

Homesteaders: SEE HAPPY FIRST CHRISTMAS AT TULE

By MALCOLM EPLEY

Remember? It was just seven days before Christmas, 1946, that a hand was thrust into a converted pickle jar on a platform at the Klamath armory, and the drawing for 87 Tulelake homesteads was off.

The World War II veterans who won blocks of the fertile land of the Northern California lake-bed that day have had an eventful, and for the most part, highly successful and prosperous year.

It was not until spring that they got on their homesteads, but the land was cropped successfully, in time to get in on some of the finest prices ever paid for the agricultural production of the Klamath country.

Pictorial Review

So Klamath's new homesteaders will be celebrating this Christmas as one of the best holiday seasons in their family histories. As an appropriate pictorial review of their busy but happy year, the accompanying pictures, made by photographers of the U. S. reclamation service, are presented by The Herald and News. Incidentally, these are the only pictures in the entire Yule Tidings sections of today's paper which are not made by Wesley Guderian, Herald and News staff photographer. They were selected because they graphically tell a story that is significant in the Klamath country this Christmas time—a story of progress and sound prosperity that means much to the well being of the entire basin.

Santa Good To Them

The new Tulelakers knew, of course, that Santa had been good to them when their names were drawn and they were awarded the homesteads in the first drawing for World War II veterans. The cards were falling right, for they had gotten fertile land, proven already under farming conditions, worth from \$20,000 to \$30,000 for each farm.

The circumstances were generally auspicious for them. Despite some frost damage in various parts of the basin, their crops grew well and produced heavily. Many of them went into barley, and this turned out to be the big year for barley in the Klamath basin. Market conditions were never better for the crops of this area.

So they spent the year farming and building. They had their problems and troubles, and still have them. The first winter may see some pretty tough road conditions down there. Everything can't be perfect, but by and large, the new farmers of the Tulelake country have really gone places in their first year.

They've done well enough that hundreds of other veterans will apply for the 46 new homesteads in the nearby Coppock bay area to be opened this winter.

The pictures:

1. Under cloud-studded autumn skies, harvesters move over a homestead potato field. Note the frequency of the sacks in the row at right, denoting a heavy yield.

2. Lee McMullen, manager of the Klamath Production Credit association, knows how well the homesteaders did. "We're proud of the repayment they made," he said about loans to homesteaders. Of \$100,000 loaned, all due has been repaid.

3. Marinella Hundley, Texas girl and wife of homesteader, paints the baseboard of a room in their new home.

Barracks Into Home

4. Paul Christy made his home attractive by putting plywood over the rough boards of an old Jap camp barracks.

5. The Shirley Congdons' home,

made by placing asbestos shingles on the exterior of a barracks. Congdon, former officer at the Klamath naval air station, is a member of a prominent Yakima orchard family.

6. Robert G. Solterbeck made a barracks building into a good machinery shed.

7. Frank Elmer has made a barn out of old barracks.

8. Harry and Marinella Hundley and their new home. Harry met her at Pine Bluff, Ark., during the war.

9. James G. and June Stearns at the pump. Stearns played it cautious, rented out his land. "I'm sorry," he says.

10 and 11. Frank L. Sullivan, still batching and says he won't get married until 1953 or 1954. "I'm not mature enough," laughs Sullivan.

12. John S. Wynn, Theresa Wynn and John Ray Wynn, the first baby

boy born to the homesteaders.

13. Another view of Sullivan and his batching quarters.

14. John and Theresa Wynn practice carpentering.

15. And here John Wynn becomes a mason, laying the punice tile used in the construction of his new homestead home. Homesteaders are required to construct a livable residence on their property as one step toward "proving up."

16. James Bell calls himself the "happy homesteader." "And why not?" he asks. "We were eating lamb stew and then the Lord decided to take care of us."

17. A potato picker on the Jess Prosser land. This man made \$27 a day picking potatoes with the aid of his wife, who flipped the vines from the spuds to speed his work. Not a bad Christmas for him, either.

