

IRRIGATION IN ROGUE RIVER VALLEY

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



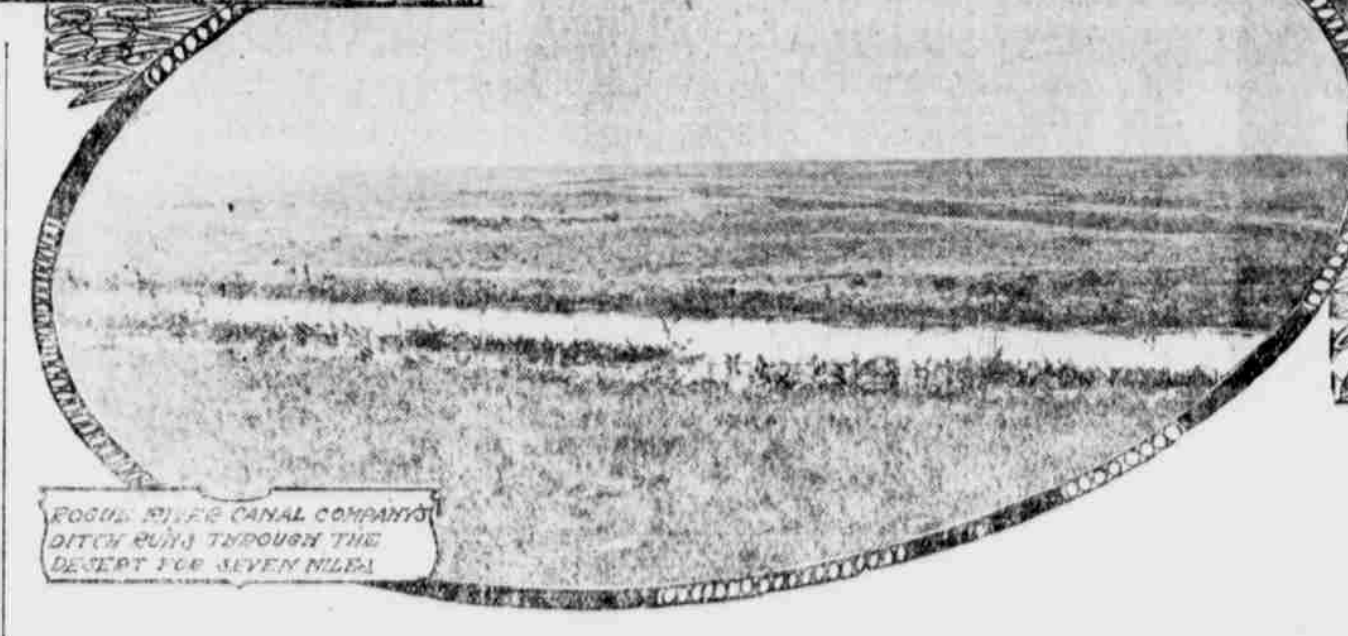
FIVE YEAR OLD FIGS IN TREE WHICH YIELDED THIS SEASON 10 BUSHELS



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



ROGUE RIVER AT RAY DAM, WHERE THE WATER IS PUMPED ON TO THE LAND BY ELECTRICITY



ROGUE RIVER CANAL COMPANY'S DITCH CUTS THROUGH THE DESERT FOR SEVEN MILES



FOUR YEAR OLD CEDARS PLANTED BY THE IRRIGATION LAND



MILL CREEK FALLS ON THE UPPER ROGUE.

(By A. P. Stover.)

Irrigation is destined to play a most important part in the development of Rogue River valley, supplying as it does the one deficiency that now prevents intensive production. Its benefit to the orchard industry has in the past been more or less of a debatable question. Much good fruit has and is now being raised without irrigation and young orchards are being grown without aid, but such production and growth on irrigated land is at the mercy of the summer rains which may or may not occur in proper season and the bearing orchard of young orchard just set out, unless most favorably located is forced to suffer during average seasons because of insufficient moisture in the soil. It is coming to be generally conceded that irrigation in the bearing orchard is valuable insurance against crop failure and that through its use a heavy set of fruit may be secured each year and the common practice of thinning excessively in order to secure size and color is wholly unnecessary. That the young orchard may be brought into much earlier bearing and at less expense where irrigation is used is also being fully demonstrated. An orchardist in Rogue River valley with the aid of his small irrigation stream raised strawberries in his young orchard during its five or six years of early growth, thereby maintaining himself and family, developing his property and in many cases paying for his land by the time his trees come into bearing.

Although irrigation is destined to be of incalculable value to the large commercial orchard, its greatest value will result from the important part it will play in making possible the small diversified fruit farm of five, 10 and 20 acres on which a family may make a comfortable living while their young orchard is coming into bearing, or from which they may secure a comfortable income simply from the production of small fruits and general farm products. The one great need of the Rogue River valley is the man and his family who own and care for their small tract. Four-fifths of the valley's area lies dormant and unproductive because the dry summers preclude profitable cultivation in small areas. This undeveloped area settled in small tracts with a family on each making a comfortable living will solve the problem of our idle lands. The question of labor during the rush seasons in the larger orchards would be taken care of and the abnormal high cost of living in

the towns and in the country would be reduced by the local production of commodities that can now be had only at high cost—with freight added. The money that now flows out of the valley for butter, eggs, bacon, ham, vegetables and countless other commodities should be kept in local circulation. Through the medium of the small irrigated farm this will be accomplished.

In some sections of the valley irrigation has been employed for years. "Stringtown," near Phoenix, is a splendid illustration of what water will do in the development of the highly cultivated farm of a few acres. This area has for years depended upon the night flow of the Phoenix and ditch, which the users were given in exchange for labor spent in cleaning out the ditch and keeping it in repair. Many are the stories of fabulous production that come from this locality. The ranches along Little Butte creek have been irrigated for years, and so highly is water in that section valued that only through the medium of the state board of control was serious litigation over water right prevented. Many of the noted orchards of the valley have been irrigated for a long period, among which may be mentioned the Goss orchard, south of Medford; the Randall orchard, near Talent; the A. D. Heine orchard, south of Ashland; the Trueson & Guthrie orchard, near Eagle Point; and many others.

The Rogue River Electric company is developing an orchard tract of about 300 acres near Yolo with water, secured from an electrically driven pumping plant, located at its power house at Gold Ray. The water is forced through an underground pipe for a distance of one mile and conveyed to the highest points of the lands being irrigated.

Wherever a small source of water supply is available, it is being put to use. The larger part of the valley, however, because of the difficult and expensive construction involved, has been without a water supply, and such development as has taken place has been accomplished without irrigation.

The first effort to provide a water supply for the valley as a whole was inaugurated about eight years ago by the Fish Lake Water company. Their plans embodied the diversion of water from Little Butte creek and the storage of the run-off of Mount McLoughlin in Fish and Four Mile lakes. This company constructed

16 miles of main canal and succeeded in bringing water into the north end of the valley, but difficult construction and apathy on the part of landowners in the matter of purchasing water rights prevented the further development of the project that held the key to the irrigation of the entire valley. After lying practically dormant for six years, the possibilities of this project, through the efforts of Fred N. Cummings, were brought to the attention of Patrick Walsh, the millionaire contractor, and R. K. Neil mining and irrigating operator, both of Spokane, whose experience with the irrigation development of the Spokane valley, fitted them to foresee the irrigation possibilities of the Rogue River valley.

After making an exhaustive examination of the old Fish Lake Water company's properties, these men with their associates organized the Rogue River Valley Canal company, and on July 1, 1910, for a consideration of \$500,000, purchased the entire interests of that company.

By this purchase this new company secured 5000 acres of land, the old Fish Lake ditch system and ex-

tensive water rights in Little Butte creek. In addition, the new company purchased 2000 acres of land adjoining the old company's tract of 5000, purchased the Eagle Point mill and its water rights, and has since secured direct from the department of the interior the exclusive right to use Fish lake and Four Mile as storage reservoirs.

The irrigation system to be built by the Rogue River Valley Canal company will cost \$2,000,000. It will consist of Fish lake and Four Mile lake reservoirs, having a combined storage capacity of 45,000 acre feet of water; a connecting canal between the two lakes, a diversion canal 16 miles in length to bring the water from Little Butte creek into the valley; three main lines of distributing canals aggregating 100 miles in length, and 400 miles of laterals to convey the water to the land.

The "For Sale" classified ads are the market-place for the useful things that have already been used. Sometimes a second-hand article would serve you as well as a new one. Watch this classification!

Fruit Exchange

(By P. J. O'Gara.)

The prospects in the immense field of horticulture in the Rogue River valley were never brighter. The new year finds that the progress made during the old year has added a powerful stimulus to the great industry of fruit growing, and the momentum given it by the previous year's successes will be such as to make a much better record for the year of 1911. In attempting to forecast more or less accurately what we fully expect to realize, it will be well to note, in a more or less general way, the progress which has already been made, especially during the past year.

One of the most noticeable results which has been accomplished in the valley is along the line of nursery inspection and the introduction of clean stock for planting the future orchards. During the past season we have received the kindest cooperation of the nurserymen doing business in this valley. They have worked hand in hand with the inspectors and have been desirous that their patrons get nothing but clean trees. Of the hundreds of thousands of nursery trees received, but very few have been thrown out, showing that there has been an honest effort to fulfill the requirements laid down by the horticultural laws. We have particularly noted that our nurserymen have been as anxious and painstaking in securing clean shipments as the inspectors have been careful in seeing that no diseased trees be planted. It is a healthy sign of the times when we see a desire to build up and maintain an honest business which, unfortunately, in many places still smacks of dishonesty and craft. As a rule, the nurserymen doing business in the Rogue River valley are building up an enviable reputation which means a prosperous future. If there ever have been any differences between them and the horticultural commissioner's office, all have been forgotten.

During the past year practically all the fruitgrowers of the valley have become associated in one great organization known as the Rogue River

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