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BUILDING PROJECTS OF HOLT COMPANIES

Improvements Planned In All Valley Cities Indicate Active Season

Business Blocks and Extensions of Ice and Cold Storage Plants Involve an Expenditure by Mr. Holt and the Hol- ton Corporation of a Third of a Mil- lion Dollars.

In pursuance of his fixed policy to assist in the development of all of the towns of Imperial Valley, W. F. Holt has plans matured for a building campaign this fall and winter which will represent an expenditure of fully \$333,000. Every incorporated city in the valley will benefit by these operations.

One of the principal extensions of the Holton Power Company's interests will be the enlargement of the ice plant at El Centro. Mr. Holt proposes to erect an addition to the plant which will extend to the south of the present building, and which will be eighty by 140 feet. A new thirty-five ton ice machine will be added to the present equipment.

The sum of \$150,000 is to be invested in the erection of cold storage plants at El Centro, Imperial, Holtville, Brawley and Calexico. The large cold storage plant will be erected in El Centro, on land located next to the Blinn Lumber Company's yards. During the past week Mr. Holt has purchased from the town company a tract 150x300 feet in block 16 as the site for this new enterprise.

It is proposed to erect a plant capable of storing carload lots of produce and fruits, poultry and meats, which will supply the valley merchants with products in as fine condition as they can be found on the Los Angeles markets. Smaller cold storages will be erected in the other towns and these will be used as distributing stations for ice and as depots for the gathering of valley perishable products.

Plans have been prepared for the erection of a one-story brick business block on Second street, in Calexico. This will be 130x140 feet, and will cost approximately \$30,000. It will have five store rooms, and it is probable this building will be started about the middle of December. The site at present is leased to Edgar Brothers, who have subleased to other parties. It is desired to clear away the present buildings by the first of December.

A one-story brick business block will be erected at Fifth street and Holt avenue, in Holtville, at a cost of between \$25,000 and \$30,000. This block will contain six stores, with a frontage of 150 feet on Fifth street and 100 feet on Holt avenue. It will be started about the first of December.

The plant of the Imperial Valley Gas Company, which is another Holt corporation, is in progress at El Centro, and within a short time service pipes will be laid for El Centro and Imperial, so that gas may be served to customers in both places early this winter.

Other plans for great development in this valley are under consideration, details of which may be announced soon, and the activities of Mr. Holt and his associates bid fair to exceed this year those of any previous season.

HAY RATE CUT

San Bernardino Put on Equal Footing With Los Angeles on Rate From Imperial Valley Points.

The Southern Pacific has announced a cut in the freight rate on hay from points in the Imperial Valley to San Bernardino from \$4 per ton to \$3.50 per ton in carload lots.

This gives San Bernardino the same rate which has been applied to business of this kind between valley points and Los Angeles, and while merchants of the former city are pleased at the concession granted, they make the plea that they should be granted even lower rates, as San Bernardino is sixty-five miles nearer Imperial Valley than is Los Angeles. This is one of the points which will be urged at the meeting of the State Railroad Commission in San Bernardino next month.

LAND FRAUD CASES

Witness Says He Made Assignment Before He Filed Desert Claim.

The Imperial Valley land case in the United States Court at Los Angeles, in which various persons are charged with fraudulent dealings in desert entry assignments, is expensive. Each witness is paid \$3 a day for attendance at court. With the exception of a few, all of the 130 persons subpoenaed have thus far been in attendance every day during the trial.

The jurymen are paid \$3 a day, so that the case costs about \$400 a day, just for witness and jury fees. This does not include the expenses of the court and the salaries of several officials.

One of the witnesses this week was Fred M. Bevis, an ice man, who testified that he was approached by Paul McPherrin, one of the defendants in the case in March of 1903.

"McPherrin asked me if I wanted to earn \$25 easy," testified Bevis. "I said, 'yes, if there is nothing crooked about it.' He told me to file an entry on desert land and sign an assignment. I signed the assignment first and received \$25, and then went to the Land Office and filed on the desert land. I didn't know where the land was and didn't care. I had no intention of reclaiming it or of putting in any water pipes on the land. All I wanted was the \$25, and I got it. I don't know who the land was sold to, or whether or not it was sold at all." The government attorneys allege that this land to which Bevis made out an assignment was sold to Mrs. Lydia Riggins.

MESQUITE LAKE COMPANY

Settlers Approve Proposed Water Con- tract and Proceed With Incorporation

At the meeting of prospective stockholders in the new Mesquite Lake Water Company, held on Friday of last week at the ranch of the McKim Brothers, about forty people participated and many more were represented by letters. The proposed contract between the water company and the California Development Company was discussed in detail, and after some minor amendments it was ratified.

The temporary directors were instructed to proceed at once with the incorporation of the company under the laws of California, and the papers have been transmitted to the Secretary of State.

The contract ratified by this meeting is very similar to the one between Water Company No. 1 and the California Development Company.

FINE COTTON CROP SURE

Quality and Quantity of Staple Sur- prise Experts and Prove Suita- bility of Soil and Climate.

From 100 bolls borne by one stock of cotton in the Loftus field at Meloland, a pound and a quarter of seed cotton was picked this week. The lint and seed were separated by hand and weighed accurately, giving a result of the proportion of a bale of 500 pounds lint to 1400 pounds of seed cotton. That the best fields in the valley will yield better than a bale to the acre is a demonstrated fact and it is also plain to experienced growers that a much heavier yield can be depended upon when farmers learn how to cultivate the weed.

TEAMSTERS ARE WANTED

Chief Engineer Sewell, of the Laguna Dam project, has issued a call for 100 teamsters and scraper men to work on the canals being constructed on the Indian Reservation, in Imperial County. Camps for the force have been prepared and work on the canals was begun this week.

QUINCES DOING WELL

Nurseryman William Kelly, who has been inspecting some of the valley orchards, reports that the numerous quince trees have been making a fine growth this season, and that they should bear next season. He has great faith in the Imperial Valley's advantages as a grower.

CRIMINALLY RECKLESS ASSAULT UPON IMPERIAL VALLEY INTERESTS

Anonymous Government Official and Irresponsible Correspon- dent Concoct Amazing Mass of False Statements, and San Francisco Paper Shrieks That Valley Settlers are in Danger of Destruction By Water Famine.

An amazing and monstrously false Washington dispatch in the San Francisco Call of September 30 has aroused the people of Imperial Valley to bitter indignation against those who are suspected of responsibility for repeated assaults upon the irrigation enterprise of this region.

An unnamed "government official" is quoted by the correspondent as having said: "The people of Imperial Valley do not know now slender is the thread upon which hang their lives and property. If the Colorado river should go on one of its tangents, the entire region would starve for water within forty-eight hours. The canal people realize their danger and have intimated that they want government assistance, but there is no help for them as matters stand. The situation is, indeed, very dangerous."

That is an exaggerated statement of a problem that is engaging the attention of canal engineers, and it is false because the anonymous government official is obviously ignorant of conditions and does not understand the factors in the problem. If the Colorado should do something very erratic and improbable the engineers would have to meet the situation with some new method of handling water at the intake, but the valley would not starve for water.

So long as the canal system of the valley is supplied through an intake directly from the river below Laguna dam, there will be the remote possibility of a lowering of the channel to a level that would leave the bottom of the gate above the surface of the water at the time of least discharge of the river, and because of that possible difficulty in getting water into the canals, engineers that have studied the problem are convinced that it would be wise to attach the Imperial Valley system to the Laguna dam.

Relations between Imperial Valley settlers and officers of the Reclamation Service have been strained since the inception of the project, and because some government officers have talked foolishly and been hostile to the project, the people of the valley have been reluctant to have any dealings with the Reclamation Service. It is natural, no doubt, to suspect that anonymous alarmist is an officer of the Reclamation Service, but no responsible officer of that bureau is so grossly ignorant of conditions and it is not to be presumed that any officer who has knowledge of the situation is so criminally malignant as to utter such astounding falsehoods.

The Call's Washington correspondent is even more ignorant than the official whom he professes to quote and by combining with utter lack of true information his desire to concoct a sensational story, he produces a monstrous fabrication and inflicts incalculable injury upon the interests of thousands of people. This felonious fool asserts that the people of Imperial Valley and 500,000 head of cattle "are in imminent danger of dying of thirst," and goes on to explain that "the dam on the Colorado river, which supplies the arid region with water, is filling with silt and becoming more clogged every hour."

There is no "dam on the Colorado river which supplies Imperial Valley with water." Water is taken from the river directly through a concrete headgate, and the more the river silt's up its channel, the safer the supply. Every settler knows these facts, but persons who read the Call do not, and many of them are writing in great alarm to friends in the valley. The lie has a long start, and it will be hard for the truth to overtake it.

Last summer the Colorado's flood was unprecedented and the river scoured its channel, as it always does in the flood, but deeper than usual. Opposite the headgate the channel was very deep, and the canal engineers were worried lest it might remain deep enough to affect the flow through the intake at low water. As the flood subsided, silt is deposited. The bottom comes up as the surface goes

The problem that might be presented by failure of the river to silt up to the normal bed plane was discussed informally at Spokane last summer by engineers of the Reclamation Service and engineers of the valley canal system, and the government engineers agreed to aid in its solution by securing certain data relating to the slope of the river from Yuma to the headgate. At one time the slope was so steep that there seemed to be doubt of the deposit of silt enough to raise the bed to the desired level, and the possibility of necessity of going to Laguna dam for water was considered. It was agreed by the engineers that a canal from Laguna dam to the headgate could be constructed in thirty days.

In September, however, conditions changed, the channel silted up, the slope returned to normal and the Reclamation Service engineers reported that the danger of cutting back of the channel had passed. In the meantime, the C. D. engineers had the dredgers at work cleaning out the intake and removing accumulations of silt in the main canal below the headgate. That is the work the machines are now doing. Should the river reach a very low water stage this winter before the main canal is dredged out, there might be a shortage of water for irrigation for a brief period, but there is not the slightest danger that the people of the valley or their cattle would perish of thirst.

It is probable that some discussion of all these problems and contingencies by officers of the Reclamation Service was heard in Washington by an official or clerk, who knew nothing of the situation and misunderstood what the engineers said. It would be quite possible for one entirely unacquainted with the physical facts to get the impression that there was imminent danger of disaster, and to misinterpret the request of the canal engineers for professional cooperation as an appeal for government aid. The misinformation and erroneous conclusions of an ignorant official, poured into the ears of a correspondent eager for sensations and for a chance to bat Ballinger, might easily get twisted into the amazing mess of stuff published by the Call.

Maleficent, stupidity and criminal recklessness account for the injurious falsehoods spread broadcast by the Washington correspondent of the San Francisco Call. It is not necessary to seek for malignant motive or Machiavellian intrigue in a government bureau. The attempt to cast blame upon Secretary Ballinger for alleged inaction of the government is mere puerile politics of a reporter in Washington. No appeal for aid has been made, and no aid is needed.

It is the conviction of those who understand the situation in its broader aspects that the government should undertake permanent work to control the Colorado river and that the Imperial Valley irrigation system must eventually be connected with Laguna dam, but there is no situation of affairs on the river demanding immediate action in either direction. Should the emergency arrive, it would be met promptly and effectively.

DIDN'T SEE COMMISSIONERS

A delegation from the Imperial Valley Business Men's Association planned last week on a conference with the State Railroad Commission, at San Bernardino, in regard to railroad rates in the Imperial Valley. A similar delegation was to go from the Coachella Valley, but both missed their reckoning, and found that the Railroad Commissioners had been in San Bernardino almost a week previous and will not be there again until November.

LECTURES AT HEBER

Prof. Mansell, U. S. C., will lecture at the Heber Institute next Tuesday afternoon on landscape gardening, and on Thursday he will lecture on produce gardening. All interested are invited to attend.

BROOM CORN LOOKS WELL

Fields Near El Centro Give Promise of Heavy Yield of Superior Quality—Prices are High.

Two fields of broom corn, one of twenty acres, grown by Denver D. Pellet on the C. S. Morris ranch, and another of thirty-five acres grown by A. J. Snee, on the Blackington ranch, near El Centro, give promise of producing a heavy crop.

Samples of the straw were brought to The Press office this week and placed on exhibition. It is long and fine, and the head is still in the growing stage.

The estimate is that these fields will produce fully a ton to the acre. Broom corn prices have been taking soaring flights the past two months, and the last quotations were \$130 per ton for the best qualities. Valley growers stand to make a handsome profit on this season's crop.

Samples submitted to broom makers in Los Angeles have brought from them the opinion that Imperial Valley will prove an excellent district for growing the highest grades of broom corn, and it is probable that another season will bring about an extensive planting of this crop.

Already there is talk of the establishment of a small broom factory at El Centro to work up the valley product.

TWO-HEADED SIDEWINDER

James Maxey Kills Freak Rattlesnake on Ranch Seven Miles Below Yuma

James Maxey one day last week killed a two-headed "sidewinder" rattlesnake on a ranch about seven miles from Yuma. Mr. Maxey was in El Centro the first of this week, exhibiting an excellent photograph of the freak snake.

The reptile's two heads were almost perfectly formed, with separate necks. It was sent to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, D. C.

While plowing new land, Mr. Maxey heard the warning rattle and looking ahead he saw the reptile crawling under the team. Before he could strike it the reptile attempted to coil, and was trod upon by one of the mules and so injured that it was readily captured.

HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

Central High School Students Give Reception—Mapping Out Ath- letic Events.

Bertha Heil, Charles Fry and Clinton Heil have been selected as a committee to represent Central School in a meeting of the Inter-scholastic Athletic League to be held at Heber today to arrange for athletic events for the school year.

Boys of the high school are working on the new athletic grounds to the east of the High School building, and the grounds will be ready for use within another week.

Tennis, volley ball and Boston ball are the games which the high school girls are to take up this year.

The sophomore class gave a reception to the faculty and students of Central Union High School, last night, in the Palm Roof Garden. A literary and musical programme and a short address by Principal B. C. Nichols were given. The roof garden was handsomely decorated in the class colors, white and green.

These committees of five each have been appointed to provide ways and means for the athletics, art department and piano fund.

ANOTHER ALFALFA MILL

John Detlefs, of Los Angeles, who owns a 160-acre ranch north-east of Holtville, has been visiting his property this week, and was in El Centro Wednesday. He plans to raise alfalfa and hogs on his ranch in a scientific manner, and to install a small alfalfa meal mill to work up his crop for feed on the place. Mr. Detlefs has been giving much attention to the experiments in hog feeding as carried on by government experts. He is certain that these methods applied to an Imperial valley hog and alfalfa ranch will prove profitable.

COUNTY BUSINESS

Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors in October Meeting

Official Advertising Divided Between Imperial and El Centro Papers and Rates Fixed—Cost of Bridges Over New River to be Borne Largely By General Fund.

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Imperial County, was called to order at 10 o'clock Monday morning by Chairman Clark. The minutes of a special meeting held on September 20 were read, corrected and approved.

Mr. Dowdy, of Brawley, County Veterinarian, was instructed to purchase fifteen gallons of cattle dip to be kept on hand for emergencies.

The District Attorney was instructed to prepare an amendment to Ordinance No. 6 so it will show that all stock imported into Imperial County must have a certified bill of health.

A leave of absence from the county for sixty days was granted to Mr. Dowdy and to E. E. Forrester, Public Administrator.

Chairman Clark opened and read a joint bid for county printing submitted by the publishers of the Imperial Valley Press and Imperial Daily Standard. On motion of Supervisor Wade it was unanimously voted to reject the bids.

It was then moved and carried that the following rates for county printing be fixed and the following newspapers be designated to do the printing:

Supervisors proceedings to be published in both the Imperial Valley Press and Imperial Daily Standard; each paper to make a charge of 20 cents per column inch; type for this part of the printing and for all other to be eight point or less.

Ordinances to be published in the Imperial Daily Standard except where it is deemed advisable to use both papers; rate to be 40 cents per column inch.

The delinquent tax lists to be published in the Imperial Valley Press; rate to be 40 cents per column inch. Notices of hearings, to contractors, concerning elections, etc. such as emanate from the office of the clerk, to be alternated or divided between the Press and the Standard by the clerk; rate to be 40 cents.

The Board relating to the Lucia A. Blaine Board and objecting her land and levelled and in other reason the ban Railroad a right of way ed and carried Central Avenue til the next re board.

Clarke Brads Peace for Imper before the Board his office supply by fire and ask be furnished h Board the follow dered to be pu shaw's office; set codes, eye one legal bl file, one case bottom sect one civil do records, on ets, one office cha As two road view er road Hamilton Board F. B. In the tion in the po line of ording the office the east 16 south, thence sou to be a ros each side Fuller, C. son, Jr., w Adjourn morning, The B (C)