

A History of The Oregon Water Resources Congress

BY ARTHUR S. KING



FORWORD

We submit this brief history with apologies. Many may feel that the contributions of many toward the achievement of the objectives of the Organization have been overlooked or inadequately treated. We plead guilty on both counts but offer a defensive alibi. Each of the sixty odd yearly membership rosters reads like a listing of "Who's Who in Oregon." Most have aided the Congress and contributed toward the development of Oregon's soil and water resources. We could not adequately outline the accomplishments of each of these fine people. Therefore, except for the series of events leading up to the beginning of the Oregon Irrigation Congress, we tried to limit personal references to those cited in the records as changes in the organization evolved.

There is another apology. An organization can only be as strong as the combined strength of the membership. We believe the combined strength of the membership accounts for the many accomplishments of the Oregon Irrigation Congress, the Oregon Drainage Association, the Oregon Reclamation Congress, and the Oregon Water Resources Congress. Records of the organization inadequately covered the contributions developed from the periodic association of the individual members with each other.

Many important concepts developed from technical program presentations. These were followed by friendly, informal visits with an occasional heated argument over applications, the resolvment of which had brought people closer together. With this informal interchange of opinions, ideas, and facts, notions developed into concepts, concepts into plans, and plans into projects. By providing an opportunity for communication between people, the Congress had aided in the achievement of many important advancements that are not in the records because no formal action was necessary.

There is another note-worthy point on Congress membership. Many have attended for the first time, primarily as a representative of a special interest, a specific project, a federal agency, a state agency, or private company. A high percentage of these people stayed on to become life-long members of the organization long after the original objective was settled either "pro" or "con."

There is every reason to believe that the Congress will continue to attract those constructively interested in land and water resources. Those with vision and imagination. Those with training, knowledge, expertise, and know how. Those with the initiative and drive to develop the well conceived concepts and plans into constructive multi-use projects.

Arthur S. King

HISTORY OF THE OREGON WATER RESOURCES CONGRESS

INTRODUCTION

There is important historical prelude to the organization of the Oregon Irrigation Congress, grandfather in name of the Oregon Water Resources Congress.

Even before statehood it was recognized that in the arid two-thirds of Oregon, irrigation was a necessary prerequisite to agriculture. In common with most of the arid West, it was quite obvious that there was much more public land than water. It was further recognized that bringing water and land together involved costs heretofore not required of those who had acquired title to 160 acres under the Homestead Act of 1841.

In the Desert Land Act of 1877, Congress recognized the problem and permitted a settler to take title to a *section* by paying a fee of \$1.25 per acre and bringing water to the land. It was necessary to irrigate one *eighty* and spend a dollar per acre each year for three years on its improvement. The permissible acreage was later reduced to 320 acres. About 300,000 acres in Oregon passed into private ownership under this law.

In 1878, Major J. W. Powell, Director of the U. S. Geological Survey, made a most important report to Congress. Powell was a prophet. His report was prefaced, "There is not sufficient water to irrigate more than a small fraction of the tillable land in the arid West," and therefore urged "public control of water rights to avoid monopoly." There was added emphasis, "The appropriation doctrine applying to water is essential for the development of the West." He recommended that "irrigable and other land be classified" and that "land and water should be disposed of together."

The Carey Act, passed by Congress in 1894, provided for the "Disposal of land and water together" and made the cost of reclamation a lien on the land. It granted up to 1,000,000 acres of land to each of the arid western states provided the irrigation works were built and the land settled and reclaimed by actual settlers. Administration was placed in the hands of the Secretary of the Interior.

After several years of evolution, Congress passed the Reclamation Act in 1902. It provided that a reclamation fund be derived from the sale of public lands and authorized the Secretary of the Interior to investigate and construct works for storage, diversion and development of water. Subsequently, there have been numerous modifications and amendments to the Act. In a surprisingly brief period the Act

Initiated a highly constructive continuing impact on Oregon reclamation. Construction of the Klamath project began in 1906 and Hermiston project in 1909.

There is evidence in the Congressional Record during the late 1890's that these gestures towards bringing land and water together in the West, the Desert Land Act, the Carey Act, and the Reclamation Act, did not necessarily reflect an altruistic attitude toward the western states by the federal government. Congressmen from east of the Mississippi argued that because the gold and silver had been mined and oil reserves were practically exhausted, it was necessary for the federal government to take steps to prevent the West from becoming a financial burden on the more opulent East.

Oregon accepted the provisions of the Carey Act in 1901 and conferred on the Desert Land Board the responsibility of carrying out its provisions. The Desert Land Board was to apply to the Secretary of the Interior for any land proposed to be reclaimed, contract with construction companies, approve reclamation charges and water requirements, and approve settler qualifications.

By October 1, 1904, 23 segregations of desert land had been made by the state under its terms. Four had been approved by the Secretary of the Interior and the contracts between Oregon and the United States had been executed. Robert W. Sawyer, for many years editor of the Bend Bulletin and a past president of the Oregon Reclamation Congress, historically recorded the beginning of the Carey Act operations in Oregon thusly:

In the light of our present knowledge it is easily apparent that Oregon at that time was wholly unready and incompetent to undertake the management of reclamation activities such as devolved upon her with the acceptance of the Carey Act and the making of contracts with the United States. Everything seemed propitious at the start, however, and no member of the Desert Land Board, newly created to handle these matters and consisting of the three principal officers of the state, had the slightest realization of how casually they were dealing with questions that later would take years of study, corps of engineers and a college of agricultural experts to settle. For example, we find in the report of the Board made to the legislature in 1905, in connection with a Carey Act application for some 80,000 acres in the vicinity of Bend the following wholly naive statement:

"In order to determine the advisability of making these new contracts for such large tracts of land, and to inspect the water supply available in the Deschutes River, as well as the work then in progress on the then existing contracts, the Board made a visit to Bend last June and made a personal examination of the river as far up as Benham Falls, and being satisfied that the quantity

of water was ample for all these various projects and that the location of the land was such that it would be better that one company have it all so it would all be under one system, and conflict of interests thereby avoided, the segregations were made and contracts applied for."

There was no measurement of stream flow over a period of years, or even for a single year, to determine the adequacy of water supply, no soil survey or classification of land, no determination of the proper duty of water, no economic or engineering study, no complete cost estimate. The Board simply made a trip, looked things over and--opened Pandora's box.

Sawyer referred to the Laidlaw or Tumalo project, which soon experienced a host of difficulties and obstacles--engineering, financial, geological, water supply and others. Sawyer's summary suggests that reclamation is not a simple matter of bringing land and water together with your own or someone else's money. Successful culmination requires the application of many different disciplines and a means for meshing necessarily varied resources--knowledge, financial and physical--to achieve a worth-while objective.

The need for some entity to reflect the needs, the desires, and the potentials of people on and off the land; in and out of various varying segments of government; provide a medium for the exchange of techniques and ideas; support research and field studies; and guide the orderly development of land and water resources was recognized with the formation of the National Irrigation Congress, which was organized at Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1891. The 13th annual meeting was held at the Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland in 1905. The 22nd meeting was held at Sacramento, California, as an International Congress in 1915. The organization apparently disintegrated during World War I.

A similar organization, the Oregon Reclamation Association, was organized in Portland in 1902 with the expressed objective of obtaining for Oregon its fair share of federal reclamation funds from the sale of public lands. This organization apparently gave way to the Oregon Conservation Committee, established by the state legislature. The Conservation Committee was largely responsible for developing and passing the State Water Code in 1909.

Oregon Irrigation Congress

There is some disagreement as to who or what provided the inspiration for calling the initial formal meeting of the Oregon Irrigation Congress. Historian C. C. Chapman, best remembered as editor of the Oregon Voter, wrote that the meeting was called to promote a bill for

a state appropriation for the Carey Act Laidlaw project. Robert Sawyer, a meticulous historian, credited the initial inspiration to Jay Frank Spining, Echo, Oregon, who had spent several years trying to consummate the construction of a Teal irrigation project. There is evidence to support Sawyer's contention. In a letter dated June 9, 1909, to Joseph Hinkle, Hermiston, Spining suggested that the efforts of people interested in an individual project were largely wasted and that it would be desirable to organize an association for the constructive promotion of irrigation and drainage. He volunteered to send out 100 letters asking people to meet on a certain date at the Imperial Hotel in Portland. It is probable that such a meeting was held, that it included those interested in the Teal and Laidlaw as well as other projects, and that it led to a meeting in Portland in February, 1912, where the Oregon Irrigation Congress was formally organized. William Hanley, Burns, was elected the first president, and J. T. Hinkle, secretary.

By-laws provided: "the purpose of this organization shall be to bring together the business, professional and farming interests of the state of Oregon for the purpose of discussing the irrigation and reclamation needs of the state, devising ways and means for accomplishing the reclamation of arid and overflowed lands of the state, and advising and recommending to the Congress of the United States and to the legislature of the state of Oregon, legislation in the interest of said reclamation work."

Membership requirements reflected a strong leaning toward the Carey Act approach in consummating reclamation projects: "The active members shall be the Oregon Development League--5 delegates; each sectional subdivision of the Oregon Development League--5 delegates; each association of landowners in or affected by each government project--5 delegates; each operating company and each association of landowners, settlers, or water users in or affected by each Carey Act project--5 delegates; each association of landowners, settlers, or water users in or affected by private irrigation projects--5 delegates; each owner of the project--5 delegates."

The first meeting provided an opportunity for representatives of potential reclamation projects to publicly speak on behalf of their particular projects. There was a recommendation that before settlers could obtain land on a reclamation project that they should have a minimum of \$1,000 in liquid assets. This could have been good or bad for the settler depending on the point of view. Major action, however, was a strong resolution in support of a state appropriation of funds to aid the completion of the Tumalo project.

The follow-up to the 1912 meeting is colorfully covered in an excerpt from a letter written by C. C. Chapman, the Congress's first Vice President:

"William Hanley, Jimmy Sawhill, Jimmy Donegen, and I spent six weeks at Salem during the 1913 legislature promoting the \$450,000 Tumalo appropriation and an appropri-

ation of \$250,000 to start the Oregon Extension Service. Hanley did the heavy stuff, Sawhill did the retting, Donegen did the treating, and I did the organizing. Our chief aid was an old gentleman, Gehrking; he did the crying. Between us, we got the \$450,000 for Tumalo."

Chapman did not comment on the Extension Service appropriation although it passed. Throughout the years, the Congress has strongly supported Extension and research work by OSU and other agencies.

Because of unforeseen problems, the Tumalo project never blossomed as dreamed. Seemingly, the \$450,000 was literally poured down the drain. On completion, it was found that the reservoir would not hold water. There were other difficulties. Philosophically, the sum was a modest educational fee. Many were taught the importance of developing reclamation projects only with adequate information on resources, adequate planning, and the best of assurance for economic success.

The stormy 1915 meeting was a parliamentary donnybrook involving state financial assistance to reclamation projects. One faction favored a statewide one-half mill levy on property to raise money for aiding reclamation projects. Another faction, including the Resolutions Committee, favored the issuance of bonds by the State for the same purpose. The Congress compromised by supporting both proposals: "Legislation is urged to levy a one-half mill tax on all property in the state for irrigation development" and "urge passage of a constitutional amendment giving the state authority to issue bonds for irrigation development."

The legislature turned a deaf ear toward both proposals, but with the support of the Congress proposed a constitutional amendment to permit the state to guarantee interest on reclamation district bonds. This amendment was approved by the people of Oregon in June, 1919. In ensuing years the state lost possibly a quarter of a million dollars in interest payments that could not be paid by the districts. In the reality, the sum was an overall sound and highly profitable investment. It permitted districts to remain operative during a period of economic stress. Of greater importance, communities dependent on the districts were relieved of extreme hardships caused by loss of livelihood.

The 1915 session recognized the need for people as part of reclamation and asked for a continuing appropriation to support the work of the Oregon Immigration Commission. It urged cooperative state and federal investigations of several proposed reclamation projects and urged further intensification of the work on stream flow measurements and for acceleration of the topographic map program. Modernization of the irrigation district law was urged and the enactment of a drainage district law was requested.

Compared to the explosive 1915 annual meeting, affairs within the Congress were all love and kisses for the ensuing 10 years. World War I could have been a detracting factor. Support of reclamation under the Carey Act faded in favor of the Bureau of Reclamation. For several

years considerable support to a proposal that reclamation projects be financed by monies contributed by the state and federal governments in equal proportions. There seemed to be no assurance of funds from either source. With logic and by resolution, the Congress pressured to have funds derived from the sale of Federal timber diverted to the reclamation fund. Annually and perennially the Bureau of Reclamation was requested to accelerate work in Oregon. Continual support was given to local project proposals. The opportunity for interested people and agencies to become acquainted and share both facts and ideas probably accomplished more toward the consummation of worthy projects than the formally published *Whereases*.

A proposal persisted for several years that the Bureau of Reclamation extend the same type of assistance to drainage projects that was being extended to irrigation projects. It was hoped this would help build political support for reclamation in the Midwest, South and East.

There was strong and effective support for intensification of topographic mapping and water supply information. With the aid of the Congress, cooperative soil surveys of agricultural lands were initiated and intensified. Almost single-handed the Congress secured funds for the expansion of the experiment station at Hermiston and continually aided in securing appropriations for other soil and water research. In 1920 there was a definite proposal that the Bureau of Reclamation employ county agents to aid settlers on federal reclamation projects. The recommendation did not become effective until 1941 when an agent was employed to assist the settlers on the Vale and Owyhee projects in Malheur County.

Many speeches, papers and resolutions emphasized the need for more settlers. The Bureau of Reclamation was urged to employ *immigration* agents as well as agricultural agents. Continual support was given the Portland Chamber of Commerce in its program for increasing immigration. The Chamber had taken over the work of the State Immigration Commission.

Beginning in 1919, the Congress recognized the necessity for improving rural credit services to farmers on reclamation projects. Because of the prior lien for operation and construction costs, loaning agencies not only hesitated, they did not extend credit to farmers upon reclamation projects on terms as favorable as to those outside the projects. This issue was battled for nearly 40 years before it was favorably resolved. In 1920 and 1921, possibilities for the utilization of ground water were recognized. There were requests that studies to determine ground water potentials be initiated and that a system of appropriation be developed for ground water flowing in *defined channels*. A bit later through the urging of the Congress, the State made appropriations for the construction of *artesian wells* in the Fort Rock area. The wells yielded much better than crops grown in this frosty area.

There have been inconsistencies in the expressed attitude of the Congress from its beginning. Beginning in the early 1920's and recurring periodically throughout the years, recorded resolutions have favored private development of hydroelectric power over *public* development. An

even greater number of resolutions demanded that income from the sale of power from *federal* power projects be used to expand the Bureau of Reclamation's construction program.

Legislation to authorize the organization of *conservancy* districts in Oregon was first urged in 1921 with recurring requests periodically for the next 40 years and with increasing intensity. Up to the present time, the Congress has supported the principle of conservancy districts enthusiastically. Enthusiasm has not been apparent in the support of specific Oregon Legislative proposals.

On two points, there have been no questions regarding attitudes of the organization or individual members. In 1922 strong opposition to any federal control of water rights was expressed. At the same time, there was an emphatic demand that water from Klamath Lake not be used in California.

Congress membership always included people with constructive vision. The 1920 meeting urged that public lands in reservoir sites be withdrawn from homesteading. It urged further that federal forest lands be managed to assure maximum continuing yields of good quality water. At later sessions specific support was given to the allocation of funds for forest fire protection.

Never have deliberations been confined to reclamation. A roasting resolution in 1920 denounced the *Reds* and the *Wobblies* and applauded the *American way of life*. Closer home, establishment of a mail route between Bend and Burns was strongly championed.

At times, illusion of opulence fouled a focus on financial facts. Despite a negative treasury balance of \$600, the 1924 meeting voted in favor of hiring a full time secretary with an office in Portland. For obvious reasons, no action was taken.

In a couple of years the fiscal fiasco was resolved though, according to the secretary-treasurer's report, not aided by a NSF check for \$15 from the North Unit Irrigation District.

Oregon State Drainage Association

The Oregon State Drainage Association was organized at a drainage conference held on the Oregon Agricultural College campus February 3, 1915. Its purpose was "to organize agencies interested in drainage, accumulate useful data, disseminate information and secure needed legislation and by other legitimate means further the development of three million acres of wet land in the state." L. N. Edwards, Monroe, was the first president; W. L. Powers, the first and only secretary.

Without much question, the organization was inspired, promoted and perfected largely by W. L. Powers, then head of the Department of Irri-

gation and Drainage at OAC. Powers saw the need for an educational and action organization to stimulate the improvement of wet lands in the state and a specific need for community drainage improvements. The need and potentials were so apparent that it was not difficult to enlist the vigorous and continuing support of others.

The organizing session of the Association approved only one, though highly important, resolution. It urged the legislature then in session to approve the modernized Oregon Drainage District Law already under consideration. The mission was accomplished. A 1930 report to the Oregon Reclamation Congress indicated that, largely due to the Drainage District Law, 50 drainage projects in Oregon had completed drainage works involving slightly over 200,000 acres with a capital investment of \$4,165,000.

The Drainage Association regularly held annual meetings until 1928, though from time to time separate meetings of the drainage section of the Oregon Reclamation Congress were called.

There was no conflict or competition between the Drainage Association and the Irrigation Congress. Basic needs and objectives were common to both organizations. State and federal agencies had assigned responsibilities common to both groups. Commercial interests likewise served both.

The formal marriage of the Oregon Irrigation Congress and the Oregon State Drainage Association probably was the culmination of a common law relationship that existed for several years.

In 1919 both organizations approved and published joint resolutions. One favored a bill authorizing the Federal Treasury to accept irrigation and drainage district bonds as security for the advancement of federal funds to finance construction of reclamation projects. The other requested that the federal government give priority to shipments of material and equipment needed in the construction of irrigation and drainage projects. There were similar requests during World War II.

The name *Oregon Reclamation Congress* first appeared on the cover of a biennial report dated 1920-21. The subtitle read, "formerly the Oregon Irrigation Congress and the Oregon State Drainage Association." The report included separate yearly proceedings for each of the organizations. The two organizations jointly endorsed several resolutions but there was no reference to even an informal consolidation.

Merger of the Oregon Irrigation Congress and the Oregon State Drainage Association was approved by both organizations in 1925. A joint constitution was prepared and adopted. Membership was open to "individuals and groups interested in irrigation, drainage, conservation and related interests including the reclamation of logged-off land." By inference, environmentalists and ecologists were included. Wilford Allen, Grants Pass, was elected president and W. L. Powers, secretary, of the fledgling Oregon Reclamation Congress. Separate annual meetings, however, were held in 1926 and 1927, but there were increasing joint activities and actions.

Completion integration appeared to be effected by 1928 but still with confusion as to *which was named what*. The drainage section met at the annual session in Salem on November 14, 1928. The program was titled Oregon Reclamation Congress, Drainage Section, 18th Annual Meeting (the Drainage Association first met in 1915). The annual report was titled Drainage Section, Oregon Reclamation Association. During the following two days there was titular confusion with the annual meeting of the Irrigation Section, Oregon Reclamation Congress. The adopted report of the Resolutions Committee instructed the president of the Oregon Irrigation Congress to So what? Actions and activities are more important than names.

Oregon Reclamation Congress

Economic conditions in the late 20's forced a complete melding of irrigation and drainage interests and set the stage for possibly one of the most constructive accomplishments of the Oregon Reclamation Congress. Both irrigation and drainage districts were forced to default on bond interest payments because farmers could not pay their yearly assessments. There was an obvious need for refinancing. There seemed to be a possibility of obtaining such refinancing through the Federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation. However, the RFC would not make loans without complete information on the soils, a sound appraisal of the installed reclamation works, and an economic analysis of each district. Congress members led by C. E. Stricklin, State Engineer, and W. L. Powers obtained the necessary funds to complete the required appraisals from the State Emergency Board.

The report of the ORC Refinance Committee reported in 1937 that seventeen irrigation and three drainage districts had received loans from RFC amounting to \$2,800,000 refunding the district's total current indebtedness of \$10,500,000. Creditors received 34.9% of the amount due but they were happy. Compared to other investments made during the same depressed period the reverse return was attractive.

At the 22nd annual session of the ORC in Bend, Governor Julius Meir was requested to appoint a three man committee to attend the Western Governors Conference to request united support for reclamation progress. The governor responded by appointing E. C. Van Petten, Ontario; Dr. W. L. Powers, Corvallis; and Marshall Dana, Portland. The mission was accomplished. Action by the western governors at their conference in Salt Lake on December 5, 1932 resulted in the formation of the National Reclamation Association. Marshall Dana was elected first president and Kenneth Miller, secretary.

The Board of Directors in 1931 adopted an eleven point program which served as a guide for activities during the 30's. Committees were appointed to assume responsibility for each of the eleven points. The committees and the first chairmen were as follows.

Refinance: Olen Arnspiger, Chairman
Federal Projects: Frank Morgan (Nyssa), Chairman
Supplemental Water: T. G. Montgomery (Baker), Chairman
Irrigation in the Willamette Valley: Arthur King (Corvallis),
Chairman
Topographic Surveys: L. A. Mc Arthur (Portland), Chairman
Development of Underground Water: H. M. Parks (Fort Rock),
Chairman
Hydrographic Record: C. E. Stricklin, State Engineer, Chairman
Soil Surveys: Fred Phillips (Baker), Chairman
Cooperative Irrigation Investigations: E. H. Judd (Medford),
Chairman
Drainage and National Policy: Ed Wist (Scappoose), Chairman
Correlated Land and Water Use: Marshall N. Dana, Chairman

The committee approach made it possible to better utilize the talents, energies, and resources of ORC members. The annual committee reports extending through a decade provide an excellent record of Congress activities and accomplishments.

Despite the depression, the drought, the dust bowl, dismal prospects on the farm and elsewhere, reclamation made progress. The ORC along with other western states pressured for more funds for reclamation construction, in part, using the argument that construction activities would help prime economic pumps. It was implied that the funds should be routed through the Bureau of Reclamation.

The federal government responded through the Works Progress Administration. Through this agency important assistance was extended both to federal and nonfederal projects. A few projects were aided through the establishment of CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) camps.

The settlement problem, recognized as paramount from the beginning of the Congress, was largely solved. Through the activities of the Resettlement Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, displaced farmers from the dust bowl were relocated on reclamation projects and elsewhere in Oregon. Credit was extended not only to relocated farmers but to others caught in the financial trap. This helped both farmers and projects remain operative. This extension of credit to farmers on reclamation projects probably paved the way for more liberal credit policies by both private and federal lending agencies.

Various facets of the Works Progress Administration permitted continuing progress toward the achievements of other ORC objectives. There was aid to mapping work and field studies; to the collection of hydrographic information; to the completion of soil surveys; to continuing research, and to the accumulation of basic information on economics and land use.

The ORC joined other interests in the West in pressuring for a moratorium on construction charges on Bureau of Reclamation projects during the depression years. This concession was granted. Other ORC goals were achieved in 1939 when the Bureau of Reclamation further

liberalized policies; costs for flood control and navigation made non-reimbursable. A ten year development period was allowed before starting the 40 year repayment schedule, and electricity could be sold by the secretary from Bureau developed projects.

Also in the thirties, the Corps of Engineers, United States Army, became an active partner in the Oregon reclamation program. The Corps initiated and completed needed rehabilitation and improvement of dikes and other structures for drainage districts in the lower Columbia area. They likewise initiated preliminary studies of flood problems in the Willamette Valley but soon expanded these studies to include irrigation, power production, navigation, drainage, and stream purification. From these studies developed the concept of the Willamette Valley project. The federal congress, impressed with this work, authorized \$8,000,000 for flood control work in the Willamette Valley in 1936.

Strongly encouraged by ORC members, Governor Charles H. Martin appointed the Willamette Basin Committee in 1935. Also in 1935, the National Flood Control Act was passed by the Federal Congress which authorized further federal attention to the Willamette and similar stream basins. The 1939 state legislature created the Willamette Basin Commission. This in effect gave legal status and limited funds to the previously appointed committee.

Soon appropriations were extended to the Corps of Engineers to complete further detailed planning and to initiate bank protection measures. By January 1, 1938, ten improvement districts had been organized to assume local responsibilities for bank protection measures to be installed by the Corps of Engineers.

The constitution of the ORC adopted in 1925 recognized a potential in the reclamation of two million acres of logged-off land in western Oregon. The Congress aided in securing funds for research, for the establishment of demonstrations and for action, the latter in the form of a WPA project for grass seeding, partial clearing and fencing. Efforts were preponderantly directed toward the utilization of these lands for grazing. A sizeable livestock industry was envisioned. As late as 1938, ORC resolved that stump land reclamation become a responsibility of the Bureau of Reclamation. Ranchers and others made substantial investments in developing grazing land--seeding, burning, fencing, barns, livestock. Briefly there appeared to be an agricultural boom, particularly in the north coast area. Trainloads of sheep moved into Columbia and Clackamas county for summer grazing. Herds of *white face* inspired a change from *calked* to high heel boots.

It was recognized that on much of the land grazing might be an interim use, but few realized how short an *interim* can be. Despite sometimes vigorous control efforts, trees grew and shaded out the grass. Deer and elk replaced sheep and cattle. The better barns housed the equipment used by loggers engaged in thinning out the first marketable *second growth*. Remaining remnants of fences are unnoticed except when they trip a forester or cruiser appraising the growing crop of wealth.

ORC deserves a lion's share of the credit for the establishment of the coordinated system of Cooperative Snow Surveys. This service, which assembles information on the annual cumulative snow pack, is invaluable to the year to year management of water resources and to long range planning. ORC began to advocate such a program in 1928. The following year irrigation districts, cities, and others in Rogue River Valley systematically inventoried the snow pack affecting the water flow available to the Rogue Valley. The information was most helpful in rationing water supplies, particularly in short water years.

Soon there was federal support with correlating guidance through the Soil Conservation Service extending through all of the western states. ORC has continued to back the program over a period of forty years.

Possibly because of the depression borne problems at home, a major development was underway before being documentally recognized by ORC.

Bonneville Dam was completed during the 30's, seemingly unnoticed. There were informal comments. Some felt that cheap power for pumping would aid reclamation development. Others felt that it was a bit ludicrous to add to an already surplus power supply. Likewise, initiation of construction of Grand Coulee Dam and the Columbia Basin Project was neither lauded nor lamented, though there were emphatic protestations that Washington was receiving the benefit of more reclamation funds than Oregon.

The first formal commentary regarding Columbia Basin development appears to be a well prepared resolution adopted at the annual session in Ontario in September, 1941. It approved the creation of a recognized statutory and stable authority for the Columbia River watershed for the development and conservation of the resources of the Pacific Northwest and that this might best be accomplished by the modification of the existing Bonneville Act. It deplored any centralization of power under any authority not immediately responsive to the area affected. There was objection to any action that would further remove control of non-navigable water from the state in which it was found and defended the right of states to deal with each other in settling differences over the use of water. It urged that any legislation affecting water for irrigation should be drafted without limiting the control of the Reclamation Act. It supported a policy that all net revenues from the use of water should be allocated to the reduction of cost of construction of reclamation projects. In conclusion, the resolution urged that any action of the Columbia Authority bills be held in abeyance until after the passage of the National Defense Emergency.

The Board of Directors meeting in June, 1942 were more than a bit perturbed by the type of authority outlined in the then proposed Bone Bill. They resolved that the Bone Bill proposal gave the Secretary of the Interior paramount control over the development of federal power in the Columbia Valley, thereby jeopardizing existing water rights and complicating the granting of future rights and adversely affecting the Federal Reclamation Service. They further urged that action on any

authority legislation should be delayed for the duration of the war and that any action should be preceded by adequate local, regional and national hearing.

World War II may have been a diverting interlude between Acts I and II of the *Battle of Authorities*.

Operations Section

World War II forced curtailment of ORC activities and compounded problems for operating reclamation districts. There were scarcities and restrictions on necessary supplies and equipment. Manpower was in short supply at all levels. It was almost impossible to replace essential operating equipment. At the same time there were extreme pressures for more food production.

Recognizing the desirability of united action toward maintaining district operation, under common handicaps and restriction a group of 30 district representatives close to operational problems met in the State Engineer's office in December, 1942. These included managers, directors and attorneys. Discussion of mutual problems brought out many practical solutions. United action helped ease restrictions on critical supplies and materials.

The ORC meeting in Portland in 1943 was largely a continuation of the 1942 informal but highly effective session. Discussion of operational problems dominated the meeting and all benefited. Informal discussion suggested the need for an entity within the Congress to be concerned primarily with districts. Particularly important was the pyramiding problem of protecting district interests during Oregon legislative sessions. At the annual ORC meeting in Salem in December, 1944, operating districts voted to create the *Operations Section*. The Congress amended the constitution to accept such an organization. By-laws for the *Section* were adopted in 1945, and Victor Boehle, Grants Pass, was elected chairman and Art King, Corvallis, secretary.

There were several reasons for the formation of the section. The value of the opportunity to exchange information had been established. It was reasoned that through the section the Congress could render better service to districts and in return receive better support, including membership dues. There was a provision that the operation section could if necessary act independent of the ORC. This unused provision was inserted in answer to a recurring criticism from Oregon legislators that the Congress might not always speak in the best interest of operating districts.

Faltering fiscally at first, the operations section soon achieved basic objectives. Brazier Small, a Salem attorney, was employed to review bills proposed before the 1945 legislative session. Those that might affect districts were called to the attention of the officers for

appropriate action. Payment of dues by additional districts established the fact that the work was being done on behalf of operating districts. There was financial backing from ORC and the work was done in the name of the parent organization.

Because of services rendered, an increasing number of districts paid the stipulated dues to a point where they became obviously the major source of income to ORC.

The last formal session of the operations section was held at the ORC annual meeting in Klamath Falls in 1950. Officers elected included LaSelle Coles, the last chairman of the section.

Prior to the Klamath Falls meeting, the ORC board of directors, including officers of the operations section, authorized the appointment of an ORC legislative committee to continue the Oregon legislative work initiated by the operations section. The brief internal detour by the operations section achieved two important points. With operating districts, it proved that ORC could be a helpful and useful organization. With the Oregon legislators and others, it demonstrated that ORC truly represents member districts.

Conservation Section

In the late 30's, ORC backed the principle of the Oregon Soil Conservation District law which was passed by the legislature in 1939. By 1945, a half dozen districts had been formed. Under the terms of the ORC constitution they were invited to become affiliated with ORC. At the ORC annual meeting in 1945 associated SCD's voted to form a *Conservation Section*. Omar Spencer, Sauvie Island, was elected chairman and Art King, Corvallis, secretary. By-laws stipulated that the annual meeting be held in connection with the annual meeting of ORC, though other meetings could be called at any time. Action by the section was not dependent upon approval by ORC.

A rapidly increasing number of soil conservation districts created pressures to form an independent association of soil conservation districts in keeping with a national program.

The Oregon Association of Soil Conservation Districts was officially formed at the annual ORC meeting in Grants Pass in November, 1948. Since the by-laws provided for the selection of officers by *work group areas*, officers were not elected until later.

The Oregon Association of Soil Conservation Districts held their first annual meeting in Portland in November, 1949, jointly with the annual ORC meeting. Lloyd Gift, Bonaza, became president of the district's association; Omar Spencer, the first chairman of the conservation section, continued to serve as president of the ORC.

The Second Thirty Years

There was little disruption to ORC activities during World War II. Because of the press of other matters, there was less time for people to talk and few receptive listeners. There were affective appeals for assistance in keeping Oregon reclamation projects operating. These emphasized manpower and materials rather than money. As the war came to a close, there was interest in new projects encouraged by federal and state agencies to ease any economic shock from military and industrial demobilization in the post-war period. There was revived interest in Bureau of Reclamation and Corps of Engineer projects. Other agencies entered the field. The USDA came out with a small projects program under the Case-Wheeler Act. This probably was the forerunner of the present Small Watersheds Act administered by the Soil Conservation Service. The Federal Reclamation Act was amended to permit the Bureau of Reclamation to enter the small projects field. ORC supported these proposals.

With encouraging support from ORC, the Production and Marketing Administration of the USDA through the Agricultural Conservation Program offered federal cost sharing for irrigation and drainage improvements. While not a direct aid to districts, cost sharing payments under pooling agreements have contributed much toward improving the efficiency of both irrigation and drainage districts.

ORC never ceased to support the development of information that would aid in guiding water resource development and in improving the all around efficiency of land and water use on reclaimed areas. Perennially, resolutions supported topographic mapping, soil surveys, and improvement of hydrological information. There has been continued support for research on crops and cropping practices; the establishment of experiment stations at Klamath, Ontario, and Central Oregon are examples. The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management and other agencies were urged to conduct research on watershed management as related to water yield and quality. There has been helpful response from several federal and state agencies.

In the early 1920's, ORC recognized the desirability of applying the doctrine of appropriation to ground water as a means of limiting use to the available supply. The first step toward achievement was the enactment of an Oregon ground water law which applied only to Eastern Oregon in 1927. This law was rewritten and made applicable to the entire state in 1955.

ORC has been concerned with the equitable regulation of surface and ground water supplies. That interest extends in a skyward direction is recorded in this 1952 resolution.

WHEREAS, certain practices, intended to affect or control the weather, have been used within recent years without state regulation or control, and

WHEREAS, the amount of precipitation within the State of Oregon is of vital importance to the state as a whole, and to the water users in particular,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Oregon Reclamation Congress urge the State Legislature to enact appropriate legislation to determine the qualifications for and to license cloud modifications and weather control operators and activities within the State of Oregon.

Clouded records of accomplishment indicate that the proposition is still up in the air.

In 1961 following 40 years of active support, ORC successfully brought about the enactment of legislation to bring water masters under the direct control of the state engineer. Previous to this time, county water masters who were responsible for administering water laws of the State of Oregon were appointed and paid by county courts. Generally, there was excellent cooperation between county courts and the state engineer in selecting qualified people. But not always. The legislation also provided for the appointment of *area* rather than county water masters. This eased the sometimes complex problem of administering the use of water from sources common to more than one county.

ORC continued to urge the appropriation of adequate funds to permit the State Engineer to complete the adjudication of the surface water supplies in the state. The responsibility has existed since the original water law was passed in 1909 but never have funds been available to complete the job. There has been fiscal assistance in recent years but still not adequate.

Beginning in the early 40's, ORC became increasingly interested in the Willamette Valley and people in the Willamette Valley became interested in ORC. Irrigation in the valley was increasing rapidly, largely through the installation of individual farm irrigation systems. Near depletion of surface water supplies emphasized the need for consolidated action to bring about the utilization of water in reservoirs already constructed or planned. ORC supported work of the Willamette River Basin Commission, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Corp of Engineers, and the Soil Conservation Service. All were working on certain phases of Willamette Basin development. ORC helped the first irrigation districts organized to cooperate with the Bureau of Reclamation. These were the Tualatin, Monmouth, Dallas, and Red Prairie.

The water control district law, a simplified multi-use district for irrigation drainage, and flood control and peculiarly adapted to small projects in the Willamette Valley, was conceived within ORC. The basic law was passed by the 1947 legislature.

In 1952, ORC supported a proposal to have the Oregon Water Resources Committee created by legislation. The legislation was passed in 1953. Work of the committee led to the creation of the present State Water Resources Board by the 1955 legislature.

ORC never lost interest in national issues relating to reclamation. Always there were requests for additional funds for construction and planning by the Bureau of Reclamation. The Reclamation Act as amended

in 1939 provided that receipts from the sale of incidental power developed on federal reclamation projects be assigned to the reclamation fund. Costs for flood control and navigation were made nonreimbursable. The ten year development period was made allowable before starting forty years of repayment. This seemingly simple broad authorization in the opinion of ORC did not speed up the reclamation program in Oregon. As plans developed for a project to the point of approval, it was necessary to tie costs to income from specific power producing projects. For a period of years, ORC has supported the principle of establishing a *basin account* by which power revenues would be pooled and assigned to projects as appropriate. The proposal is still pending.

ORC has persistently opposed the diversion of water available to Oregon to other areas except as determined by interstate compact. ORC has supported the Columbia Basin compact and the Klamath Basin compact. The latter was a seeming reversal of a firm stand taken in 1922 against the use of Klamath River waters in California.

About 1960 opposition to out-of-state diversions was fanned to a fever pitch with the announcement of a dozen independently developed proposals for the diversion of water from the Pacific Northwest to the Pacific Southwest. The *Parson's*, *Pirkey* and *Klamath Project Extension* seemed to rate the most publicity. While none of the proposals had even reached the concept stage in development, ORC, all of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho mobilized to fight a defensive war against the southwest. Somehow an informal truce developed about 1965 and 1966, both sides yielding to *opportunities for further study*.

In 1965 the Oregon legislature became a party to the armistice when it instructed the State Water Resources Board to determine Oregon's *Ultimate Water Needs* and backed the request with dollars.

Despite continued requests by ORC and concerned agencies and organizations in Oregon and elsewhere in the west, that the right of the state to control water rights be protected, the threat of federal encroachment intensified. Close to home, the Pelton Dam decision by the U. S. Supreme Court overruled a decision by the State of Oregon on the use of water on the Deschutes River. Other court decisions intensified the threat to state control under the *implied reservation doctrine* which, overly simplified, means that in reserving lands for any purpose the federal government likewise reserved the right to use water on these lands. This poses a real threat to Oregon and other states including a high percentage of reserved or government owned lands.

For a period of twenty years following a firm stand taken in 1941 on the development of the Columbia River Basin which favored a *Statutory and stable authority for the Columbia River Watershed*, ORC emphatically and vehemently opposed any proposal for any *authority, corporation, or similar body* that might have any semblance to the Tennessee Valley Authority. Reams of vitriolic resolutions and other documents were written. Some scorched the files because of their sulfurous content. ORC went further than the poison pen in condemning authorities. It contributed funds toward the employment of a counsel and consultant

to act on behalf of ORC and other interests in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho to act in opposition to proposed authority bill measure. None were created.

In lieu of the authority approach, ORC favored an inter-agency cooperation with state participation. This approach prevailed and began with the establishment of the Columbia Basin Interagency Committee in 1943. The Interagency Committee gained in strength and importance and has been a highly constructive medium in furthering the planning and the development of the Columbia Basin. Besides minimizing water use conflicts and coordinating the construction and operation of federal and other projects, the Interagency Committee initiated a program of long-range comprehensive plans. One of the first was the Willamette Basin Comprehensive Review started in 1963 and finished in 1969.

In 1969 the Interagency Committee was superseded by the Columbia River Basin Commission.

As agriculture became mechanized, requiring comparatively large acreage to support the necessary machinery, the application of the 1902 160-acre ownership limitation on federal projects began to be questioned and protested throughout the west. These protestations began in the 1930's. As the question arose during the 30's, ORC expressed no objection and on occasions supported the limitation. The reason could have been diplomatic: *Don't bite the hand that is feeding you.*

For the first time in its history, ORC in 1943 challenged the ownership limitation but added a cautious modification, *only for the duration.* In a general discussion of the topic at the Bend meeting in 1951, the opinion was expressed that the 160-acre limitation had caused no hardship in Oregon. Attitudes have changed sharply since. Since 1961, ORC has persistently resolutely for modification of the limitation. To a large degree, the changed attitudes stem from the inclusion of land already farmed in federal reclamation projects being seriously considered for construction. Difficulties became apparent first in the Willamette Valley and soon after in Oregon's Columbia Basin.

The constitution and by-laws were amended in 1956. Major changes were in the structure of annual assessments or dues. Since there was no mention of the *Operations Section*, the omission could have formally marked its demise. There was provision for a legislative committee who were assigned major responsibilities formerly performed by the *operations* section.

It is also noteworthy that the new constitution and by-laws for the first time provided formal association with the National Reclamation Association including the payment of annual dues. Twenty years earlier, the NRA came into being largely through the efforts of ORC. In these years, Oregon assessments to NRA were obtained from voluntary subscription.

ORC activities were not limited to technical and political phases of reclamation. A silver jubilee session was held in Corvallis in 1935. At this meeting, considerable attention was given to reviewing the accomplishment of the Congress through the past 25 years. There was open apology in the recorded papers as to whether or not 1935 truly represented the 25th anniversary. Robert Sawyer, President, best explained the arithmetical inconsistency by pointing out that the organization held two meetings in 1921.

The 1952 meeting at Medford commemorated 100 years of irrigation in Oregon. A monument was erected and dedicated with appropriate ceremonies at the intersection of Rapp and Wagner Creek roads near Talent. The inscription tells the story:

OREGON IRRIGATION HISTORY

1852 - 1952

NEAR HERE, IN MARCH, 1852 JACOB WAGNER DIVERTED WATER FOR THE IRRIGATION OF 69.4 ACRES AND THEREBY ESTABLISHED THE FIRST KNOWN WATER RIGHT IN OREGON.

IN A CENTURY OF PROGRESS MEN OF VISION AND RESOLUTE PURPOSE HAVE BROUGHT WATER TO MORE THAN 1,388,000 ACRES OF FERTILE OREGON SOIL. FOR THEIR EFFORT AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE GROWTH AND STABILITY OF OUR ECONOMY, OREGON IS INDEBTED.

THIS MONUMENT ERECTED BY THE OREGON
RECLAMATION CONGRESS AND DEDICATED BY
HONORABLE DOUGLAS MCKAY, GOVERNOR OF OREGON
OCTOBER 27, 1952

A review of proceedings for 1959, 1960 and 1961 contained no indication of recognition for any three plausible dates to celebrate a golden anniversary. The cover on the 1959 report merely stated *48th Annual Meeting, 50th Anniversary*. This probably indicates that, as with people, the importance of birthday parties diminishes with age.

In lieu of a golden jubilee, the 1959 meeting at Klamath Falls honored Dr. W. L. Powers, a charter member of the original Oregon Irrigation Congress. Dr. Powers served as ORC secretary from 1925 to 1942 and was secretary of the Oregon Drainage Association for 10 years up to 1925 when it became a part of ORC.

In keeping with the trend of the times, ORC formally changed its name to Oregon Water Resources Congress in 1970. Ben Evick, Madras, was the first president; Marvin Shearer, Corvallis, was secretary. The organization celebrated its first meeting under the new name by holding the 1971 annual meeting at Sun River, a delightful resort and meeting place. There was evidence to suggest that work on water resource development is like wiping your face on an old-fashioned roller-towel: There is no end to it.

Much of the Sun River session was devoted to the development of support for the Oregon Water Bank--state loans for reclamation projects. The prime purpose of the first meeting in 1912 was to obtain state financial aid.

The Sun River program featured a report on the private irrigation development in the Hermiston-Boardman area. Some of the land was included in the original Teal project which was vigorously supported for federal development at the 1912 and subsequent sessions. A possible moral is: If asking Uncle for 60 years proves futile, do it yourself.

Major efforts of the organization for the first twenty years were concentrated on securing more settlers for reclamation projects. At Sun River and for twenty years previous, even greater attention has been devoted to problems arising from small farms, rural residences, subdivisions, freeways, supermarkets, airports, all resulting from earlier prayers being answered in overabundance.

Over a span of 60 years the Oregon Water Resources Congress has worked constantly, diligently and effectively in furthering two purposes outlined in the original by-laws. Work on both was so voluminous it is impossible to include details in the foregoing review. These were:

Project Support. There is scarcely a reclamation project in Oregon that has not been beneficially assisted by OWRC. The files contain reams of resolutions relating to individual projects in various stages--planning, Bureau or departmental approval, authorization, appropriations. Without question, these documents have favorably influenced decisions of administrators, legislators, congressmen and others. Probably of greater importance, through association with OWRC, interested local people, usually Boards of Directors, when the project progressed to the organizational stage, meet with appropriate representatives of agencies concerned. This opportunity for the interchange of ideas has often avoided delaying objections from the several agencies legally responsible for certain phases of land and water use such as fish and wildlife, pollution abatement, recreation and others. Through these contacts it has been possible to alter construction plans to meet changing local needs.

Work With Oregon Legislature. The original by-laws likewise prescribed that the organization would work diligently with the Oregon legislature in furthering reclamation. Some actions relating chiefly to policy have been covered previously.

The Congress has been responsible for developing and improving laws covering the organization and operation of the several legal districts that have financial responsibility for the construction and operation of reclamation projects. The organization has constantly suggested and supported constructive changes in the basic Oregon water laws. The work always went far beyond the passage of supporting resolutions. There has been constant personal contact with legislators in and out of session. This legislative liaison was handled informally but effectively in early years. It became more formalized when the operations section was created. In the past it has been handled even more effectively through the legislative committee. The relationship has not been one way. Legislators have appreciated and respected constructive information obtained through OWRC.

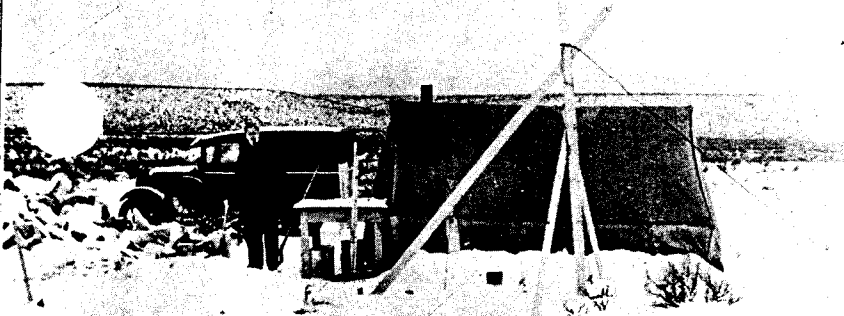
Of paramount importance to operating districts and to districts that will become operative in the future has been the constant meticulous review of contemplated or introduced legislation that might adversely affect or benefit operating districts. During each session literally hundreds of bills relating to legal entities in Oregon, and reclamation districts are legal entities, are reviewed to determine whether or not they would affect reclamation districts. If there were objectionable items, OWRC attempted, often successfully, to have the bills changed before they were formally introduced. When suggestions for changes failed to be accepted, OWRC has vigorously opposed bills or portions of bills throughout the legislative process. Again the batting average has been good because of the high standing of OWRC and its legislative committee with the legislature.

PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, AND
ANNUAL MEETING LOCATIONS OF THE
OREGON RECLAMATION CONGRESS
FROM 1912 TO PRESENT

<u>Year</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Place of annual meeting</u>
1912	W. Hanley	J. T. Hinkle	Portland
1913	W. Hanley	J. T. Hinkle	Portland
1914	Asa Thompson	Fred N. Wallace	Portland
1915	Asa Thompson	Fred N. Wallace	Portland
1916	J. W. Brewer	Fred N. Wallace	Portland
1917	J. T. Hinkle	Fred N. Wallace	Portland
1918	J. H. Upton	Fred N. Wallace	Portland
1919	J. H. Upton	Fred N. Wallace	Portland
1920	Fred N. Wallace	F. J. Spinning	Portland
1921	Fred N. Wallace	F. J. Spinning	Pendleton
1922	Fred N. Wallace	L. Antles	Bend
1923	Jas. M. Kyle	Walter Meachan	Vale
1924	Jas. M. Kyle	Walter Meachan	Klamath
1925	Jas. M. Kyle	Walter Meachan	Grants Pass
1926	Wilford Allen	W. L. Powers	Hood River
1927	Wilford Allen	W. L. Powers	Prineville
1928	Olen Arnspiger	W. L. Powers	Salem
1929	Olen Arnspiger	W. L. Powers	Ontario
1930	Jas. T. Chinnock	W. L. Powers	Burns
1931	Jas. T. Chinnock	W. L. Powers	Medford
1932	R. W. Sawyer	W. L. Powers	Bend
1933	R. W. Sawyer	W. L. Powers	Baker
1934	R. W. Sawyer	W. L. Powers	Klamath
1935	R. W. Sawyer	W. L. Powers	Corvallis
1936	R. W. Sawyer	W. L. Powers	Vale
1937	R. W. Sawyer	W. L. Powers	Portland
1938	Frank T. Morgan	W. L. Powers	Redmond
1939	Frank T. Morgan	W. L. Powers	Clatskanie
1940	Frank T. Morgan	W. L. Powers	Klamath
1941	Frank T. Morgan	W. L. Powers	Ontario
1942	Frank T. Morgan	W. L. Powers	Directors meeting only
1943	Frank T. Morgan	A. S. King	Portland
1944	Frank T. Morgan	A. S. King	Salem
1945	Ed E. Lage	A. S. King	Portland
1946	Ed E. Lage	A. S. King	Albany
1947	Howard Turner	A. S. King	Baker
1948	Howard Turner	A. S. King	Grants Pass
1949	Omar C. Spencer	A. S. King	Portland
1950	Omar C. Spencer	Kenneth Sawyer	Klamath Falls
1951	Victor Boehl	Kenneth Sawyer	Bend
1952	Victor Boehl	Kenneth Sawyer	Medford
1953	Harold Eidemiller	Kenneth Sawyer	Baker
1954	Harold Eidemiller	Kenneth Sawyer and Clancy Jean	Portland

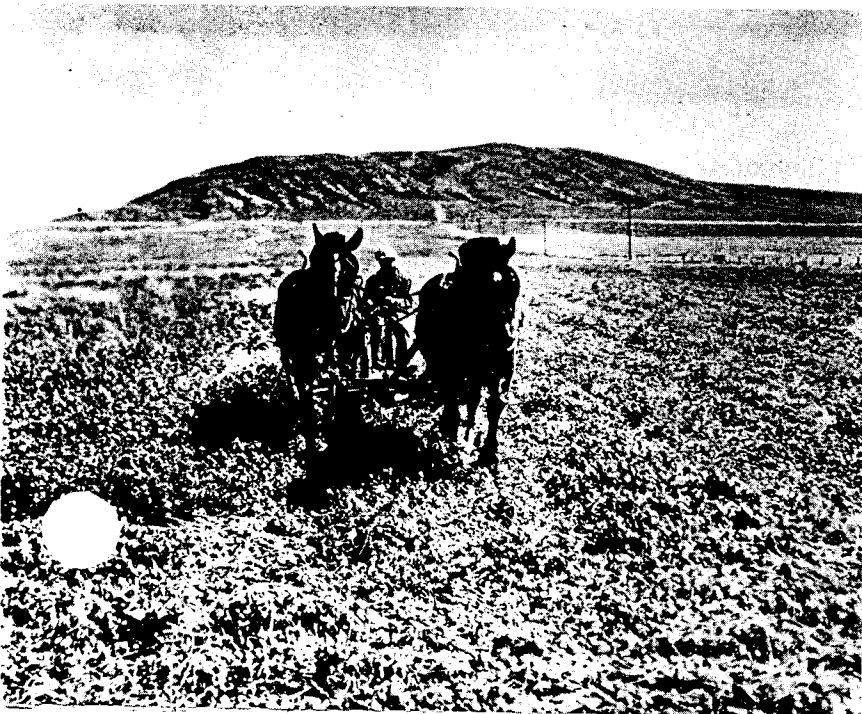
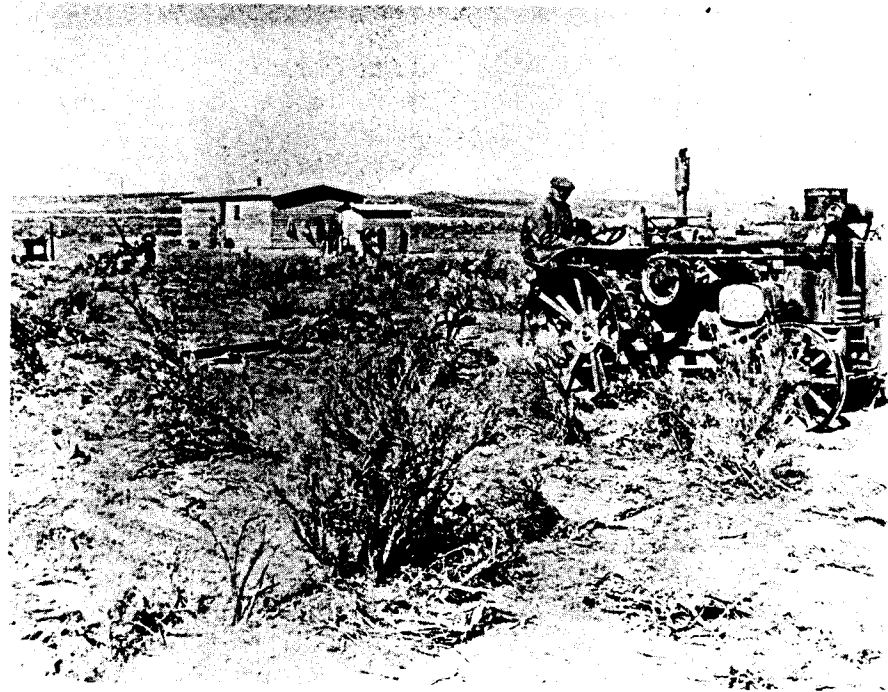
PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, AND
ANNUAL MEETING LOCATIONS OF THE
OREGON RECLAMATION CONGRESS
FROM 1912 TO PRESENT
(continued)

<u>Year</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Place of annual meeting</u>
1955	R. M. Kent	Clancy Jean	Prineville
1956	Paul House	Clancy Jean	Salem
1957	Tom Crawford	Clancy Jean	Ontario
1958	Tom Crawford	Clancy Jean and Amos Bierly	Madras
1959	Harold Hursh	Marvin Shearer	Klamath Falls
1960	Harold Hursh	Marvin Shearer	Baker
1961	Harold Hursh	Marvin Shearer	Salem
1962	John Stewart	Marvin Shearer	Medford
1963	John Stewart	Marvin Shearer	Bend
1964	Jack Hoffbuhr	Marvin Shearer	Portland
1965	LaSelle Coles	Marvin Shearer	Hermiston
1966	Walt Hoffbuhr	Marvin Shearer	Grants Pass
1967	Walt Hoffbuhr	Marvin Shearer	Salem
1968	Alvin Ward	Marvin Shearer	Ontario
1969	Alvin Ward	Marvin Shearer	Klamath Falls
1970	Ben Evick	Marvin Shearer	Portland
1971	Ben Evick	Marvin Shearer	Sun River
1972	Rustin Brewer	Fred Gustafson	Otter Rock



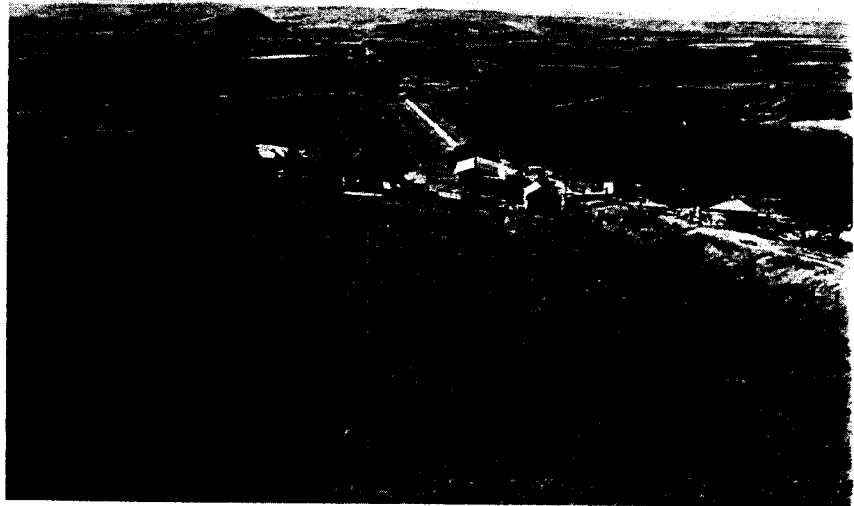
A pre-fabricated structure quite commonly used as the house during the early stages of developing an irrigated farm. Note that sage brush has been cleared from field to right of tent.

Using time borrowed from the important job of clearing and levelling land wood shanties were built to replace the tents. Note the expanded cleared area to the rear.



The first water delivery and a good stand of alfalfa made life seem better but not necessarily prosperous.

From a harsh environment to a desirable place to live.



In place of desert lands producing sagebrush and rabbit brush, onion fields produce record yields.

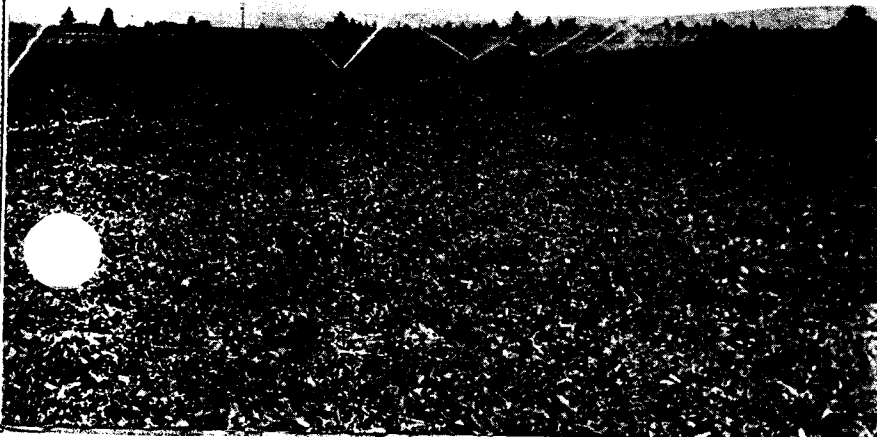
Early dreams blossomed into reality as efficient production practices were adopted.





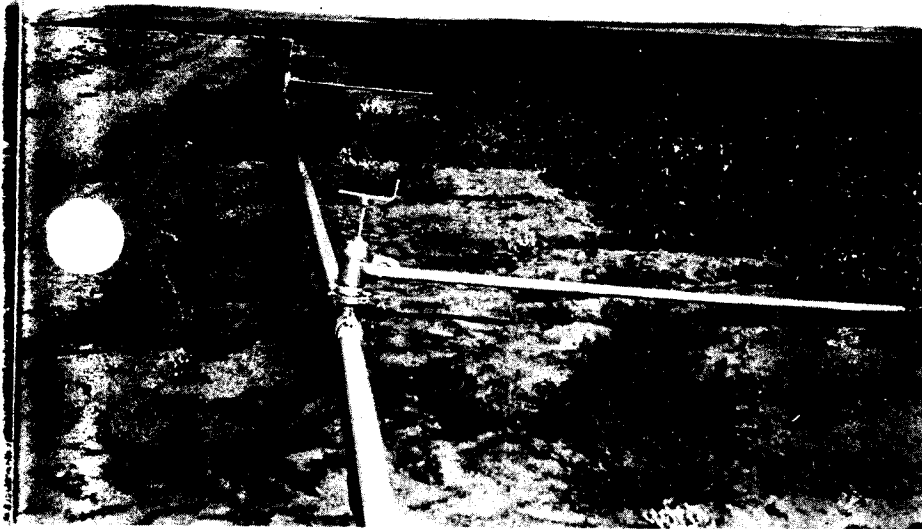
In south central Oregon at Klamath Falls, thousands of acres of potato fields replace the sagebrush and juniper.

Water control structures and conveyance systems developed rapidly on farms after water was brought to the lands. Hundreds of miles of concrete-lined ditches exist on the Owyhee Project shown here, thirty-five years after the first water reached the barren sagebrush covered land.



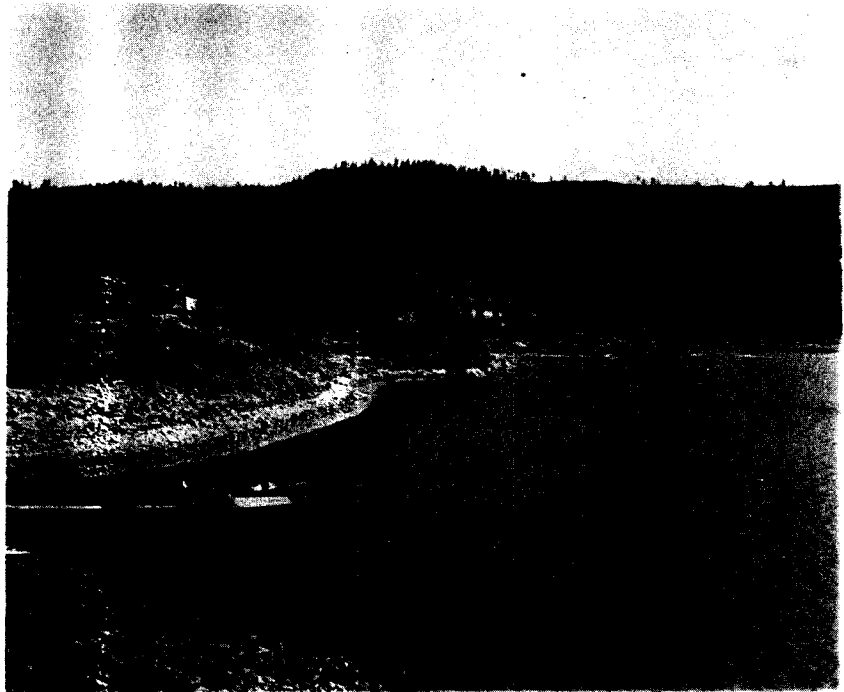
Sprinkler systems replaced many furrows on irrigated farms as water control and labor became more critical.

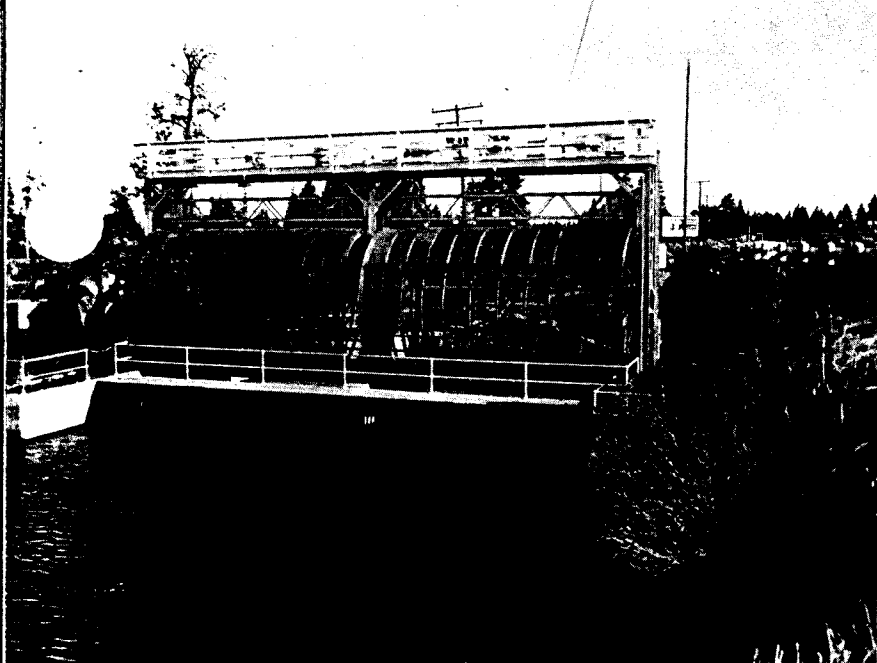
The Oregon Water Resources Congress promoted the cooperative snow survey program from its inception. Data from this program has proved invaluable to the operation of irrigation districts in estimating the availability of water supplies prior to the irrigation season.



Privately financed projects in the Hermiston-Boardman area transformed thousands of acres of sagebrush-spattered desert lands to productive agriculture in a single year during the early '70's.

Reservoirs have provided recreational opportunities in water starved areas throughout eastern Oregon. Summer homes dot the shoreline of Drew's Reservoir shown here which is located 25 miles west of Lakeview, Oregon.





Irrigation districts have invested thousands of dollars in fish screens to prevent fish entry into irrigation canals.

In western Oregon, irrigation was developed largely on an individual basis along streams. Urban expansion into these areas is causing problems. Productivity from irrigation districts create opportunities for employment within communities, which in turn require more living room, which in turn crowds irrigated land. This is a major concern of existing projects today.



During recent years, moderate sized reservoirs have been built throughout the state by the Soil Conservation Service under Public Law 566. This is the Plat I Reservoir of the Sutherlin Creek Watershed. The lake covers approximately 145 acres. Picnic facilities and other recreational improvements are under the management of the Douglas County Water Park Department.

About the Author

Art King could have inherited his interest in Oregon land and water resources. His great grandfather, Nahum King, arrived in the Willamette Valley with the wagon train made famous by the "Terrible Trail." In 1845 the family settled on a donation land claim in King's Valley and immediately initiated the utilization of the hydro-power potentials of the Luckiamute River with the construction and operation of a gristmill.

Art's maternal grandfather, Albert Busse, arrived in Harney County in 1887 and homesteaded on the Blitzen River south of Burns. He constructed a diversion dam and canal for irrigation. The dam was made of flat rocks skidded into place with the aid of a horse. It anchors the site of Busse's Ford, a prominent landmark in the area. The water was used to irrigate vegetables which were sold to the freighters and others who passed by the homestead.

Art was born and raised two miles north of Corvallis' city center as it was in 1906. He attended grade school near Corvallis and graduated from Corvallis High School in 1922. He graduated from OAC with a B.S. degree in Soils in 1928 and remained to earn a Master's degree in 1930. His technical knowledge of drainage developed while he worked as a professional tile layer to earn money for school. Professional experience with irrigation began in 1926 when he served as chief and only irrigator on the experiment station east farm.

Art started with the OSU Extension Service as a district county agent in 1929, but after receiving his Master's degree was appointed soils specialist in August 1930. Titles have changed on occasions since that time but the job objective, the improved use of Oregon's soil and water, remained constant.

Art's first association with the Oregon Reclamation Congress began at the Prineville meeting in 1926 when as a student he handled the registration desk for Dr. W. L. Powers, the Congress secretary. Except for a brief sojourn in Washington, D.C. and [REDACTED] foreign countries from 1952 to 1955, he has continuously participated in the activities of O.W.R.C. since 1926.

Art King passed away in Corvallis, Oregon on October 25, 1972.