

Irrigation Changed Future Of Klamath Country

By FLOYD L. WYNNE | For 37 years, most everyone with the huge Upper Klamath | Except for some dabbling in the Basin. | In 1878, residents of the town of Linkville, then run by its founder George Nurse, decided to incorporate into the Linkville Water Ditch Company. | This was in 1884, at about the time that the first newspaper was being set up by Joseph Bowdoin, the Klamath Basin. | By now, George Nurse, town founder, had sold out his interests, and migrated to Yreka where he was to spend his last days. | This ditch was to be enlarged from time to time. Eventually it watered about 4,000 acres. | While the Van Brimmer Canal was being completed in 1886, J. Frank Adams and neighbors completed a small canal from Lost River to Adams Point, a distance of about six miles. Water for this ditch came from White Lake through the Van Brimmer ditch. This company was incorporated as the Little Klamath Ditch Company. | The following year, 1887, proved to be an unusually dry winter and spring found water levels at new lows. Operators of this ditch had to cut through the agricultural portion of the valley to become Klamath Falls.) | In 1878, residents of the town of Linkville, then run by its founder George Nurse, decided to incorporate into the Linkville Water Ditch Company. | This was in 1884, at about the time that the first newspaper was being set up by Joseph Bowdoin, the Klamath Basin. | By now, George Nurse, town founder, had sold out his interests, and migrated to Yreka where he was to spend his last days. | This ditch was to be enlarged from time to time. Eventually it watered about 4,000 acres. | While the Van Brimmer Canal was being completed in 1886, J. Frank Adams and neighbors completed a small canal from Lost River to Adams Point, a distance of about six miles. Water for this ditch came from White Lake through the Van Brimmer ditch. This company was incorporated as the Little Klamath Ditch Company. | The following year, 1887, proved to be an unusually dry winter and spring found water levels at new lows. Operators of this ditch had to cut through the agricultural portion of the valley to become Klamath Falls.)



SOURCE OF WATER SUPPLY — This view of the southern end of Upper Klamath Lake shows the main facets of the irrigating process that provides water for much of the Klamath Basin agricultural area. (1) shows the intake canal which moves water from the beginning of Link River into the irrigation ditch. (2) is the location of the beginning of the long tunnel that carries about 7,000 feet to (3) where it emerges at Oregon Avenue and Eleventh Street. (4) shows the regulating dam on Link River and (5) is Lake Ewuna at the far end of Link River.

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swamp and tules between Lower Klamath and White Lake to reach Lower Klamath. A new channel 22 feet wide and 39 miles long was constructed. Eventually the Adams Canal reached 22 miles in length and irrigated 10,000 acres. | The year 1887 saw another irrigation scheme launched by Charles and Rufus Moore. | They constructed a sawmill on the west side of Link River near the head of the rapids. Now they constructed a ditch to furnish power for the sawmill and also to float logs from Upper Klamath Lake to the mill. Later, this venture was broadened to irrigate some land and to provide power to operate a flour mill. | By 1887, then, at least four different canal systems were in operation in the Klamath Basin, irrigating in all between 15,000 and 18,000 acres. | **Turned To Railroads** | The Basin, now assured of adequate water, turned its attention to securing a railroad and other improvements. | It wasn't until the turn of the century that irrigation became a vivid prospect not for just certain areas but for almost all irrigable areas of the Basin. | Records show that the federal government's first interest in the possibilities of irrigating the entire Klamath Basin came in 1883. | John T. Whistler, engineer of the Oregon district of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation arrived in the Klamath Falls area on Oct. 12, 1903. Quietly he traveled around the Basin area on horseback, checking on the irrigation possibilities. | He investigated the discharge of Link River, the possibility of using Upper Klamath Lake as a reservoir. He also made trips to Clear Lake, Tule Lake, Langell and Poe valleys. | In his recommendations to the Bureau, Whistler-suggested (Continued on Page 3-D) Friday, February 26, 1965

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