

# Jackson County Building Road of Three Nations

(By F. A. Kittredge, Resident Engineer.)

During July of this year the county court of Jackson county authorized a preliminary survey to be made over the Siskiyou mountains by Mr. J. S. Howard. Later in the month the county court, by formal action, requested the State Highway Engineer, Mr. H. L. Bowlby, to take complete charge of all work proposed to be done under the bond issue. On September 9th, the people voted in favor of bonding Jackson county for \$500,000 by an overwhelming majority. This is the first instance in which an election has been held for a similar purpose under the terms of the new law authorizing the several counties to bond themselves for road work. The proposition which was submitted by the county court upon popular petition, was carried by a majority of three to one.

The California State Highway Department has already made a survey and connected her north and south trunk road up the Sacramento valley with the Pacific Highway through Jackson county and will probably begin construction early in the spring.

Beginning at the California-Oregon state line, our road will follow along the hillside, at an elevation of about 350 feet above the valley and continues to climb on a 6 per cent grade for about one mile. Then follows a mile of road with just sufficient grade for good drainage. Near the end of this stretch of road is a spring which runs the year around and will be brought into a concrete trough at the upper edge of the road for the use of teams and autos. For the next one and one-half miles the road follows the steep hillside on a 6 per cent grade. The curves are all easy and the country open, thus making it a safe route in spite of the steep hillside. At the end of this grade we come upon a bench which is nearly the same elevation as the summit at the pass. We travel along this shelf with light grades and long easy curves for two miles. From this point we are able to look southward and see Mt. Shasta and the valley in California. At our left we look down into the depths of the valley almost at our feet and more than a thousand feet below. Here and there the bottom of the valley is dotted with farm houses surrounded by green fields and trees. The sparsely wooded slopes of the valley's floor afford good pasturage for cattle and sheep thus adding to the rural scene at our feet. From the tourist point of view this is an ideal stretch of road for he has the two extremes of scenery in view at once—the grandeur of the rocks and cliffs immediately above and below him, and at his feet, a quarter of a mile below, lies the valley and the pastoral scene across the valley may be seen the long ribbon of steel of the Southern Pacific railway when the sun is reflected from their surface as they wind in and out around the hills in an effort to get to the floor of the valley with as easy a grade as possible.

Along this stretch of road we have another spring of water so cold that it makes one's teeth hurt and in sufficient quantities to keep a little stream running during the hottest weather. Then all at once we run up to the pass and look down into the beautiful Rogue river valley—over miles of wooded mountains and cliffs and the floor of the valley away beyond with Mt. Pitt in the distance.

The road follows the ridge for a short distance when a view of both the valleys—one into Oregon and the other into California—are visible. Then it drops over and commences to run down along the hillside toward the railway station of Siskiyou at the north entrance of the long S. P. tunnel. Throughout the distance from the summit to the foot of the hill the grade is between a 4 per cent and a 6 per cent most of the way. There are no curves with a radius shorter than one hundred feet and when the whole curve is not in sight



Construction Scenes in Jackson County Road Building.



NEW AND OLD GRADES ON GRATED LAKE ROAD

SECTION OF THE ROAD



then our sharpest curves have a radius of 200 feet.

On the route it will be necessary to cross the railroad twice—once at Dollarhide crossing and again at Stelman. In both of these cases the highway will pass over the railway on a concrete bridge. At Stelman a novel, but very necessary, piece of construction is seen where the road not only passes over the railway but turns three quarters of a circle and passes under itself. This was done to save the expense of making a fill farther down which would have used thousands of yards of material.

Two miles more of grade and then we come to the floor of the valley and run along amid the farm scenes which we looked down upon from the summit two thousand feet above. It leads past a number of mineral springs famous from the earliest days when early settlers used to travel long distances to obtain the healthful effect of the waters.

The road passes through Ashland, a beautiful city, at the edge of the foothills of the Siskiyou mountains, well paved and beautifully situated. At the north city limits the road avoids the now dangerous railroad crossing by passing under the railroad.

A half mile farther on the road toward Medford we pass between two hot springs which are steaming hot all winter long. It is expected that a sanatorium will soon be built here, tests showing the water to have wonderful health properties.

Between Ashland and Medford the road passes through probably the most thickly settled part of Rogue river valley and when paved with concrete or bituminous material will make travel and freighting very easy and pleasant between cities. The tourist will surely feel himself to be in the land of wonders for he has traveled in only a short time from the rugged mountain top to the beautiful valley of apple and pear orchards.

About a mile of pavement in the city of Medford, the metropolis of Southern Oregon, will be utilized.

Between Medford and Central Point the road will follow the present route, but all sharp corners will be rounded off before the permanent pavement is laid. The present macadam base will be of big assistance.

After leaving Central Point the road again approaches the foot hills and as we pass through the pass over the Blackwell hills there is quite a stretch of road from which the river, valley land, and orchard form a wonderful panoramic view.

Farther on the road crosses Rogue river, passes through Gold Hill and thence on down along the river's edge to the town of Rogue River.

It has been the effort of the engineers to so locate the Pacific Highway so as not only to make the most permanent road with the least money, but also to take advantage and show off to the tourist travel of the world much of the diversified and wonderful scenery of Rogue river valley.



J. S. Howard, Pioneer Engineer and Road Builder of Southern Oregon.

## Road Building in Pioneer Days

(By J. S. Howard.)

Up to 1868 when Jackson county extended from a point west of Grants Pass to Stein's mountain on the east, or about 300 miles long east and west and about 100 miles average width north and south, with this vast territory and a sparse population and a limited tax roll, about the best that could be done in the way of roads was to survey a traverse line so as to show the road location and place it on the map, and the opening up

and improvement of the roads was left to the district road supervisors. About the best they could do was to brush out the road and put in a few pole bridges and culverts.

Under these circumstances no matter how great the skill of the surveyor or engineer, there was no opportunity for making a practical demonstration of his abilities, what-



Major H. L. Bowlby, State Highway Engineer.



F. A. Kittredge, Resident Highway Engineer.

ever he might have had so far as things earthy were concerned. His talents might as well have been stored with his other treasures in heaven.

In 1872 when what is now Klamath and Lake counties began to settle up and the traffic between Ashland and Klamath Falls, became heavy an imperative demand for a better road over the mountains was heard, and with small aid from the state Jackson county commissioners ordered me to make a survey of a road from Ashland to Linkville, and over such grades as the county would be able to build.

## Postal Roads

Oregon was the first of the states to apply for money under the terms of the Bourne bill, whereby the federal government appropriated \$10,000 to \$20,000 put up by Jackson county for improvement of rural delivery postal roads.

Work was begun last October under Major W. A. Crosslands, senior engineer of the bureau of highways, department of agriculture. Stormy weather interrupted the work, although good progress was made during the time of construction.

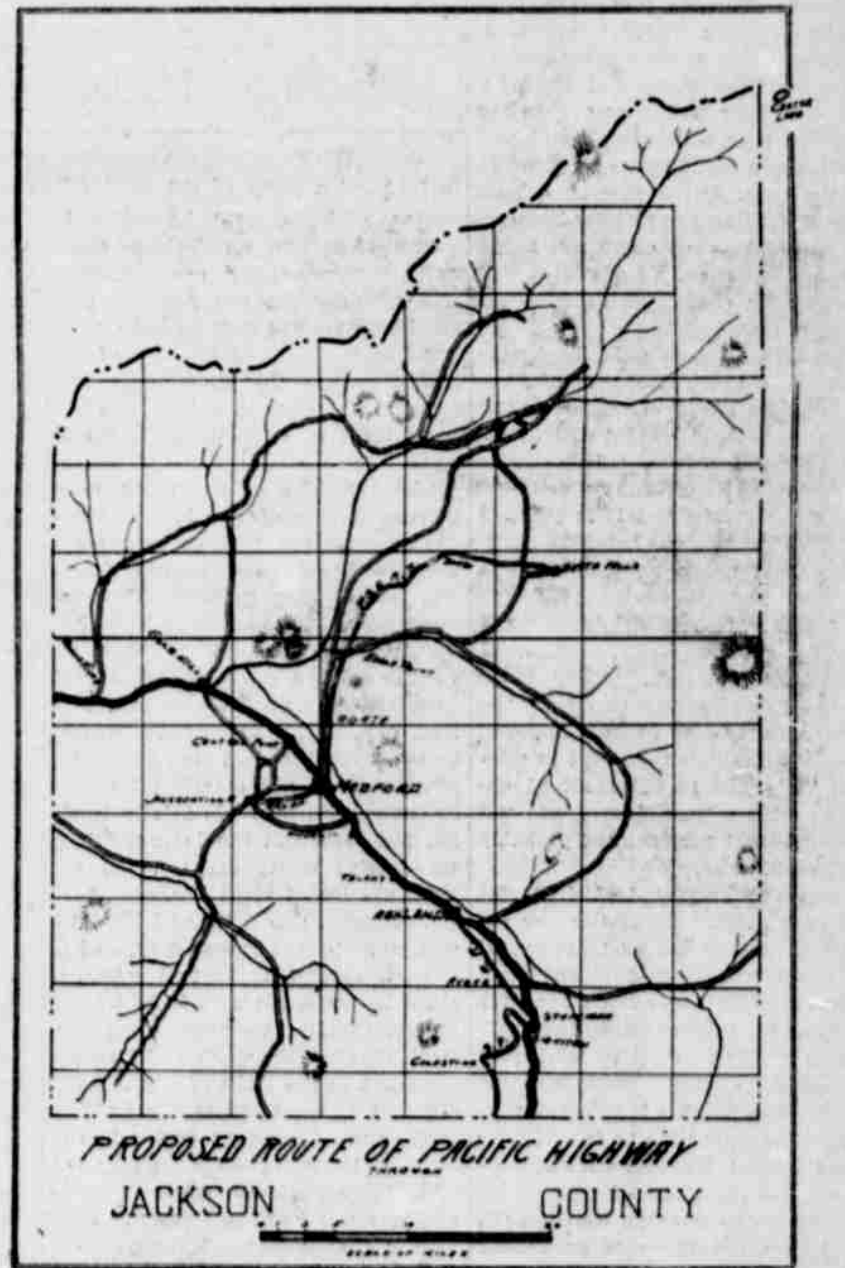
The rock was quarried at the Griffin creek quarry and hauled by traction engine and the county dump carts as far as three miles. Work will be resumed in February. Meanwhile concrete culverts are being erected by S. A. Howard, who secured the contract.



Major W. A. Crosslands, Senior Engineer Building Postal Highways.



SECTION OF ROCK WORK



PROPOSED ROUTE OF PACIFIC HIGHWAY JACKSON COUNTY

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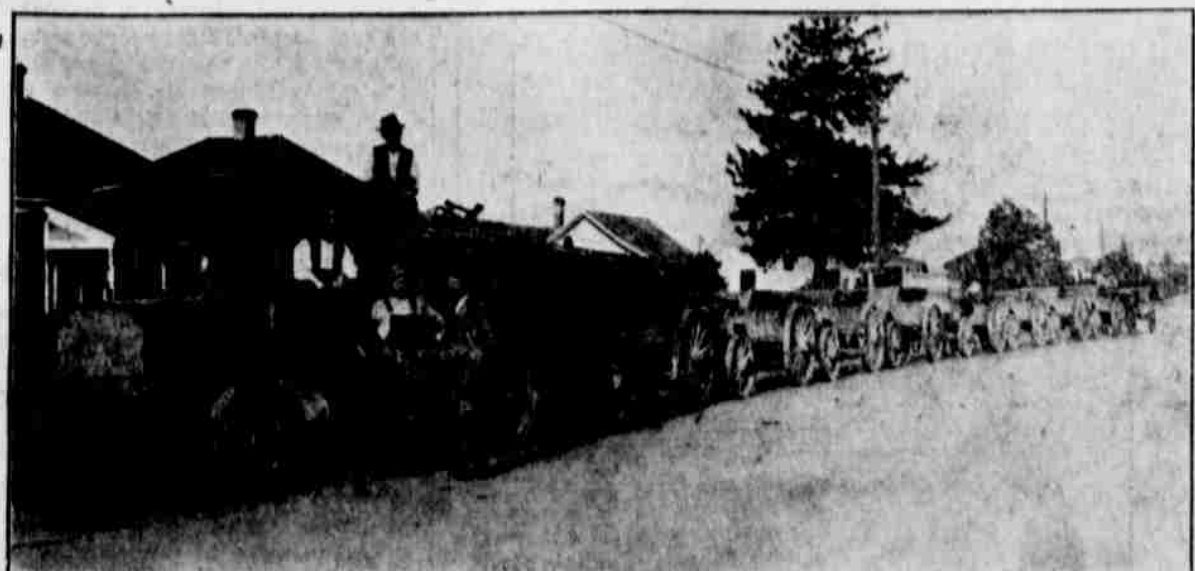
In conformity with such orders I run the road from a point seven miles south of Ashland eastward across and up Emigrant creek and thence a grade up and across the Green Spring mountain and down and across Keene creek, and thence on across the Cascade mountains to Klamath Falls. The grades were on about 10 per cent, where the old road the grades were 30 or 40. This was the first attempt at graded roads in Jackson county except in one instance, that of the grade from Jacksonville to the Applegate side. The road from Jacksonville west ran up Rich gulch and Dowell gulch and up over the hill, many places with a grade of 35 per cent. So about 1868 after prolonged arguments with the county court, I obtained permission to run a grade over the Jacksonville hill. I run the grade line in less than a day on a 10 per cent grade and the road supervisor opened it out that same season. That is the present grade over the Jacksonville hill. A grade of 6 per cent could be

built, but in doing so no part of the present road could be used and the expense would be great, so probably no change will be made for some time yet.

About 1878 the old road over the east side of the mountains to Crescent City via its 30 per cent grade had been impassable and abandoned for several years, and with little prospect of an outlet by railroad, the counties of Jackson and Josephine, in Oregon, and Del Norte county, in California, employed me to lay out a new route to Crescent City. I commenced at the east foot of the McGrue mountain seven miles west of Waldo, and run up and over the coast range of mountains and down to Patrick creek, thence across Smith river and over to Crescent City, a distance of about 50 miles, with a maximum grade of 6 per cent. I reduced the grade from that of the old road two-thirds and shortened the distance 13 miles. That is the present traveled road to Crescent City and was said at the time it was built to be the best mountain road on the coast. Autos have made the trip from Crescent City to Medford the present season in seven hours, a distance of 120 miles.

Fifty-three years ago I drove my ox team over the Siskiyou toll road at the end of my 2,000 mile drive from Illinois, and I found the almost

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Auto Truck Pulling Wagon Loaded With Crushed Rock for Road Building