

LAND AND WATER.

Brought Together at Woodbridge, San Joaquin County.

Six Thousand People Celebrate the Opening of the Headgates of the Woodbridge Canal.

The little village of Woodbridge, about fourteen miles this side of Stockton, in San Joaquin County, was the scene of a remarkable popular demonstration yesterday, the occasion being the celebration of the opening of the headgates of the canal of the Woodbridge Canal and Irrigation Company. At least 6,000 people were present, and great enthusiasm prevailed. The roads leading into the town from all directions were lined with carriages and vehicles of every description. Fourteen carloads of people came over from Stockton by special train, and many arrived from that city in carriages. Beside the attendance from the immediate neighborhood, many were present from distant parts of the State.

Arthur Noble, J. M. McCarty, J. M. Ingalls, Frank Cobb, W. W. Prugh, J. Peters and many other members of the San Joaquin County Board of Trade came in carriages. The following gentlemen, H. Mills, Vice-President of the State Board of Trade, Judge G. J. Swinerton of Stockton and J. A. Morrissey, San Joaquin County's representative on the Board of Trade, who had the general direction of the celebration.

The Reception Committee consisted of the President and Directors of the Woodbridge Canal and Irrigation Company and the citizens of Woodbridge, and the visitors were given a welcome they will never forget. The Southern Pacific Company ran a free train backward and forward all day between Lodi and Woodbridge, a distance of about three miles.

Early in the day the town presented an animated scene. Street fairs had taken up positions on every corner, and made things lively in their neighborhood. They seemed to do a lively business and were well paid for their presence.

An excellent lunch from Stockton went out to meet the invited guests on their arrival and furnished much during the day, while the booming of a cannon, located near the headgates, served to enliven the occasion at intervals.

The most remarkable feature of the celebration, however, was the grand dinner provided by the ladies of Woodbridge, Lodi, Acampo, Stockton, and the surrounding country. Under a great pavilion eighteen long tables had been spread, at which, during the day, five thousand people were fed. The tables were handsomely decorated with flowers and evergreens, and were simply loaded down with such viands as are only furnished by the skillful housewives of the country. There was everything that could be desired—fat roasted turkeys, chicken pies, barbecued meats, glorious mince and pumpkin pies, cranberry and sweetmeats in quantity and variety. It was a grand dinner and was served by the charming ladies themselves.

The tables were in charge of the following ladies, each one of whom had four young ladies as assistants: Mrs. Dr. H. Bentley, Mrs. Charles Smith, Mrs. Charles Allison, Mrs. Dr. Burchard, Mrs. M. Carr, Mrs. Rebecca Ivory, Mrs. B. S. Myers, Mrs. George Askey, Mrs. E. S. Hogan, Mrs. I. A. Sollinger, Mrs. Amos Boyce, Mrs. Charles Newton, Mrs. Robert Boyce, Mrs. Wesley Horton, Mrs. Henry Barnhart, Mrs. A. S. Thomas, Mrs. Thomas K. Burkett and Miss Hannah Hutchings.

To Mrs. Dr. Bentley's table fell the honor of entertaining the Board of Trade and invited guests. The day is remembered by Mrs. B. A. Laws, Mrs. B. F. Sprague, Mrs. R. Salsbury and Mrs. Emerson.

The Ladies' Dinner Committee was organized by Mrs. Charles F. Allison, President, Mrs. Hattie H. Saunders Secretary, and Mrs. King Treasurer.

THE CANAL AND DAM. The canal is one of the largest and longest yet built in the State and is apparently exhaustless supply of water. It is forty-eight miles long, with an average width of ninety feet and average depth of six feet. The course of the canal is such that nearly all the territory between Woodbridge and Stockton can be watered by means of the canal, and aggregating fully ninety miles in length, have been projected. The work has cost about \$3,000,000. Only white labor has been employed in digging the big ditch and nearly all this money has been paid out to men who live in that locality.

Credit for suggesting the canal is given Byron D. Beckwith, an old resident of the county. He was granted a franchise for the project on December 30, 1886. James Hinkley of Lodi was one of his enthusiastic supporters. H. H. Sanders of Calaveras County, a civil engineer, gave efficient aid, and B. F. Laws superintended the work. Others who favored the idea, and have since given what help they could, are B. F. Langdon and C. H. Johnson of Lodi, and J. H. Woolly and W. H. Johnson of Tulare County. Beckwith and the early movers in the scheme were badly handicapped by limited means. A company was finally organized, with \$400,000 capital stock, which is now held in New York, Pittsburg and San Francisco. The present officers of the company are: M. V. B. Watson of San Francisco, President; N. T. Moses is Secretary, the Bank of California is Treasurer, and B. A. Laws Superintendent of the canal. The company is Judge Greene of Oakland, Thomas Lancaster of San Francisco and Judge S. W. Dexter of New York.

At the first time of the year it is figured that 150,000 inches of water are available at the canal headgate at Woodbridge. The Mokelumne is a full, flowing mountain river. For ten months of the year it is fully ninety feet across in the valley, and ranges from ten to twenty-five feet deep. The headgate consists of ten small gates with a total width of forty-eight feet. It took 500,000 feet of lumber to build it. The dam that diverts the water from the river raises the bed of the river fully seven feet. This is accomplished by a water-way 200 feet long and a series of carefully-constructed channel gates.

THE EXERCISES. Of the day consisted in the ceremony of opening the flood-gates and letting the water of the river into the canal for the first time, and an address by William H. Mills, General Land Agent of the Southern Pacific Company, and Vice-President of the State Board of Trade. After the multitude had been fed, the ladies of the vast concourse of people assembled about the headgates and were called to order by Judge G. J. Swinerton of Stockton, who acted as president of the day. He said: "The time has now come to celebrate the opening of the canal, the most important event in the history of this county, and it has been thought proper, by those having this matter in charge, that inasmuch as this is an enterprise of the entire State, that all parts of the State should be, as far as possible, represented here. As one feature of this occasion in line with that idea, the committee have selected William H. Mills, Vice-President of the State Board of Trade, to send the first flow of water through this dam. It is not now the time or place to set forth the vast importance of the results of this enterprise, and I will simply introduce to you William H. Mills."

Mr. Mills stood by the great lever which was to raise the gate and said: "I wish to thank the committee for the distinguished honor they have conferred upon me in nominating me for this great office. I wish also to thank these gentlemen and you, citizens of this county, for the compliment this invitation implies to the State Board of Trade, of which I am an executive officer. I understand that I am to be called upon to make some remarks here in the day, but I take this occasion to say one thing which might not

be appropriate in a connected address, and that relates to the gentlemen who inaugurated and who have carried this work to completion. I have heard the story of the heroism of the men who have the laudations of their heroism. I have had proof presented to me of their identity, and I believe the people of this county, when they are made aware of this great work are upon them, will find that these men were their highest benefactors.

All great enterprises have had small beginnings. All great enterprises have originated in the mind of some one man. In this instance Mr. Beckwith is the originator of this great scheme. There has never been a great enterprise which was not prosecuted through difficulties, and this has been no exception to the rule."

The speaker went on to say that it was easy to look upon any great work after its completion and forget all the difficulties that had been encountered in its construction. He said that he would like to look upon St. Peter's and imagine that it had been spoken into existence, but if they would read his history they would find that the construction was a source of contention for centuries. They were about to inaugurate a great industrial enterprise for the fertilization of their valley, and the development of its material resources, and he wanted to couple the name of B. D. Beckwith with the undertaking in such a way that they would never forget the sacrifices he had made, the toil he had endured and the patience and perseverance he had manifested. The greatest enterprise of earth were often originated by men who afterward sleep in forgotten graves. He recited the first verse of Edward Everett Hale's poem, written in celebration of the men who are heroes of great achievements. "I do Not Know His Name," and expressed the hope that such would not be the case with Mr. Beckwith in the history of this county, with to raise the gate and turn the water into the canal.

Mr. Beckwith stepped forward, and as the crowd gathered about him, he addressed the multitude and raised the headgate and the water flowed into the canal in a great stream. Mr. Morrissey led the crowd in three cheers for the Woodbridge Canal, and three more for Mr. Beckwith, and the ceremonies at the gate were over. At 10 o'clock the crowd went for a short time, the vast concourse of people returned to the main street of the town and assembled in front of a temporary platform on the corner, to listen to the address by Mr. Mills.

Judge Swinerton again called them to order and read a letter from S. D. Woods, President of the Board of Trade, in which he regretted not being able to be present, having been detained in Stockton by the trial of an important case, which was on trial before Judge W. C. Van Fleet, Superior Judge of Sacramento County. He congratulated the audience upon the pleasure they would have in listening to the address of Mr. Mills, who was to follow. He said that the grandest monuments of antiquity were built for the distribution of water. In the case of the canal, the mankind had instituted a work that upon the union of land and water depended its highest and most permanent interests. He then introduced W. H. Mills, whose appearance was greeted with applause.

MR. MILLS' ADDRESS. Was listened to with marked attention by the immense crowd and was frequently interrupted by bursts of applause. He stood in the open street, they were too deeply interested to feel weariness, and gave the speaker their undivided attention throughout the address. The speaker started out by saying that when he accepted the invitation to deliver an address upon this occasion it had been with the understanding that it was to be delivered in a hall. There was no hall in the town that would hold a quarter of the crowd that had assembled, and the committee had been obliged to change that part of the programme. His address would therefore be of a different character than he had intended, as a line which would be comfortable to an audience comfortably seated would not be pleasing to a crowd which was compelled to listen to the speaker standing.

He had agreed to deliver the address because of the deep and abiding interest he felt in everything pertaining to the canal, and because he felt that it was the duty of every citizen to know the history of the canal, and the value of the water which it would bring to the county and the State. What they did for their country they did for the State, and what they did for the State they did for the nation. He said he was proud of the platform from which he was speaking. It was an implement of industry, and while he was not a Farmer's Alliance member he would be if he was a farmer.

The speaker said that when he first saw that beautiful dam he was impressed with the fact that it had been planned by pioneers and pioneers who first visited that section did not think it was worth a cent, but his audience evidently differed with them, as they appreciated the value of the structure. The work just inaugurated was of vast importance to that section of the State. One hundred and seventeen thousand acres of land lay tributary and subject to the waters which would flow through the canal. Investigation of the history and commercial value of such schemes, he had made estimates between the farming community practiced in this country and the farming community of other States that it has twelve months of productivity in the year. There are twelve months in the year when forage is grown and beef and wool and mutton produced, and the difference between our State and other States is as twelve months are to one.

In the dry land farming of California it requires four men to the 1,000 acres, provided the practice of summer-fallow is adopted. In Colusa, Tehama and Yolo Counties the industry of one man, with the gang-plow and the seedling machine, is equal to the common farming of 200 acres of land. Under the system of irrigated land ten acres of land are sufficient to employ the diligence of a single cultivator of the soil—that is, one-twenty-fifth of the acreage. The number of men to be employed is twenty-five to the acre. In the dry land farming of California it takes ten men to till one acre of land. You have added twenty-five times of area to the country, on the same amount of capital, which are available to men who follow the tilling of the soil. So that when you irrigate 100,000 acres of land you produce a capacity equal to 2,500,000 acres. The amount of value is not the acreage, but the productivity of the soil.

The soil they were about to irrigate was unusually fertile. It is better than most of the land that has been placed under irrigation in other portions of the State. About 3 per cent of it would stand the test of the highest irrigability. You cannot irrigate a country unless it is properly drained. Men had an idea that irrigation was practiced simply to supply moisture and nothing else. This was a mistake. The heaviest rainfall in Europe is in Portugal, in the valley of the Po and in Ireland. In the valley of the Po, with one-half the acreage of this country, they have 9,000,000 of population. In the Sacramento Valley, in this State, with the same acreage of irrigable land, there are 170,000 people and they are beginning to feel the density of population. You must have drainage, and you must have irrigation. You cannot irrigate a country unless it is properly drained. Men had an idea that irrigation was practiced simply to supply moisture and nothing else. This was a mistake. 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