capable of unlimited expansion. The company, mainly financed by Colonel Frank Ray, of New York, and his brother Dr. Ray, who resides in Medford, has spent a million dollars in the establishment of a power plant on the Rogue river at Gold Ray, 10 miles to the north of Medford. Here the electricity supply for southern Oregon is generated. Wires carry electricity from Gold Ray to Medford, Central Point, Ashland, Talent, Phoenix, Jacksonville, Grants Pass and Woodville, and numerous mines in this district. In connection with their power plant they run a

centrifugal pump, which lifts the water from below the falls into a pipeline which carries the fluid to the farms miles away. It is stated by the company's officers that the present equipment is sufficient to irrigate 3000 acres. Only 300 acres, which is owned by the company, is at present under irrigation. There is plenty of water in the Rogue river to irrigate thousands of acres of orchards when it is needed. There is considerable expense connected to the laying of steel riveted pipe, and in keeping up the pump plant, which is the only disadvantage the company has to contend with. The company delivers the water to the users at the price of \$5 an acre for the year's use.

Besides the water furnished by these two large enterprises, much irrigation is carried on from other sources. Bear creek furnishes a water supply for a number of orchards, as do smaller streams in the valley. J. G. Gore, who has the heaviest pro-

ducting Bartlett pear orchard in the Rogue River valley, pumps water from Bear creek onto the land. Wells furnish another supply of water for the orchards.

The Judy ten-acre tract of Yellow Newtown Pippin trees is supplied with water by this means. The Bennett orchard is under the ditch of the Rogue River Valley Canal company as so is Snowy Butte orchard, the Fiero orchard, the Norcross orchard, the orchard which produced the Spitzenbergs which won the sweepstakes prize at the Spokane National Apple show, is irrigated by Little Butte creek.

Undoubtedly the bulletin which the Oregon Agricultural college is planning to publish upon use of irrigation in horticulture, with statistics gleaned from observations of Rees and Hall in their summer experiment work in southern Oregon, will be of much value to the Rogue River valley fruitgrowers.

Irrigation in the Rogue River valley has already demonstrated the certainty of increased profits, it has removed the possibility of crop failure, it has added to the value of every acre of land that will come under the canal company's system, it will reclaim large unproductive areas and best of all, it will be the means of great expansion in the orchard industry, adding vastly to the resources and guaranteeing Medford that she will be the center of the greatest of all the orchard districts.

### SEVENTY PEAR TREES YIELD TWO CARLOADS

A remarkable crop of Winter Nellis pears is now being harvested at the Snowy Butte orchard, the first car having been shipped last Thursday evening, says the Herald. In size and quality the crop is better than last year, the first car shipped being made up of pears grading 165 and 180 to the box. The first car shipped last year ran 190. Many travelers over the Southern Pacific have admired the crop on this wonderful pear grove lately, the trees being literally loaded with fruit. Supports were necessary under many of the trees to save them from ruin. Seventy trees next to the railroad track, which were gathered last week, yielded almost two full car loads of first class fruit, and Superintendent Brook, who is in charge of the Snowy Butte property, expects to ship not less than 12 cars of pears from the grove this season. The crop has been sold to Rae & Hatfield of New York the price being \$1.87 1-2 per box f. o. b. Central Point.

### WEALTHY WOMAN FINED FOR SMUGGLING GOODS

NEW YORK, Oct. 8.—"The richer people are the more inclined they seem to be to defraud the government," remarked Federal Judge Hand, as he handed out a fine of \$5,000 to Mrs. Asa Adriance today. Mrs. Adriance pleaded guilty to smuggling.