

Speech at Tieton Library
March 22 1961

The role of the Tieton country in history is auspicious, yet we have been too submerged in centennials to yet recognize something of far reaching and lasting importance. And this development is so comparatively recent ~~we could not~~ if we ~~could not~~ ~~advised~~ you, yourselves did not participate in it, you have relatives, neighbors or friends who did.

History is a vantage point from which we can look two ways , behind, and see where we came from, arriving at the place we now are, and forward, so we can see where we are going.

It is the little stories like the stories of the development of the Tieton ~~and~~ country that made ~~and~~ America what she is today; the little stories, put together in one book that makes the great volume of our ~~country~~ country. So if we believe in the American way of life, we believe these little stories are worth preserving.

I could tell you about the Indians of your area, the ~~the~~ ~~Indian~~ ~~pumps~~, in reality the ~~the~~ ~~Switz~~ and of some few of them who yet live near the center of their country, around ~~the~~ Packwood, although ~~many~~ many of their blood live on the Yakima Reservation

I could tell you of the Railroad surveys, to determine the practicability of building a railway from the Mississippi to the Pacific which brought men and pack mules through your region in 1853, although they did little but make notes and inscribe data about the elements and the general terrain. But I'll come a little closer to present times, the days of the cattlemen and homesteaders and the sheepmen, the ~~beginning~~ beginnings of the Yakima Valley settlement after footholds were established 100 years ago this spring.

About 1880 the first settlers came into this region, Philande Kelley, John Koempel, Fred Dealy, Louis Lanch, John French, Tom Donnelly, Angus French, Tom Weddle and Frank Weddle.

We should remember that the first were livestock men, we should remember that this was semi-arid country; dry land and sagebrush. That grain was the only crop the settlers could plant on the wide open spaces that have become the best of the apple country. They planted in the fall and harvested in the early spring and summer.

The earliest settlement was just east of present Tieton. W.H. Schenck had a drygoods, grocery and postoffice there with a dance hall on the second floor. It wasn't until after irrigation came that J.E. Madson and D.H. Dressen of the Tieton Township Corporation gave a 200 x 175 foot square as a park and playground. Around this grew the new town with Market, Maple, Elm, Oak, Washington, Minnesota, Tieton and Wisconsin the first streets.

D.W. Northland built a bank on lots he bought of A.C. Alderman. A.D. Rovig built a lumber yard and the Horticultural Union was later built on that location. Fred Milliron built a store on the site occupied later by Campbell's Department Store and the Tieton Mercantile built on the location of the first hotel operated by Mr. and Mrs. William Anderson.

Schools started in the earliest days with Tieton and Highland joining to organize Cowyche School District 27. School was in a small cabin about a mile southeast of Tieton. It burned down and for a time classes were held in individual homes. Then a school was built on property acquired from Herman Froemke and that building became the Tieton Grange Hall. The stone school was built in 1912 and you can take it on through the years from there, easily enough.

Now look back through the years, to the passing of the cattle herds and the ~~devel~~ development of small patch irrigation; the coming of the railroad into the Yakima Valley providing ~~and~~ a marked; the availability of irrigable land and ~~and~~ an ~~and~~ abundance of water needing only to be captivated .

Charles Schanno, as early as 1876, was interested in development of irrigation in the Tieton drylands. In 1890 D.W. Stair was studying the possibility of captivating the waters from snowpacks at the head of the Tieton and ~~and~~ diverting them to the ~~and~~ ^Wowiche, and by 1892 bonds were voted for an ~~and~~ irrigation project, but hard time intervened.

In 1895 E.C. Burlingame carried out a survey revealing the practicability but the Congdon ditch cut out part of the lands west of Yakima. Burlingame had hoped to irrigate.

About the same time the state became interested in the Tieton basin and Bumping lake. George S. Rankin and George Weikel acquired property of B.F. Barge, and sought a state bill without success. By then realization was coming to the Yakima Valley that there was not enough ~~and~~ unappropriated water, and that development of ~~and~~ storage facilities was necessary.

For a long time now we have heard of men who have made their marks in the world by developing this community or that community; for years we have looked up builders and dreamers and such. I am sorry to say I can't go along with that way of thinking.

My historical ~~and~~ research has showed me that our country--our Yakima Valley has made more men than have contributed to the valley's ~~and~~ making. The resources and all other elements were here; the final component, the human element, was contributed by those for whom we now have tender memories.

Theodore Roosevelt came to Yakima in 1902 and made significant utterances then that we in the Yakima valley, overly proud of "the birthplace of irrigation" (forgetting the earlier developments in ~~Colorado and~~ California, and other states, have long overlooked.

He pointed to the Irrigation Law of 1902 marking the beginning of a policy more important to this country's internal development than any since the homestead law, which came about in Lincoln's administration.

He said

"By aid of the National government cooperating with the state governments, with individuals and associations of individuals, we shall see development during the next 50 years literally unparalleled." (We have)

"What is necessary, he said, ~~is~~ to distribute the water is to get it out of the irrigation ditches, ultimately to have great storage reservoirs which will enable us to take the waters that go to waste at seasons when we do not need them. "We are now entered upon this policy and a very great good will come of it."

So the ~~Yakima~~ ^{Pieton} project was begun, tunnels and canals; Bumping Lake and at ~~the~~ ^{the} Alliste Meadows on the ~~Pieton~~.

The Main work was completed in 1909, 1910 and 1911, five tunnels, Steeple, 100 feet long, Columbar, 1,200, ~~Pieton~~, 2,730, North Fork 3,810, almost three miles of tunnels; some 12 miles of main canal, 89 of laterals and 238 of sub laterals.

Originally surveyed for 27,000 acres it was enlarged and then cut to about 32,000 by consolidation of water rights.

By 1913 costs were fixed by the Department, 10 payments or a total of \$93 an acre. In 1914 the Reclamation Extension Act extended the ~~Yakima~~ ^{Yakima} repayment to 20 years. In 1917 the newly

Yakima-Tieton Irrigation district authorized an enlarged expenditure to cover 32,000 acre and enlargement of the main canal to carry more water/

By 1910 the project was 75 per cent complete with a work force of 320 men and 190 horses in the field, and work under way on Bumping Lake Dam at the same time. By November of that year units 1 and 12 were finished and Bumping Reservoir was almost ready and the distribution system of unit 3 was the only work remaining.

Some remember the contracted contractors, Nelson Rich of Prosser, George Cook and Sons of Spokane, D.H. Traphagen, Seattle.

That year Secretary of Interior Ballinger announced units 1 and 2 would receive water and the sale of 18,883 acres for which water would be available. From then on we have a general recollection of the happenings, the completion, development of the orchards and their coming into production fed by 360 miles of canals and pipelines, an eventual cost of \$114.40 per acre and a total cost of \$3,660,800. And the proving ground test was completed in 1947 when the final payment was made and the Tieton Project became the first in the nation to pay out under the Reclamation Act.

Like I said, the little stories about Tieton and the Yakima Valley are the stories that have made this America what she is.

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