

Stockman Tells Of First Irrigation Efforts

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grasp eagerly the good opportunity offered them, for I feel sure that we can pay the price and that it is easier today to pay what we are asked to pay than it was in the early days of irrigation to pay what we then had to pay. In support of this I will offer an instance:

Water Ritter of Tule Lake will be the party chosen to whom I will refer. In June, 1908, I went down to Mr. Ritter's and laid his land off in what is known as the contour check system. This is the system experience in the Tule Lake Valley has taught is the proper way to prepare the land for irrigation where alfalfa is to be sown. I surveyed or ran the levels so that each contour would be four-tenths of a foot

lower than the one above it, then sent my teams down to these checks and put the small levies so they would hold four-tenths of a foot of water, enough to properly cover the land above the check.

This land was very sandy, as is all of our land in this valley, and all of it must be prepared so the water will get over every inch of it. It is expected to get the best results from irrigation. After we prepared the land and put the supply ditches in to fill the checks, Mr. Ritter sowed this place to alfalfa. He turned on the water later he came to me to go and look at his stand of alfalfa. He was afraid he had overdone it so that each contour and sowed it too thick; it could not grow. But I assured him

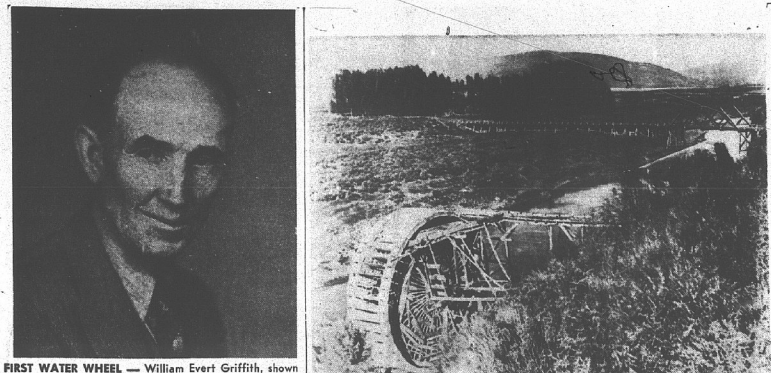
that, in my opinion, too thick was just thick enough, and it would be a fine stand.

To my surprise it did more than I had expected and was even better than I had hoped for, and I have taken great pleasure in showing it to my many friends and to the colony of Bohemians now settled on the Lakeside tract of land on Tule Lake. This piece is almost a part of the Lakeside tract, as it is in the same enclosure and section. Mr. Ritter cut this year (1909) a little less than three tons of measured hay off 512 cubic feet to the acre the first cutting and a little over two tons the second cutting, and sold the hay at \$6.25 per ton measured in the stack. Each acre produced, you might say, the first year enough money to pay for the next ten years ir-

rigation—\$11.25 per acre.

This I consider no more than any man can do if his land is properly prepared and a good stand of alfalfa secured. I will add here that while we can raise good crops of grain and the best of vegetables, I consider alfalfa the real crop and the mortgage lifter, and no one should lose any time in preparing the land and trying to get a good stand of it. With a good stand of alfalfa he can not fail to pay out his water right, make a good living and become an independent and prosperous farmer. There is not a single instance in my knowledge where an alfalfa farmer has made a failure.

Klamath Falls' metropolitan area population is 35,000.



FIRST WATER WHEEL — William Evert Griffith, shown here, helped his father build the first water wheel on Lost River in 1859. His father was Rev. J. B. Griffith and Evert was 21 years old at the time. Evert left the Klamath Basin with his family in 1922, moving to Springfield where he succumbed in 1958 at the age of 79. He helped organize the Henley School District and the Leki School District.

BUILT ON LOST RIVER — This picture, courtesy of Hal Ogle and the Klamath County Museum, shows the first water wheel used on Lost River. It was built by J. B. Griffith and his son, William Evert Griffith, in 1859. In 1904-05 the Griffith water rights were purchased by the government and the wheel torn down. It irrigated a 70-acre area.

First Water Wheel Built Former Editor Accompanied Party During 1869 Survey For Railroad

Among the early day irrigation efforts was construction of a water wheel in the Henley area by William Evert Griffith and his father J. B. Griffith.

The elder Griffith was born in Georgia, finished his education with his grandparents in Alabama and was licensed to preach. In 1878 he was ordained as a Baptist minister.

In 1884 he moved with his family, two sons at that time, and his brother Stephen to Klamath County. He taught in a school in Bonanza the first year and in Klamath Falls his second.

Then he moved to Poe Valley where he continued to preach. Griffith helped organize the First Baptist Church in Klamath County. At that time, he was raising cattle in Poe Valley, assisted by his sons.

In 1889 the Griffiths purchased 238 acres of land in what is now the Mt. Laki neighborhood. The young Griffith and his father built a water wheel for irrigating 10 acres of land. This wheel lifted the water 27 feet.

They used it until the early 1900's when the federal government purchased their water rights and the wheel was torn down.

At a time when two ferries were shuttling across the Klamath River, one run by Wendell Nus and another by George Nurz, plans were afoot for a railroad line through the Klamath Basin.

The year was 1869 and already Captain Jack had created several unpleasant incidents. The evidence was clear that events were building toward a showdown.

The peace treaty had been signed five years before.

The Southern Pacific initiated a survey which was conducted by a party led by Jesse Applegate and which traversed the Cascades and moved through the Klamath Basin.

D. B. Worthington, later to be editor of the Klamath Express, accompanied the surveying expedition and later wrote an article about the survey.

It was not the first railroad survey of the Basin, however. The first survey was undertaken in 1855 at the request of the U.S. Government which was in search of the best possible route to construct a railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast. Survey teams were sent to all parts of the West.

One of these surveyed a route from Benicia, Calif., to the Columbia River and was under command of a Lieutenant R. Williamson, for whom the Williamson River was ultimately named.

The story of this survey is carried elsewhere in this edition.

In the Klamath Falls Express of April 20, 1893, D. B. Worthington, who was a member of the 1869 surveying party, said of this incident:

We call attention to the fact, though forgotten no doubt by many, that Hon. Jesse D. Applegate made a preliminary survey across the Cascades in 1869, which penetrated Klamath County.

Applegate's line commenced near the old James Miller place on Little Butte, following the same toward its head in the Cascades to Fish Lake; thence southeast to Lost Prairie; thence on nearly the same course across the main summit to Buck Lake; thence in a more easterly direction to Aspen Lake; thence easterly to the Klamath River, and crossing the same at the old Nus ferry, and California line.

Our information in this matter is not borrowed, as ye scribe (D. B. Worthington) was one of the chain bearers on that memorable expedition, and the scenes and incidents occurring along the virgin line are yet quite vivid in our memory, notwithstanding the intervention of many years.

This route proved to be exceedingly rough in places, especially along Butte Creek and its head tributaries, abounding in brush, rocks and heavy timber, until we reached the neighborhood of Lost Prairie. Then the woods became more open and rocky, precipitous gorges and cliffs less frequent. From there on we had no great difficulty in running several miles each day, and on reaching the Klamath Basin we had plain sailing until we suddenly and quite unexpectedly ran into Captain Jack's camp on Lost River, near the old Hybe and Colwell stock ranch.

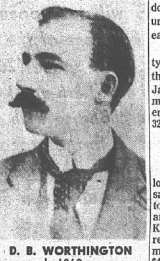
Here our further progress was questioned by his highness, and we informed us

through his interpreter, Scareface Charley, that he did not desire his dominion should be surveyed, as he had no intention of joining the "Boston" in agricultural pursuits.

When made to understand that the survey was not being made for that particular purpose, but for a line of railroad, he was still obstinate (one of his noted peculiarities) and said that he did not want a railroad; his ponies being good enough for him and his people.

After a talk which lasted nearly through the night, costing the outfit all the tobacco it possessed and nearly everything eatable, he told us we had his permission to proceed to our objective point, the state line, but not to linger, as his people were "Hya sullix copa Boston" (angry at the whites) and he would not hold himself responsible for any loss of life or property which we might suffer at their hands.

As the redoubtable captain looked very much in earnest while he was saying this, we were not inclined to doubt him in the least. On the following



D. B. WORTHINGTON ... In 1869 survey

LOW SALARIES

Teachers may complain about low salaries today, but today's salaries are princely, compared to those of yesterday. For example, the first principal of the Klamath County High School received a salary of \$100 per month and teachers received \$40 per month.

Irrigation Changed Basin Area

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from 1919 to 1929, the old wooden flume of the G Canal was replaced with concrete, the drainage system considerably expanded, the Lost River Diversion Canal capacity increased, the C-G Canal and siphon under Lost River connecting with the G Canal around the base of Stikel Mountain and the G Canal were built.

The Link River Diversion Dam was built as was the Lower Lost River Diversion Dam below Merrill. The first 15 miles of the Canal were constructed. Also Gerber Storage Dam and Miller Creek and Malone Diversion dams and the distributing canal in the Langell Valley District were built.

Improvements Continue

B. E. Hayden took over in 1929 and additional distributing and draining work was completed, including the pumping plant and tunnel for the regulation of the water level in Tule Lake, known as the Modoc Unit, and the partial completion of an outlet drain from Lower Klamath Lake to Klamath River for regulation of water levels in Lower Klamath Lake.

More recently, under a special loan arrangement, another 10,000 acres has been brought under irrigation.

Water has been the life blood of the Klamath Basin in a true sense. It was a long time coming, but today, residents of the area reap the rewards of far-sighted officials and citizens who foresaw the extent and the need of water across the entire Basin, refusing to settle for half a system, and wading up with the vast agricultural effort that today constitutes a major portion of the Basin's economy.

OLD TO NEW

The new Chiloquin High School has its origins in a school established in that community in 1918. A high school was started in Chiloquin in 1926.

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