

THE GERBER BLOCK:
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS ON THE PUBLIC RANGELANDS
IN KLAMATH COUNTY, OREGON



Report submitted to
Bureau of Land Management
Department of the Interior
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Stephen Dow Beckham
Lake Oswego, OR.

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Introduction

This project began in the summer of 1983. My assignment was to research the history of the development of the first Grazing District established in the United States under the Taylor Grazing Act. The Gerber Block, known then as Oregon Grazing District No. 1, or the Bonanza Grazing Unit, was a remarkable example of what the federal government attempted to do to reform range policy during the Great Depression. I was charged with discovering how a remote area in the Klamath Basin of south-central Oregon emerged as a cutting edge site for the implementation of a major shift in range policy and administration in the United States.

The project moved along well. I engaged in documentary research, field reconnaissance, and interviews with knowledgeable persons. Then my time and assignment began rapidly to move in new directions. The Oregon State Office of the BLM realized that the fiftieth anniversary of the Taylor Act was but months away. Soon my labor was drawn into State Office work. That involved writing and preparing for publication a special pamphlet, *Taylor Grazing Act in Oregon, 1934-1984*. My assignment also involved developing materials for the speech of the director of the BLM from Washington, DC., for the annual meeting in Portland of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association.

Before I knew it, my work hours were expended and I had not completed the anticipated historical overview of the Gerber Block. Fortunately the enduring and patient staff of the Lakeview BLM District, particularly the Klamath Falls office, did not forget this assignment. Thus in 2000 I was brought back to the task with new field work, more rounds of interviews, and further exploration of materials.

The report which follows is an overview, not an exhaustive history, of the Gerber Block and its immediate surroundings. It attempts to identify some of the larger themes, tell a few of the stories, and lift up some of the pivotal personalities who have influenced the course of this region in the past 120 years. There are omissions. There are details not recounted. There is also a lot of trivia, for the Gerber Block has not appeared in any significant secondary histories. The closest account was the brief essay, "East of Goodlow Rim," in the 1972 edition of *Klamath Echoes* concerned with Langell Valley and Bonanza. Ned Livingston of the Gerber Ranch has compiled a fact-filled compendium of information, photographs, and maps--the manuscript "Gerber Watershed: Names, Faces & Some Footprints" (2000).

So this report is an attempt to stand back and rise above the details and grasp some of the larger picture of a tough landscape which, for a time, drew tough people. The violence of the dislocation of the Modoc Indians and the blood feuds which pitted settler against settler are part of this story. So too this account focuses upon the use of federal land laws, the appearance of the land as viewed by the cadastral surveyors, and the experiences of the early settlers. It emphasizes the need for order and the hunger felt by leading citizens by the 1930s to find some means to save the range and maintain their way of life.

Henry C. Gerber and John Horn were two among several who found the way. They turned to the federal government--the largest landowner in the area--to work with them in a special partnership under the Taylor Grazing Act. Other federal agencies such as the Bureau of Reclamation, Soil Conservation Service, and ultimately the Bureau of Land Management were also players. Interestingly, deep-seated antipathy of the local ranchers toward the U.S. Forest Service helped spark some of the course of this history. Even the U.S. Navy played a bit part in this story.

This account touches but lightly on the role of the BLM. Its service is on-going and continues to evolve as new laws, interests, and needs define its mission. This account is also written by an outsider, a person who has had many associations with federal employees over the past three decades but who has consistently taught in a private college. So the nuances of conclusions and the points of view are those of this writer and not of the agency which commissioned this work.

Cover Illustration: View from Gerber Road south across Langell Valley, 1906, showing light stocking of junipers (Bureau of Reclamation, Klamath Falls, OR.)

Acknowledgments

Many persons have assisted in the research which has contributed to the writing of this overview. Some are now deceased and, a few who are yet living, probably thought this narrative might not ever get finished! To those who had the patience and persistence to drive this project forward, I say thank you. Most especially that appreciation goes to Bill Johnson of the Bureau of Land Management, Klamath Falls. Bill never lost track of the need to come to terms with the history of the Gerber Block. He opened many doors in the course of the research for this report.

I want to thank staff members at several libraries and archives. These include the Klamath County Historical Society, Klamath Falls; BLM Archives, Portland, OR.; Knight Library, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR.; Aubrey Watzek and Boley Law Library, Lewis & Clark College, Portland, OR.; Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR.; Bureau of Reclamation, Klamath Falls, OR.; and the National Archives, Washington, DC.

Most particularly I want to thank those who took the time to respond to questions, share memories, and lend photographs for consideration as illustrations in this report. My list includes a number who are no longer living, but my memories of visiting them is vivid and preserved in notes of those conversations.

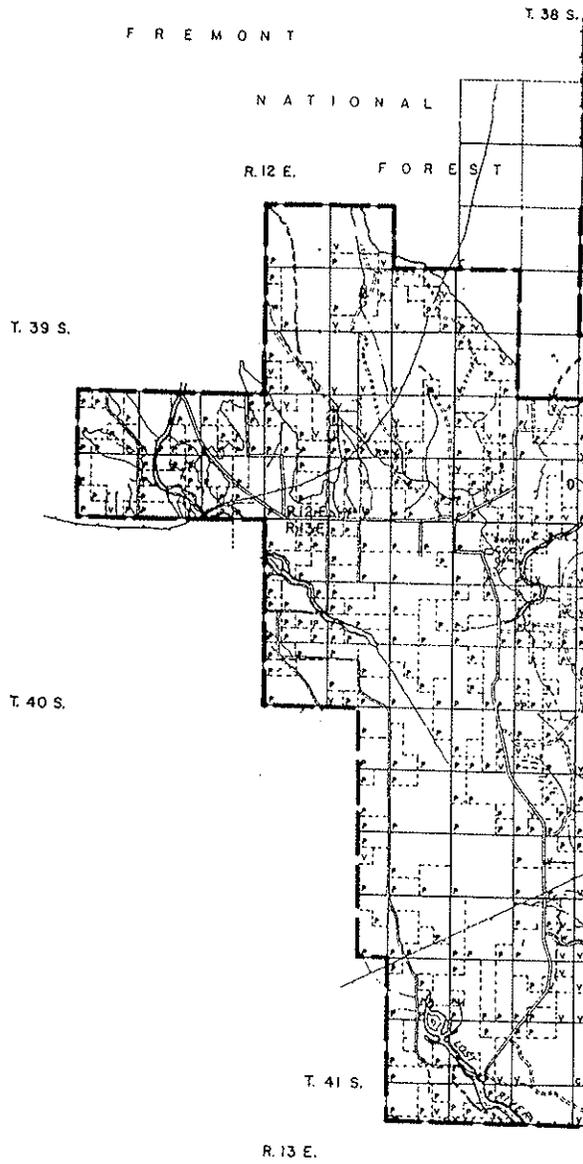
Orval and Beatrice DeVaul of Langell Valley
Mariam Gerber, Gerber Ranch and Klamath Falls
Ned and Marilyn (Gerber) Livingston, Gerber Ranch
Sylvia (Gerber) Bruce, Gerber Ranch and Yuma, Arizona
Margaret (Gerber) Cheyne, Langell Valley
Silas Kilgore, Langell Valley
Charles Kilgore, Langell Valley
Louise (Flackus) Kilgore, Langell Valley
Louis Randall, Langell Valley
Dave Cone, Bureau of Reclamation, Klamath Falls
Van Landrum, Klamath Falls
Frank Grohs, Jr., Klamath Falls
Frank Grohs, Sr., Langell Valley
Willard "Bill" Noble, Langell Valley
Luther "Bozo" Noble and Mary (Gift) Noble, Langell Valley

Several BLM employees have assisted during this project as well. These include Joe Foran, Steve Sherman, Matthew Kritzer of the Klamath Falls Resource Area, Bill Cannon of the Lakeview District, and Dr. Jack

Witherspoon and Dr. Richard Hanes of the Oregon State Office. To each of you, thank you.

I want to extend my appreciation to my daughter, Ann-Marie C. Beckham, who assisted in layout and proofreading. Her enthusiasm has been inspirational. I also thank Bill Johnson, Ned Livingston, and Van Landrum for reviewing the draft of this report and making several suggestions for its improvement.

Stephen Dow Beckham
Lake Oswego, Oregon



Frontispiece: Gerber Block, Bor
(Grazing Service 1942)

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The Modoc

The Gerber Block and Langell Valley were part of the aboriginal homeland of the Modoc Tribe. Modoc territory reached from Mount Shasta on the southwest to the forested country south of Yainax Butte in the north to the west shores of Goose Lake in the east. Primary features of the Modoc homeland were Clear Lake, Lost River, Tule Lake, and Lower Klamath Lake. The setting was a mixed Great Basin environment of lakes, marshes, river, sagebrush plains, and high country with stands of junipers and pines (Stern 1998:446).

The Modoc at historic contact in the nineteenth century had three primary divisions:

- ▲ *Gombatwa's*, the people of Lower Klamath Lake and the shore of Tule Lake; eight winter villages
- ▲ *Pasganwa's*, the people of lower Lost River and Tule lake; five winter villages
- ▲ *Gogewa's*, the people of upper Lost River, the east shore of Tule Lake, and east to Goose Lake (Stern 1998:447).

The *Gogewa's* were the Modoc most likely to have made seasonal use of the Gerber Block:

- ▲ *Peowas*, a small permanent village on Lost River near the mouth of the East Branch
- ▲ *Ulga'na*, a permanent village on Lost River near the "present town of Langell Valley [Lorella], one of many such villages lining the river both north and south of this site"
- ▲ *Ya'inaks*, a summer village near Keno Springs south of Yainax Butte, a site for ceremonial and gambling activities (Ray 1963:205-211).

The Modoc possessed a traditional lifeway that did not fit neatly into any generalized pattern. They lived at the meeting point of the cultures of the Columbia Plateau, Great Basin, and California. In many respects they were people at the crossroads and that reality, with the opening of the Applegate Trail in 1846, doomed them to contacts and conflicts with newcomers which mounted with the passing of time.

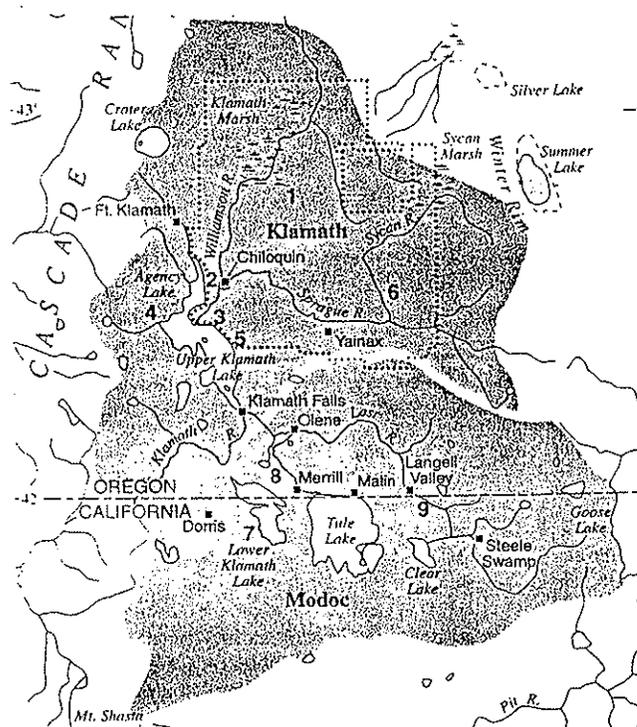


Fig. 1. Klamath and Modoc aboriginal areas in the nineteenth century with modern town locations: 1, Klamath Marsh; 2, Agency Lake; 3, Lower Williamson River; 4, Pelican Bay; 5, Klamath Falls; 6, Upland; 7, Lower Klamath Lake; 8, Lower Lost River; 9, Eastern (Stern 1998[12]:447).

The Modoc engaged in numerous subsistence activities in a seasonal round of migration. In March they disassembled their winter village, storing timbers and materials in secure, dry places. This permitted the house pits to air and be sanitized before renewed occupancy months later. They erected small, mat-covered lodges in these villages for the elderly or infirm who remained in the permanent villages during the summer. Most villagers then moved to the spring fishing camps, semi-permanent sites where the inhabitants occupied domed, mat-covered lodges. For a month or more nearly all able-bodied persons were engaged in catching, cleaning, and processing suckers. The

women dried the fish on racks constructed of pine limbs (Ray 1963:180-181).

George M. Miller, who lived in Langell Valley from 1870-77, recalled in 1948:

At that time Lost River was full of Buffalo Fish (probably the same fish they call mullet now) and they came as far upstream as Bonanza. The Indians had the junipers along the river bank stripped of all leaves and would catch the Buffalo fish and hang them on the limbs to dry. The trees looked like Christmas trees with all the fish hanging on them.

Each fall the Klamath Indians would come on their horses, bringing their papooses with them, to gather tar-weed seed and apaws which had a white flower on top like a carrot top and a potato like growth on the roots. The squaws would carry large baskets with a strap over their shoulder and would hold the tar-weed over the basket and strike the bush with a stick causing the seed to shatter into the basket. They also gathered the water lily which, when ripe, broke open and the pod inside contained a substance like flower (Miller 1964:14).

The Modoc then moved to sites where they dug and processed roots, the most important element of their subsistence. Women dug epos, while men fished for trout and gathered the eggs of waterfowl. In June or early July the Modoc moved to the camas fields such as those in the Gerber Block. Camas were rare and this was the season of greatest dispersal of the Modoc population. In late July the men began hunting for antelope and mountain sheep, while women gathered water-lily seeds. In August and September there was a second run of suckers. This was also the season when women picked and dried lowland berries. Then came fall hunting season and, at higher elevations, the opportunity to pick huckleberries. By October most Modoc returned to their winter villages, rebuilding their houses, repairing their possessions, and securing their stored foodstuffs for the advent of bad weather (Ray 1963:181-182).

The Modoc engaged in almost constant repair and manufacture

of nets, bows and arrows, seed beaters, baskets, clothing, cordage, spears, and hooks during their seasonal round. These were also winter activities for passing time during the periods of confinement during inclement weather (Ray 1963:182-200).

Modoc clothing was minimal, excepting that at puberty and for the remainder of one's life, individuals wore a loincloth. Women employed tule, leather, and plant materials such as swamp grass and sagebrush bark in manufacturing clothing. Their handiwork included moccasins, robes, leggings, skirts, blankets, and hats. Skins with the fur attached served both to provide warmth as well as to enhance decoration (Ray 1963:164-165).

Modoc housing was variable and included semi-subterranean, earth-covered lodges for use in winter; mat-covered houses with steep, sloping walls and a flat roof; a dome-shaped, mat-covered hut used as a utility house and summer dwelling; sagebrush, circular windbreaks, constructed when traveling. The structures were commonly placed randomly in a village without special spatial arrangement excepting that dwelling doorways usually faced east. The Modoc houses did not contain extensive furnishings or possessions. Verne F. Ray wrote:

Space was at a premium; a house was built no larger than necessary to provide sleeping accommodations. Bedding mats and robes were essential. When rolled against the wall, in the daytime, these served as back rests. Pillows were rare; those used were flat wood blocks over which were draped robes or pieces of matting. Clothing, small tools used by men, personal possessions, and gaming implements were stowed here and there, wherever space and considerations of security permitted (Ray 1963:157-158).

Men were the leaders of Modoc society and played active roles in managing domestic affairs, mounting war, and engaging in religious activities. Leaders had defined roles in these respective areas; they did

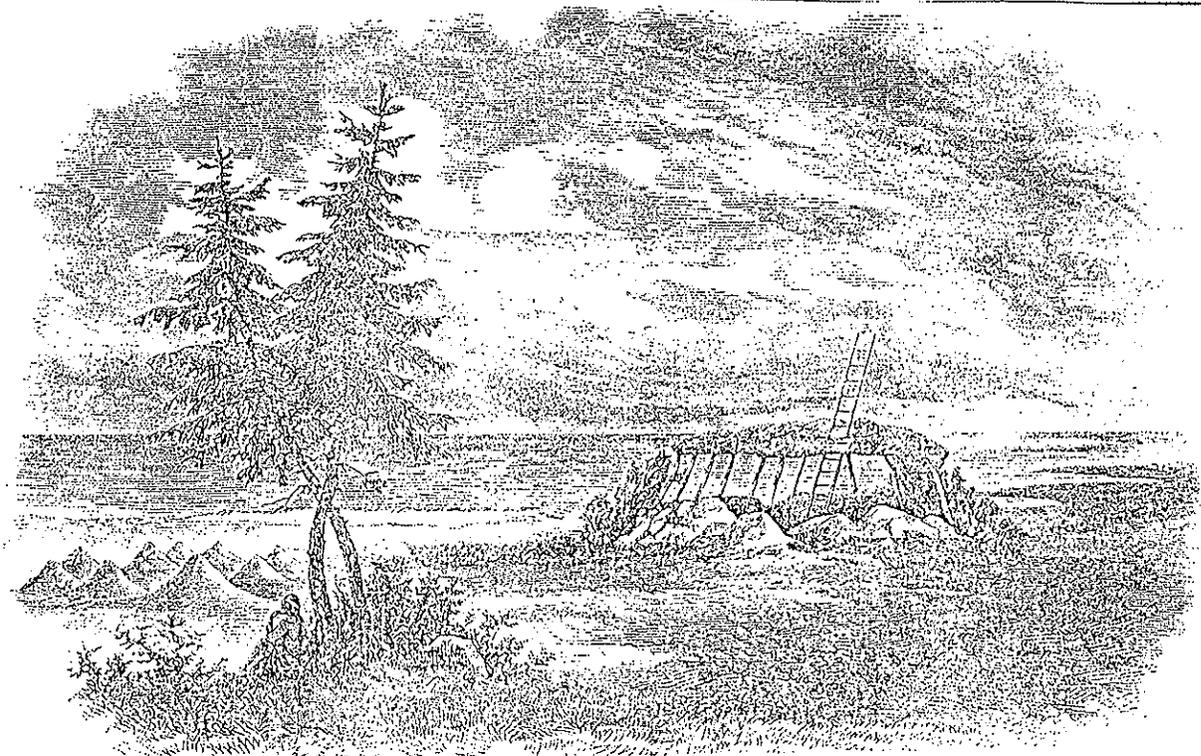


Fig. 2. Klamath semi-subterranean council house, 1855, with nearby mud-covered, conical burial vaults (Williamson and Abbot 1857:70). Modoc structures were probably similar.

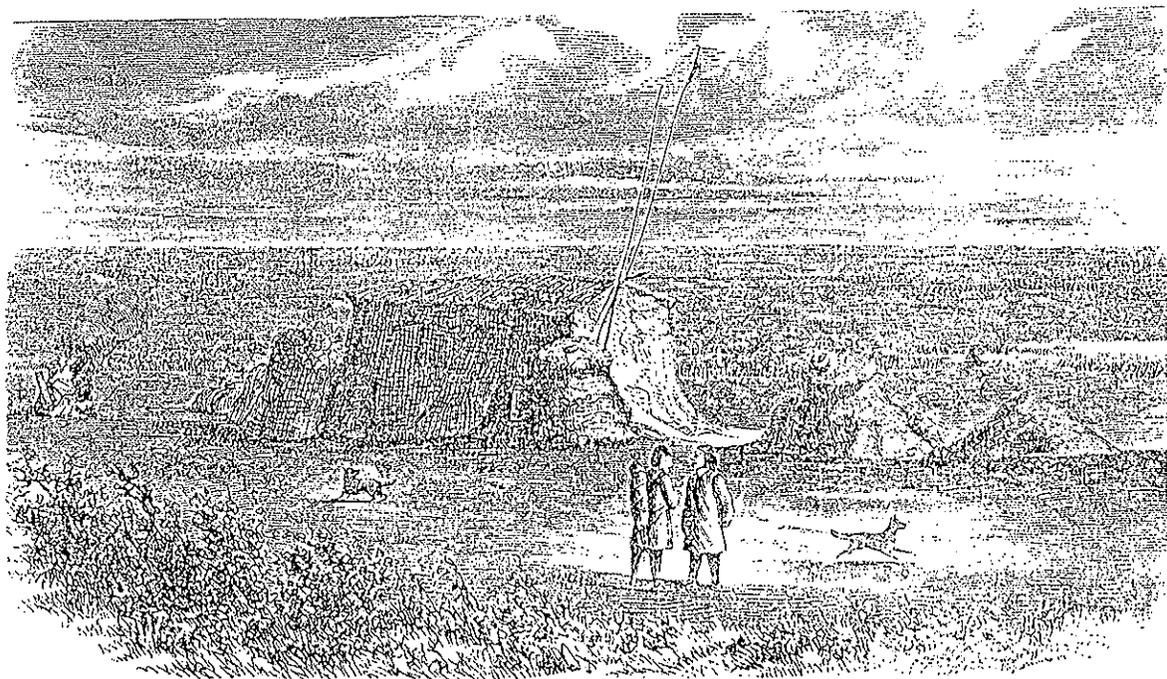


Fig. 3. Klamath summer tule-covered, mat lodge and nearby mud-covered winter lodges, Klamath Marsh, 1855 (Williamson and Abbot 1857:70). Modoc lodges were probably similar.

not stray from one activity to assert leadership in another. Leaders arose because of their abilities, speaking skills, family size, and wealth. Small villages might have but one leader; larger villages might contain several. Informants explained that leadership might mark a man for some time:

It appears that, aboriginally, once a Leader was elevated above his fellows, he might retain the honor even after the critical time which led to his selection was past. Especially was this true where the chosen man served his people well in the emergency. The fame of such a man spread to other Modoc communities and he came to be looked upon as a tribal Leader (Ray 1963:5).

The Modoc world view was founded on oral tradition and attachment to place. The Modoc believed that Kumookumts, the creator and their cultural hero, had formed the land, heavens, resources, and various tribes. The center of their world was a point on the east side of Tule Lake. A figure of ambiguous gender, Kumookumts shared the world with other mythological beings, some of them animals with human-like tendencies. Praying and ritual sweating were important religious events; the small sweat lodge was an altar at which individuals prayed. Sweating helped the Modoc when mourning, communing with the supernatural, and cleansing the body. Additionally, sometimes a shaman might treat a patient in the sweat lodge. The Modoc also marked special prayer sites in the countryside by piling up stones, each person passing placing a new stone on the stack (Ray 1963:18-30).

Modoc informants provided detailed information about their traditional culture in the 1930s. Verne F. Ray integrated his field notes with those of Ethel Alpenfels, Earl W. Count, Irving Goldman, Alice Marriott, Philleo Nash, and David Rodnick in the monograph *Primitive Pragmatists: The Modoc Indians of Northern California* (1963). A more recent overview assessment is Theodore Stern's "The Klamath and Modoc" in *Volume 12, Plateau, Handbook of North American Indians* (1998).

Exploration

The Klamath Basin lay distant from the main currents of western exploration. Beyond the mountains to the west mariners in the eighteenth century edged their vessels along the Oregon seaboard and gave shape to its headlands on their charts. Only with the establishment of the land-based fur trade was the stage set for Euro-American exploration of the country along the eastern flanks of the Cascade Mountains.

In 1821 the Hudson's Bay Company by merger with the North West Company of Montreal, Canada, gained control of the fur trade in the Oregon Country. George Simpson, governor of the company's operations, set a clear policy. The employees were to trap out the fur-bearing resources of the Snake watershed. The objective was to create an area devoid of furs so that the Americans, when they crossed the Rockies, would become so discouraged that they would fall back and not compete with the Hudson's Bay Company on the Pacific Slope. To inaugurate that policy, Dr. John McLoughlin, the chief factor at Fort Vancouver, dispatched Peter Skene Ogden's brigades in 1824-25 and 1825-26. Both trapped along the course of the Snake River in eastern Oregon and Idaho and pushed as far north as the Bitterroot Valley of Montana and the valley of the Great Salt Lake in Utah (Rich and Johnson 1950).

The outreach of the Hudson's Bay Company also extended south into the Umpqua and Rogue valleys and to the Sacramento Valley of California. In 1825 McLoughlin ordered Finnian McDonald and Thomas McKay to ascend the Willamette and examine the headwaters of the Umpqua which, at that time, were believed to lie east of the Cascade Range. They were told to press on south toward the waters of the Rio Colorado. This party crossed Santiam Pass to the Deschutes, ascended

that stream to its divide with the Williamson River, and entered Klamath Marsh. They turned back because of shortage of supplies, lack of manpower, and fears of conflicts with the Indians (Davies and Johnson 1961:xxxiii-xxxiv).

Ogden mounted a third brigade in 1826-27. This expedition took him to the Deschutes, Crooked River and John Day watersheds and to the Harney Basin. Ogden then turned west across Oregon's high desert via the Newberry Crater to enter the Klamath Basin. His party traded for dogs and fish from the Indians residing on Upper Klamath Lake which they reached on December 11, 1826. The brigade explored south to Tule Lake and Lower Klamath Lake, shoved over the Siskiyou to the Applegate River, and returned to the Klamath Basin. In April, 1827, Ogden's men were again in the vicinity of Lower Klamath Lake. On May 1 Ogden wrote:

At 7 A.M. we started and at 12 we reached the Camp of Indians about 60 men all busily employed in fishing and appear to have a good stock of Carp collected but of a most indifferent kind small and scarcely eatable we have traded four hundred in case of want. They appear shy about accompanying us but I am in hopes we will succeed ere we start from this (Davies and Johnson 1961:110-111).

The party moved on to Pit River and turned northeasterly to Goose Lake, the Harney Basin, and the Snake Plain.

In early 1833 Ewing Young, an American fur trapper, and others in his party crossed the Cascades from the Umpqua and passed through the Klamath Basin and then followed the Klamath River into northern California. No historical record provides any details of this expedition's adventures in the Klamath Basin (Holmes 1967:88).

In late 1843 a contingent of "free trappers" led by Old Bill Williams crossed from the Deschutes watershed to Upper Klamath Lake. The men planned to spend the winter among the Klamath Indians to trap and

trade for furs. The men found an abundance of martin which were readily taken by the Klamath Indians. This party remained for several months in the basin. "That winter," wrote Bill Hamilton, "we enjoyed ourselves as few mountain men ever had" During their explorations the trappers explored much of the region, including Langell Valley. Hamilton later wrote: "On the third day we started for Lost River, which empties into Tule Lake in the Modoc country, and explored it to its source, traveling through a beautiful valley, but found no beaver." On their return the explorers encountered thirty Indians, undoubtedly Modocs, who challenged them about their intentions, refused to smoke tobacco with them, and demanded horses (Hamilton 1960:104-107).

Although the information is inexact, the Old Bill Williams party explored the eastern margin of Langell Valley and penetrated as far as the stands of Ponderosa Pine which grow on the plateau east of Goodlow Rim. The information is sketchy about the precise location of these Americans. Hamilton noted: "We traveled east about six miles to a patch of timber, and were fortunate to find a good spring. A corral was built and rifle pits dug, the men jokingly saying, 'We are going to have another Bannock rupture with these devils.' Just before sundown several Indians hovered around, taking in our situation, but did not come close enough to discover the preparations for their reception." The trappers put their horses in the center of their corral, surrounded it with rifle pits, and lay logs atop the mounded earth. Fifteen men stood watch during the night while the others slept. Hamilton estimated that at dawn 200 Indians were watching his party from a nearby knoll (Hamilton 1960:108-109).

The confrontation between the Modocs and the American fur trappers erupted the next morning, Hamilton wrote:

The footmen began a charge, firing a few guns and sending a flight of arrows. We reserved our fire until they had come within

forty yards of the rifle pits. The Modocs could not see us and, having noticed that no shots came from that side, they must have thought that we were all contending against the horsemen, for they came on a run and in close body. We emptied our rifles and completely surprised them, for they halted and looked bewildered. Then the shotguns and Colts were brought into play with terrible effect, almost every shot bringing down an Indian.

Seventeen of the Indians rushed pell-mell toward the breastworks and engaged in hand-to-hand battle. Fifteen of the attackers were killed and two retreated. The conflict continued for some time. The Americans lost three men who were buried at the site. The Modocs suffered at least fifteen casualties and many more wounded. The American "free trappers" traveled on to Clear Lake and in July, 1844, reached the Honey Lake Valley (Hamilton 1960:111-113, 116).

On his second expedition to the American West, John C. Fremont and his party of Topographical Engineers entered the Klamath Basin from the north in December, 1843. The explorers turned east via Sycan Marsh to Summer Lake and Abert Lake. On his third expedition, John C. Fremont returned to the Klamath Basin, this time traveling north through California to Tule Lake (Jackson and Spence 1970[1]:585-588). On May 5, 1846, Fremont crossed Poe Valley to Lost River to camp at the site of Olene. Fremont named the stream McCrady River. He and his party moved on to Upper Klamath Lake where he found many Indians. "Our arrival took them by surprise," he wrote, "and though they received us with apparent friendship, there was no warmth in it, but a shyness which came naturally from their habit of hostility." On May 6, while encamped near Aspen Lake, the Fremont party was attacked by Indians. Fremont lost three men. A Klamath chief died in the first encounter and two more Indians were killed on May 12, when they were camped on the Williamson River. Fremont's party, in response to a secret message delivered to him by Lt. Archibald Gillespie, then turned about and

headed back to California, passing along the east margin of Upper Klamath Lake on May 14 (Spence and Jackson 1973[2]:102-116).

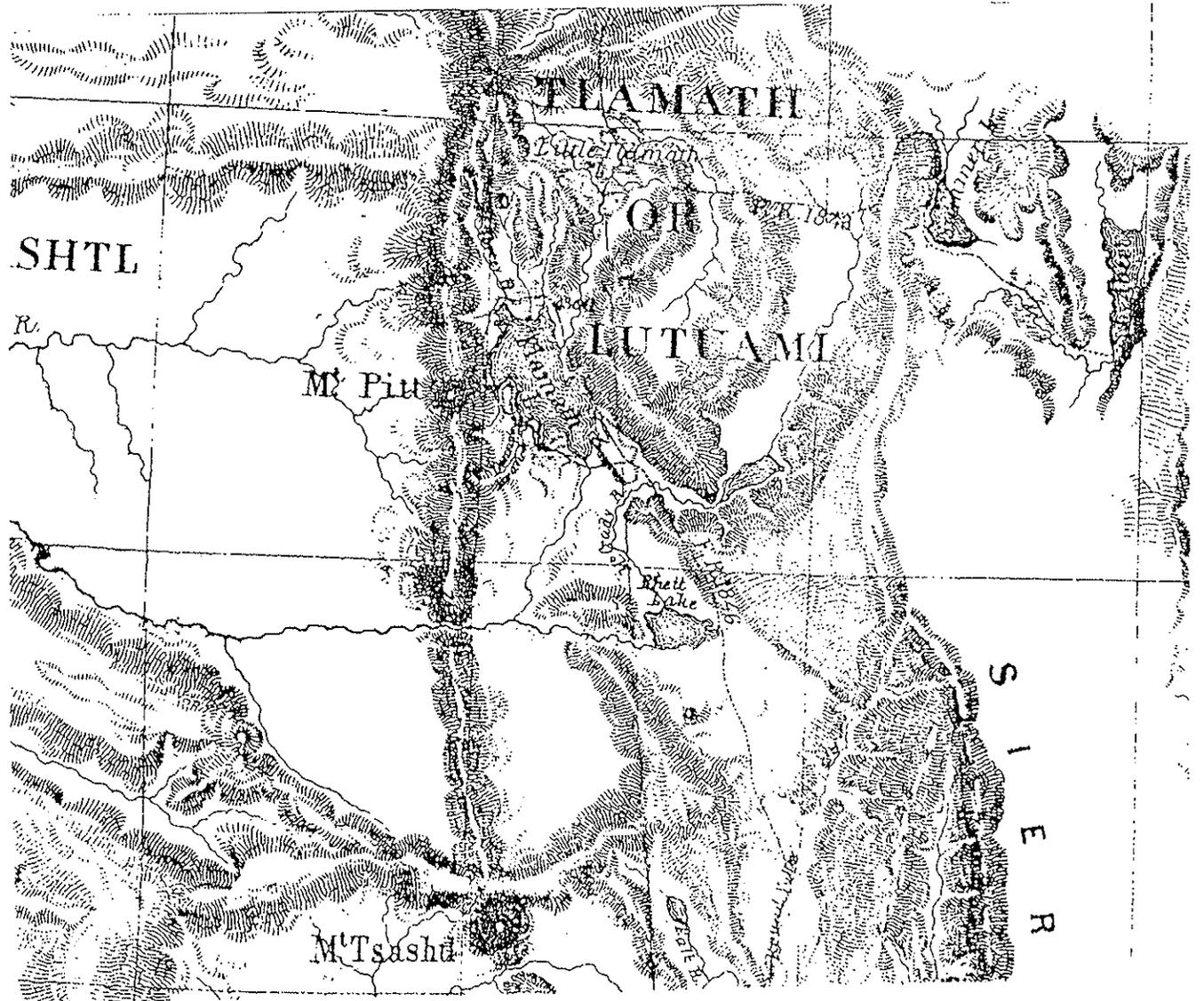


Fig. 2. Map of Klamath Basin showing Fremont's explorations of 1843 via Sprague River to Lake Abert and 1846 to Rhett (Tule) Lake, McCrady (Lost) River, and Upper Klamath Lake. Clear Lake was unnamed but identified at the head of McCrady River (Preuss 1848).



J. C. Fremont

Fig. 3. John C. Fremont, American explorer who twice visited the Klamath Basin in the 1840s (Jackson and Spence 1970[1]: frontispiece).

In the spring of 1846 settlers from the Willamette Valley organized an exploring party to seek an alternate route to the Oregon Trail's transit of the Snake Plain, the Blue Mountains, and the Columbia River Gorge. An exploring party of fifteen men which included Levi Scott, Jesse Applegate, and Lindsay Applegate followed the fur trappers' trail south to the Rogue River watershed. They then cut east from Bear Creek in the Rogue River Valley to the Klamath Basin, and laid out a route to Tule Lake and east via the Black Rock Desert to Fort Hall. The Scott-Applegate party opened the Applegate Trail, or Southern Emigrant Route. Although never as popular as the primary Oregon Trail, this southern alternate annually drew emigrants, many of whom looked

eagerly at the lush marshes and bunchgrasses of the Klamath Basin during their travels to land claims west of the Cascade Range. In time, some of those emigrants and their children would return to the Klamath lakes region (Beckham 1995).

Lindsay Applegate, one of the explorers, wrote about seeking the trail route in the vicinity immediately south of the Gerber Block. He wrote:

July 7th, we left the valley of Tule Lake to pursue our course eastward, over a rocky table land, among scattering juniper trees. We still observed the timbered [Carr] butte as our landmark, and traveled as directly toward it as the shape of the country would admit. This butte is near the State line, between Clear lake and Goose lake, and probably distant fifty miles from the lava ridge east of Lost river, from which we first observed it, and supposing it to be about thirty miles away. In pursuing our course we passed through the hilly, juniper country between Langell valley and Clear lake without seeing either the valley or lake, and at noon arrived at the bed of a stream where there was but little water. The course of the stream was north or northwest, and appearances indicated that at times quite a volume of water flowed in the channel. This was evidently the bed of Lost river, a few miles north of where this singular stream leaves the Clear lake marsh (Applegate 1921:24).

Joseph Burke, a British botanist, accompanied the road explorers in 1846. Having worked as a plant collector in South Africa from 1839 to 1843, Burke secured in 1844 an appointment for a similar position. The Earl of Derby and the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew near London hired him to collect. William Jackson Hooker of the gardens at Kew noted in 1843 "it has been my good fortune, under the liberal patronage of the Governor and Directors of the Hudson's Bay Company, to unite with the Earl of Derby in sending out an able collector (Mr. Burke), to North-western American and California" (McKelvey 1991:792).

Between November, 1844, and August, 1846, Burke worked out of Fort Hall in eastern Idaho. In one of his surviving letters, Burke wrote:

Late on the evening of the 8th of August Mr. Applegate from the Walla Amett settlement arrived. He had discovered a south route from the Walla Amett valley to Ogdens river and then east to Fort Hall. He gave such a fine description of the country between the California line & the Walla Amette valley that I felt anxious to accompany him & his party on their return (McKelvey 1991:813-814).

Burke accompanied the road surveyors on their return trip. In early September the men were on Pitt River. Burke wrote: "we crossed the Sacramento [the Pitt] river a short distance below the lake which is divided from the Clamet lake by a low narrow ridge--that evening we encamped by the Clamet lake" (McKelvey 1991:814).

Burke's botanical work in the Klamath Basin was, at best, slight. The extent of his labors remains poorly documented because no species list based on his collections has been found in the archives of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew. Burke collected seeds and at least one plant, a juniper probably collected on the Deschutes River, germinated and grew in the British garden where it was described in 1884 (McKelvey 1991:817).

In succeeding years a number of emigrant diarists described their transit westward from Goose Lake to Clear Lake and then to Tule Lake and the "natural bridge" on Lost River. Representative of these accounts was the diary of Welborn Beeson, a seventeen-year-old headed to the Rogue River Valley in 1853 with his parents. Beeson wrote:

August 21. Sunday. 15 miles muddy roads to Clear Lake. A company of U.S. Dragoons to protect the Emigrants from the Indians are stationed here. They have some of the fastest horses I ever saw. We camped. Good spring water, excellent grass, sage wood. The soldiers gave us late papers. The news from Rogue River gave dreadful accounts of the Indian's war, burning houses and massacring the people. The old chief declares he will have his valley back or die fighting.

August 22. Monday. Started early, 6 of the Dragoons traveled with us to guard us. We made 20 miles to Goat [Lost] River.

Came to camp after dark. The soldiers camped with us. Good grass, river water, sage wood (Beeson 1986:67-68).

In August, 1855, government explorers in the Pacific Railroad Surveys visited the Klamath Basin. The party, headed by Lt. Robert Stockton Williamson and Lt. Henry Larcom Abbot, traveled north from San Francisco to Clear Lake. On August 11 Williamson wrote:

After travelling several miles on nearly level ground through the forest, we emerged from it, and found ourselves on a rocky plain covered with sage bushes. This we crossed in about six miles, and, on reaching the summit of a line of low sandstone hills capped with trap [rock], saw below us Wright [Clear] lake. It was a fine sheet of water, about eleven miles long and four miles wide, bordered by tule. The banks were so miry that we were compelled to travel more than a mile before reaching a place where the animals could drink. We encamped in the edge of the tule, near some green willow bushes which supplied us with our only fuel, as even sage bushes had disappeared after crossing the hills (Williamson and Abbot 1857:65).

The railroad explorers next came to Tule Lake, which they identified as Rhett Lake, and camped on Lost River "near where it discharges itself into the lake by several mouths." They found the river deep, unfordable, and sluggish. The party continued on to the north via the Natural Bridge to Upper Klamath Lake and into the Deschutes drainage (Williamson and Abbot 1857:65-72).

The early exploration of the Klamath Basin was mounted primarily by fur trappers and then by trail-makers and government explorers. The Lost River country remained distant, isolated, and little known. While Old Bill Williams's fur seekers explored its course to Clear Lake, only fragmentary information documents their presence in Langell Valley. The Applegate Trail lay south of Langell Valley and headed west via Tule Lake to the Natural Bridge on lower Lost River. The remote country in the Gerber Block lay beyond primary routes of travel and exploration. The history of the region was carried in the memories and lives of the Modoc

who knew it as their home. The advent of exploration, however, heralded new forces in the land and the undoing of the long Indian tenure.

Pioneer Settlement

Euro-American interest in the Klamath Basin mounted steadily in the 1860s. Ambitious investors in livestock realized that the lush bottomlands and lake margins of the region held tremendous potential for grazing herds of cattle, sheep, and horses. Unlike cereal crops and other farm commodities, livestock could walk to market. The survey and opening of the Oregon Central Military Wagon Road from Springfield via the Middle Fork of the Willamette River into the upper Deschutes and then south via the Williamson and Sprague rivers in 1865 created a primary artery for movement of herds.¹ Other entrepreneurs seeking to feed miners and residents of Yreka, Ashland, and Jacksonville also saw the region's potential and began pasturing their herds, at least during the summers, in the meadows.

The watershed of Lost River held considerable attraction to stockraisers. From Clear Lake in Modoc County, California, the river meandered northwesterly into Oregon. There it slowed and spread out through Langell Valley, ultimately reaching its northern point at Bonanza where it turned southwesterly to terminate in Tule Lake in California. This sluggish, horseshoe-shaped river, surged with snowmelt in the early spring when warming temperatures and rain fed its tributaries. It provided life-giving water in the midst of a sagebrush, bunchgrass, juniper plateau. Clear Lake, Lost River, and Tule Lake lined up as a chain of oases in the high desert. The setting proved magnetic to cattle drovers and settlers.

¹ Initial travel on the OCM Wagon Road is unknown. Between 1871 and 1896, however, Stephen and Zilphia Rigdon logged all men, women, children, wagons, horses, cows, sheep, bicycles, party sizes, and primary destinations. In eleven sample years in this period, a total of 33,874 sheep, 21,182 cattle, 13,148 horses, 2,548 wagons, and 10,576 humans passed over the road. These included military personnel headed to and from Fort Klamath. The route was unequivocally a major route of trade, commerce, and travel and a measure of the growing importance of the Klamath Basin in the Oregon economy (Beckham 1981[1]).

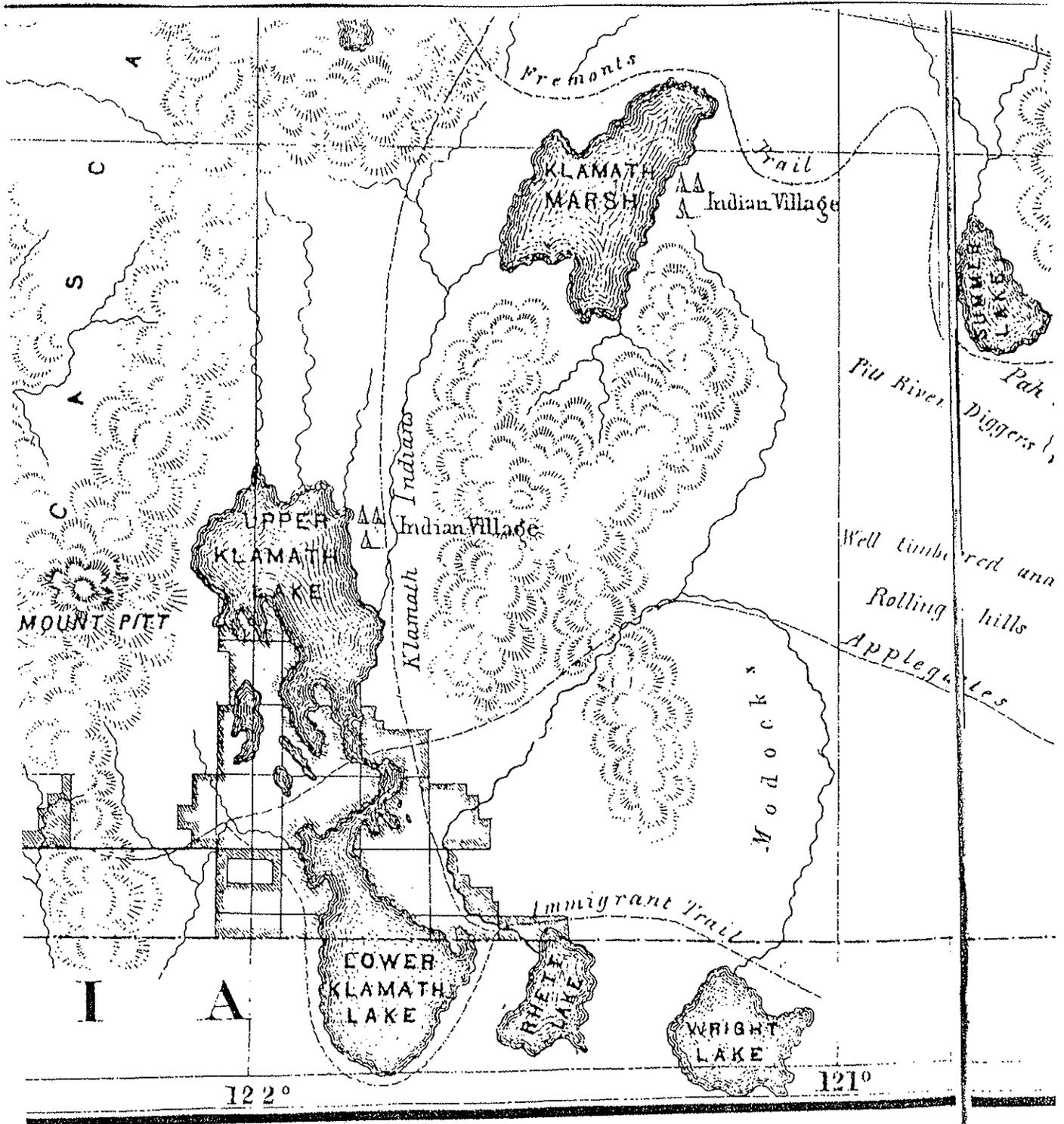


Fig. 6. Map of course of Lost River from Wright (Clear) Lake to Rhett (Tule) Lake, with erroneous identification of Applegate's Trail in Langell Valley (Pengra 1863).

Records of the General Land Office document the early settlement which commenced in the 1870s in Langell Valley. By 1875 those seeking lands and resources in the area felt sufficiently confident about the region that they initiated cash entry purchases and filed for homesteads at the General Land Office. The first to secure titles in Langell Valley were Ivan D. Applegate and Arthur Langell. The Applegate land was in T41S, R14E, Section 7, at a site today known as Kilgore Spring (BLM n.d.d). The Langell land was in T40S, R14E, Section 30, at a site today known as McCoy Spring (BLM n.d.c).

In 1869 Ivan Decateur Applegate, Lucien Boneparte Applegate, and Oliver Cromwell Applegate--named by their history-loving parents, Lindsay and Malinda Applegate--began acquiring lands for livestock in the Klamath Basin. By 1875 they were the third largest taxpayers in the county; their holdings were valued at \$16,200, suggesting ownership in fee of perhaps 13,000 acres. Oliver C. Applegate owned the Olene Ranch at the Lost River Gap among several properties. Ivan D. Applegate, born in Missouri in 1840, moved to the Klamath Basin in 1869 and began service as assistant to Alfred Meacham, Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Applegate established Yainax sub-agency and had direct responsibility for the Klamath Indians of Sprague River, Northern Paiutes, and Modocs. During the Modoc War, Applegate served as guide, interpreter, and participant in several of the councils. After the war he resumed ranching and died in 1918 in Ashland, Oregon (Good 1941:196-199).

In 1868 Joseph Langell and his sons, Nathaniel and Arthur Langell, settled along Lost River. In short order the setting became known as Langell Valley. In 1875 Nathaniel and Arthur Langell increased their holdings with the purchase of 3,113 acres in the valley from C. C. and Julia Beekman of Jacksonville, Oregon. Their father, Joseph Langell, died before 1882. Nathaniel Langell eventually operated ranches in both

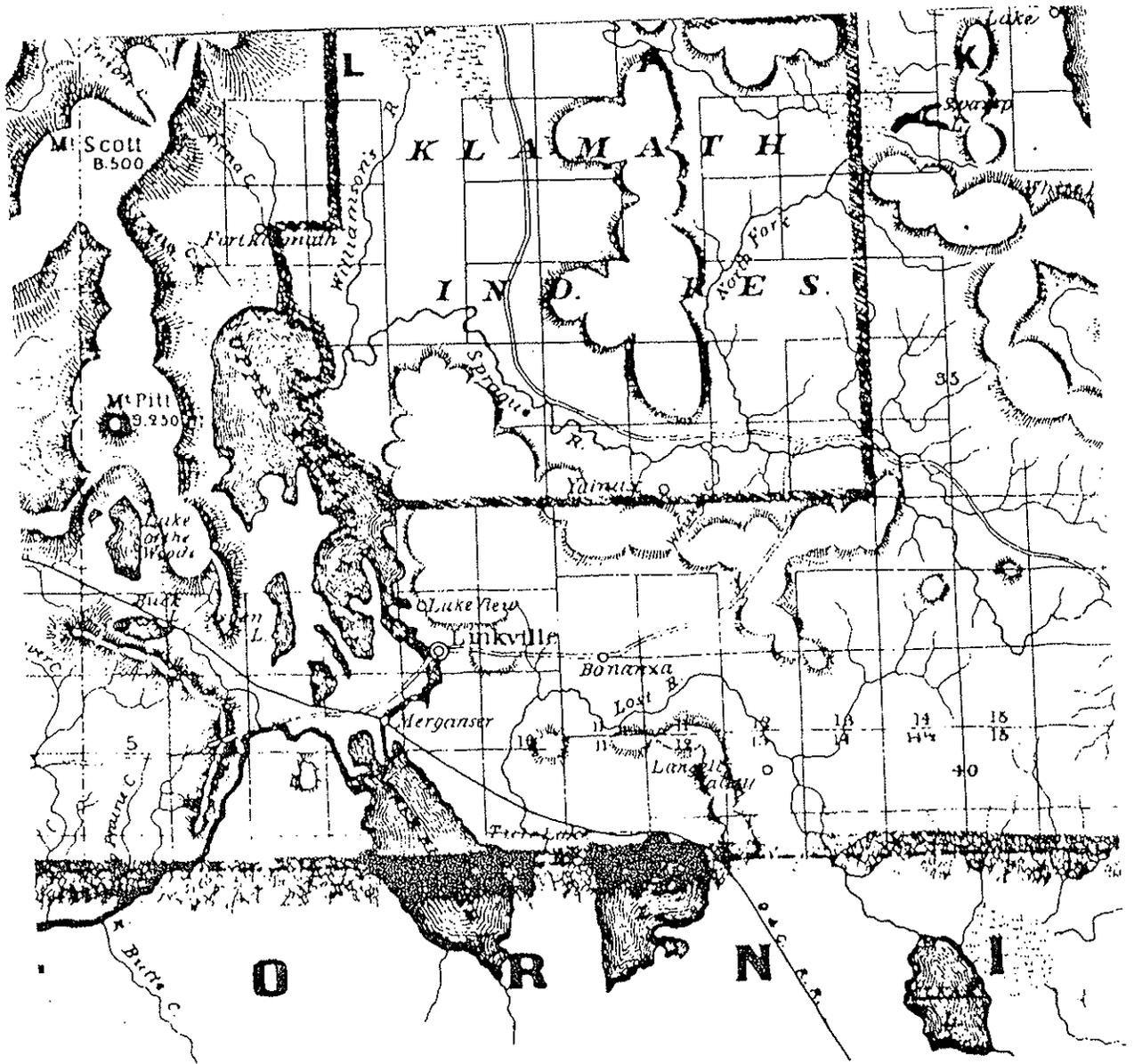


Fig. 7. Map showing "Langell Valley" and course of Lost River from Clear Lake to Tule Lake, 1878 (Habersham 1878).

Klamath and Jackson counties and drove up to 2,000 head of cattle from one holding to the other. Arthur Langell, married, had a son, and was widowed by 1888. On September 7, 1894, he was killed by Frank Swingle in Langell Valley. His son, William Arthur Langell, was heir to his property and took title in 1909 when he was twenty-one (Good 1941:212-213; Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:21-22).

Many of the parties initially interested in lands in the Klamath Basin obtained them by cash entry, paying \$1.25 per acre at the General Land Office. Those who lacked resources and were willing to endure five years of isolation and hard work, filed under the Homestead Act of 1862. The following table identifies the settlers, amounts of land obtained, the type of entry, and the date of the patenting of their claims, primarily on the floor of Langell Valley, especially along its eastern side adjacent to the Bonanza Grazing Unit.

Table 1
Initial Land Owners in Langell Valley, 1875-1895

T38S, R13E, W.M.			
Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Hall, Benjamin	120.00	Cash Entry	April 15, 1879
Haynes, Henry	78.84	Cash Entry	April 16, 1890
Buckmaster, Joshua	160.00	Homestead	June 13, 1890
Hall, Icabod, deceased	79.95	Homestead	Oct. 11, 1890
Likens, Sarah A.	80.00	Cash Entry	Aug. 24, 1891
Campbell, Alice A.	160.00	Homestead	Feb. 14, 1893
Nail, William	120.00	Homestead	July 18, 1893
Obenchain, Silas	160.00	Homestead	Aug. 9, 1894
Bishop, David	160.00	Homestead	Apr. 6, 1895
T40S, R14E, W.M.			
Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Langell, Arthur	160.00	Cash Entry	Oct. 6, 1875
Thatcher, Hobart M.	160.00	Cash Entry	April 25, 1877
Hall, Benjamin	41.39	Cash Entry	April 15, 1879

Casey, John R.	147.07	Cash Entry	Sept. 1, 1890
Swingle, Frank D.	160.00	Homestead	April 23, 1891
Hargadine, Charles H.	149.20	Homestead	April 23, 1891
Bryan, James P.	160.00	Cash Entry	June 12, 1891
Nail, William	40.81	Homestead	July 18, 1893
Bryant, John W.	160.00	Homestead	June 28, 1895

T41S, R14E, W.M.

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Applegate, Ivan D.	160.00	Cash Entry	Jan. 7, 1875
Wilson, Thomas	160.00	Cash Entry	April 20, 1875
Kilgore, Silas W.	160.00	Cash Entry	Aug. 15, 1876
Wilson, Isaac	160.00	Cash Entry	July 23, 1880
Wilson, Simpson	154.36	Cash Entry	Dec. 10, 1885
Kilgore, David C.	160.00	Homestead	Jan. 11, 1889
Goodlow, Newet S.	36.72	Cash Entry	July 24, 1889
Gregory, Henry Lee	120.00	Cash Entry	May 9, 1891
Hall, John L.	160.92	Cash Entry	July 29, 1891
Otey, Josiah B.	153.14	Cash entry	Nov. 28, 1892
Hall, John L.	157.83	Homestead	April 6, 1895
Kilgore, Silas W.	160.00	Homestead	April 6, 1895

(BLM n.d.a; n.d.c; n.d.d)

Not all who settled in these townships in Langell Valley were able to perfect their claims. Henry Vinson settled in 1884 but had his homestead claim cancelled in 1887. Conditions leading to cancellation were variable. Some claimants simply walked away from their lands without filing relinquishment papers; these claims were cancelled. Others lost their claims because they could not meet terms of proof such as five years of occupancy. Ten people filed timber claims between 1883 and 1892; none secured patent, and all were cancelled by 1903 (BLM n.d.b). The land records thus confirm that the initial decades of settlement-- 1875-1895 were tenuous for those selecting lands or establishing homes in Langell Valley.

The Gerber Tract lies east and largely south of Goodlow Rim. It is the high country beyond Langell Valley, extending east nearly fifteen miles. Beyond its eastern margin lie Squaw Flat, Little Squaw Flat, Barnes Valley, and Johnson Meadow. These areas are just west of the Klamath-

Lake County boundary. The "general descriptions" penned by the cadastral surveyors in the subdivisions of the townships in the Bonanza Grazing Unit document the appearance and prospects of the region just prior to Euro-American settlement. In a few instances isolated squatters or pre-emption claimants were in the area; their presence was noted by the surveyors.

The following are the "general descriptions" of the lands in the Gerber Block as recorded by the cadastral surveyors.

T38S, R13E, W.M., 1868 [West side of Gerber Tract: NW of Gerber Reservoir, including Paddock Butte, Coyote Butte, and Dry Prairie]

The land in this Township, generally of Second rate soil, produces an abundance of good grass and being well watered by numerous springs, is well adapted to grazing. While portions of the prairies in the middle of the township is adapted to agriculture, particularly in the production of cereals. This prairie has evidences of being wet and marshy in the early spring. The timber around this Prairie, which comprises about half the Township, is mostly Pine and Juniper with some Fir and Cedar, in the northern western and South western part of the township (Thompson, Pengra, and Meldrum 1868a:38).

T39S, R13E, W.M., 1868 [West side of Gerber Tract: west of Gerber Reservoir, Schnipps Valley, and Miller Creek]

The land in the Eastern and Southern portions of this Township is gently rolling with considerable Prairie. The Northwestern portion is over a high rocky raise [Goodlow Rim] unfit for Surveying.

There is some scattering Juniper and Pine Timber and the Township is well watered with Several Creeks and Springs and is mostly fine grazing (Thompson, Pengra, and Meldrum 1868b:28).

T40S, R14E, W.M., 1871 [West side of Gerber Tract: Copeland Reservoir, Boggs Lake, Gift Butte, and Woolen Canyon]

The eastern portion of the Township is good grazing land, lying on a nearly level plateau; bunch grass is very plenty and there is considerable good Juniper timber. In the middle & western portion there is a large amount of level prairie well grassed.

Sections 19-30-31-32-6 & 7 are nearly all subject to annual overflow caused by melting snow and the run[n]ing of the water which finds an outlet through Lost River. The channel of this river is very irregular and insufficient to carry off the water consequently the above named sections are usually submerged during the months of March, April, May and June. When the water fails, the land becomes dry and bears a splendid crop of wild hay. Sections 6-7-9 and 30 each contain one Settler who has made permanent improvements (Turner and Howard 1871a:680-681).

T41S, R14E, W.M., 1871 [West side of Gerber Tract: Three Mile Reservoir, Willow Valley Reservoir, and the Oregon-California Stateline]

All of the township except the western tier of sections and the South Eastern portion of the Twp. lies on a level plateau and bears an excellent growth of good Juniper timber and plenty of good bunch grass.

Sections 5, 6, 7 & 18 are rich prairie land mostly subject to annual overflow and form a portion of Langell Valley. Sections 5, 7, 8 & 18 each contain a settler who has made permanent improvements. A large branch of Lost river flows through the South Eastern portion of the Township on a South westerly course. This township is first class grazing land (Turner and Howard 1871b:111).

T39S, R14E, W.M., 1952 [North-central part of Gerber Tract: Gerber Reservoir, Barnes Valley Creek, Pitch Log Creek, Wildhorse Creek]

The township [in 1952] is situated about 45 miles easterly from the city of Klamath Falls, Oregon, and about 20 miles southerly from the town of Bly, Oregon. Roads formerly reached all parts of the township, but those in the south half are now in disuse.

The main topographical feature of the township is Gerber Reservoir, constructed for flood control and irrigation purposes, occupying about 5 square miles in the northwestern portion. High timbered mesas occupy several square miles on each of the N.E.

and S.E. parts and a smaller one is located in the S.W. part of the township. The remainder of the township is mostly timber rocky prairie land 50 to 100 ft. higher than the reservoir. The higher mesas in the east half are divided by Pitch Log Creek, which enters the township from the east in sec. 25 and becomes part of Gerber Reservoir in sec. 22. Another creek flows southerly through secs. 1, 12, and 13.

All of the creeks fail to flow during the extreme dry periods but some springs in sec. 9 and 24 have dependable water supply.

There are no permanent residents in the township. A semi-portage hunting cabin is located near the center of sec. 1 and fall cabins are located in secs. 9 and 30, which are the only buildings in the township (Vander Meer 1952:77).

T40S, R14.5E, W.M., 1875 [South central part of Grazing Unit: Horse Camp Rim Plateau, Antelope Flats, The Bumpheads, Bumpheads Reservoir]

The land in this township is generally 2d rate, high table land bearing Juniper timber and good bunch grass. It is tolerably well watered and the prairies have abundant pasturage. There is some good yellow pine timber on the East part" (Turner and Langell 1875).

T41S, R14.5E, W.M., 1872 [South central part of Gerber Block: Duncan Spring, Brady Butte, Notch Corral, Antelope Creek and Oregon-California Stateline]

This township is mostly open flats bearing a scattered growth of Juniper timber and covered with a luxuriant growth of bunch grass. Western part well watered by the East branch of Lost River. The Township is valuable for grazing purposes (Turner and Howard 1872a:64).

T39S, R15E, W.M., 1875 [East side of Gerber Block: Barnes Valley]

This township lies mostly on the south side of the divide between Spragues River and Lost River, and the General slope is towards the South West.

In Barnes Valley, lying in secs. 13, 14, 24, 25, 26, 35, and 36 there are about 3,000 acres of good agricultural land.

The Brook crossed by the line on the East Boundary of Sec. 13 sinks within that Section.

The remainder of the Township is rocky grassland with a scattering of Pine and Juniper timber--is tolerable well watered, and well adapted to grazing or pasturage (Thompson, Pengra and Meldrum 1868c:40).

T40S, R15E, W.M., 1872 [East side of Gerber Tract: Bear Valley, Antler Point, Deer Spring, Bug Spring, Holbrook Spring]

This township is high table land generally 2d rate. Timber Juniper and considerable good yellow Pine. The prairies have good bunch grass pasturage Generally well watered (Turner and Howard 1872b:64).

T41S, R15E, W.M., 1875 [East side of Gerber Tract: Johnson Meadow, Adobe Flat, Sorghum Flat, and Oregon-California State Line]

This township contains a large area of fine grazing land with a considerable amount of Pines and Juniper timber and is well watered on the western part (Howard 1875:39-40).

The township subdivisions, mounted 1868-75 thus confirm that the Gerber Tract was an elevated plateau with many potentials for grazing. Some sections were well-watered with springs and creeks and were covered with lush bunchgrass. Juniper and pine were widespread, especially at the higher elevations to the east. While isolated, the area was likely to gain the attention of stock raisers and a limited number of settlers.

The land records identified initial settlers and those who obtained lands primarily for grazing purposes within the Gerber Tract. The following table is organized by township and identifies those whose land entries were within the Gerber Tract or whose lands were within sections which were included in the Gerber Tract.

Table 2
Initial Land Owners in the Gerber Tract, 1875-1927

T38S, R13E, W.M., 1868 [West side of Gerber Tract: NW of Gerber Reservoir, including Paddock Butte, Coyote Butte, and Dry Prairie], Sections 25-28, 33-36

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Davis, William	160.00	Cash Entry	April 23, 1891
Davis, William	160.00	Homestead	August 20, 1892
Johnston, David W. (BLM n.d.a)	160.00	Cash Entry	May 8, 1894

T39S, R13E, W.M., 1868 [West side of Gerber Tract: west of Gerber Reservoir, Schnipps Valley, and Miller Creek]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Vinson, Henry [Cancelled April 15, 1887]	40.00	Homestead	May 16, 1890
Buckmaster, Joshua	160.00	Homestead	June 13, 1890
Hall, Ichibod	79.95	Homestead	October 11, 1890
Bishop, David [Reconveyed January 18, 1897]	160.00	Homestead	April 6, 1895
Goodlow, Laura	160.00	Homestead	March 22, 1897
Lindsay, James W.	160.00	Homestead	February 9, 1898
Cowley, Robert C.	160.00	Homestead	April 10, 1899
Abeloos, Ben (BLM n.d.b)	160.00	Homestead	April 8, 1904

T40S, R14E, W.M., 1871 [West side of Gerber Tract: Copeland Reservoir, Boggs Lake, Gift Butte, and Woolen Canyon]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Vinson, Henry [Cancelled April 15, 1887] (BLM n.d.c)	153.56	Homestead	March 15, 1884

T41S, R14E, W.M., 1871 [West side of Gerber Tract: Three Mile Reservoir, Willow Valley Reservoir, and the Oregon-California Stateline]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Kilgore, Silas W.	160.00	Cash Entry	August 15, 1876
Kilgore, David C.	160.00	Homestead	January 11, 1889
Malone, James (BLM n.d.d)	162.22	Homestead	September 4, 1896

T38S, R14E, W.M. [North Central part of Gerber Tract: Barnes Creek and Gerber Ranch]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Dickson, Edward C.	160.00	Cash Entry	July 1, 1889
Harwood, Albert C.	40.00	Cash Entry	December 26, 1891
Powell, Jacob M.	160.00	Homestead	February 8, 1898
Wilson, William T.	160.00	Homestead	May 10, 1898
Jay, Ezra (BLM n.d.e)	160.00	Homestead	September 30, 1899

T39S, R14E, W.M., 1952 [North-central part of Gerber Tract: Gerber Reservoir, Barnes Valley Creek, Pitch Log Creek, Wildhorse Creek]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Swingle, Charles J.	160.00	Cash Entry	January 19, 1891
Gerber, Louis	167.77	Homestead	January 16, 1895
Coulter, Sidney D.	160.00	Homestead	March 22, 1897
Hurley, Mary F.	162.60	Cash Entry	June 16, 1904
McKendree, Owen F.	160.00	Homestead	March 22, 1906
Tull, Albert B.	160.00	Homestead	May 14, 1906
Tull, Irene F. (BLM n.d.f)	120.00	Homestead	May 14, 1806

T40S, R14.5E, W.M., 1875 [South central part of Grazing Unit: Horses Camp Rim Plateau, Antelope Flats, The Bumpheads, Bumpheads Reservoir]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Kilgore, Florence	160.00	Cash Entry	February 14, 1893
Kilgore, Mary L.	40.00	Cash Entry	March 18, 1905
Roberts, Frank C.	160.00	Cash Entry	March 18, 1905
Kilgore, Mary L.	320.00	Cash Entry	April 26, 1906
Kilgore, Edward G.	40.00	Cash Entry	July 15, 1918
Kilgore, Ivan E. (BLM n.d.g)	310.00	Homestead	March 4, 1922

T41S, R14.5E, W.M., 1872 [South central part of Gerber Tract: Duncan Spring, Brady Butte, Notch Corral, Antelope Creek and Oregon-California Stateline]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Deal, William	169.37	Homestead	March 22, 1897
Nurmi, Eino R.	160.00	Cash Entry	August 31, 1914
Nitschelm, Elsie	160.00	Cash Entry	October 19, 1914
Ruland, Daniel K.	40.00	Homestead	January 25, 1922
Perry, Kenneth S.	160.00	Cash Entry	October 3, 1927
Delzell, Sarah C.	160.00	Cash Entry	October 6, 1927

Barth, George M. (BLM n.d.h)	160.00	Cash Entry	December 21, 1927
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T39S, R15E, W.M., 1875 [East side of Gerber Tract: Barnes Valley]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Dillard, John M.	160.00	Homestead	December 21, 1893
Malloy, Daniel P. (BLM n.d.i)	40.00	Cash Entry	June 6, 1902

T40S, R15E, W.M., 1872 [East side of Gerber Tract: Bear Valley, Antler Point, Deer Spring, Bug Spring, Holbrook Spring]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
King, George W.	120.00	Cash Entry	December 26, 1891
McMurray, Robert C.	160.00	Cash Entry	June 5, 1894
King, George W.	160.00	Homestead	February 9, 1898
Holbrook, George L.	40.00	Cash Entry	October 3, 1904
Campbell, Angus D. (BLM n.d.j)	160.00	Cash Entry	October 28, 1904

T41S, R15E, W.M., 1875 [East side of Gerber Tract: Johnson Meadow, Adobe Flat, Sorghum Flat, and Oregon-California State Line]

Settler	Acreage	Kind of Entry	Date
Gwinn, Franklin S.	178.51	Cash Entry	August 24, 1891
McMurray, Robert C.	39.91	Cash Entry	August 24, 1891
Grohs, Emma J.	170.00	Cash Entry	July 19, 1893
Grohs, Frederick P.	80.00	Cash Entry	May 8, 1894
Grohs, Frederick P.	80.00	Cash Entry	January 15, 1897
Grohs, Frank	40.00	Cash Entry	June 6, 1902
Baker, William F.	200.12	Forest Lieu Selection	June 22, 1904
Baker, William F.	520.00	Forest Lieu Selection	June 22, 1904
Baker, William F.	638.25	Forest Lieu Selection	September 1, 1904
Duncan, Henry E.	154.65	Homestead	October 27, 1904
King, Mary	40.00	Cash Entry	June 30, 1905
Gerrard, Alexander	120.00	Cash Entry	October 29, 1908
Wilson, Robert J. (BLM n.d.k)	101.97	Cash Entry	October 18, 1909

The land records thus confirm that the years 1890-1910 were the period when interest drew some homesteaders and a larger number of investors to purchase lands within or immediately adjacent to the Gerber

Tract. Homesteading in the region proved problematic. Few tried it and a number who did were unsuccessful in securing patents. Some willingly relinquished their claims. Surnames such as Kilgore, Grohs, Tull, Buckmaster, Vincent and Goodlow, illustrate that families resident in Langell Valley to the west and Barnes Valley to the east were among those seeking grazing areas in the higher country of the Gerber Tract. Other settlers purchased school lands in sections 16 and 36 in these townships. Their ownership is recorded in the records of Klamath County.

Modoc War, 1872-73

Penetration of the Modoc homeland by overland emigrants set the stage for conflicts. When the exploring party from the Willamette Valley opened the Applegate Trail in 1846, an annual flow of weary, hungry, and sometimes angry pioneers flowed through Modoc territory. Hostilities flared repeatedly. The troubles were often two-sided. The Modoc saw clothing, weapons, and other items they could pillage from travelers. The situation worsened in the early 1850s when Indian killers from Yreka, California, outfitted volunteer companies to travel to Tule Lake ostensibly to protect arriving emigrants. Their assaults on the Modoc were barbaric and deepened the divisions between the Indians and Euro-Americans (Murray 1959:7-42).

In the 1860s tensions renewed with the advent of Euro-American settlement in the Klamath Basin. As was the case in many parts of the American West, settlement pre-dated treaties and efforts to work out government-to-government relationships between tribes and the United States. Captain Jack's band of Modoc lived in the watershed of Clear Lake and Lost River. Those areas were primary targets for those filing on land claims and seeking pastures for livestock. Although the Modoc signed a treaty with the United States negotiated in 1864 by J. W. Perit Huntington, the provision that they were to remove to the Klamath Reservation proved untenable. The Modoc and Klamath tribes were generally at peace, but old feuds and tensions lurked below the surface. Confinement of the Modoc and Klamath on the same reservation created problems for both tribes. The Modoc soon returned to their traditional homes. The spread of the teachings of Tavibo--the first Ghost Dance religion--momentarily gave rise to expectation of the Modoc that the embrace of those teachings might lead to divine intervention and the restoration of their rights and lands. Thus, for a variety of reasons, the

Modoc moved toward outright war which broke out in November, 1872 (Murray 1959:43-82).

The primary theater of operations during the war was on the margins of Tule Lake, particularly the Modoc stronghold in the lava beds. The long war of attrition and building up of troops assaulting the Modoc position, however, led to the effort of the beleaguered Indians to try to escape. One of the final chapters of the war occurred in Langell Valley and, to some extent, on the southern part of the Gerber Block. In May, 1873, the Western Band of Modoc surrendered to the United States Army. The Eastern Band, that led by Captain Jack, however, slipped away and moved to Willow Creek, the tributary draining the highlands of the southern part of the Gerber Block flowing into Clear Lake. Soldiers, Indian scouts from the Warm Springs Reservation, and Modoc guides went in pursuit (Thompson 1971:110).

On May 29 the troops split into two forces to work their way through the rough terrain up both banks of Willow Creek. When they found the Modoc camp, Boston Charley, a leader of the Eastern Band, and others offered to surrender. At that moment, however, one of the Warm Springs scouts fired his weapon, an unfortunate accident. The Modoc scattered in all directions. In time Boston Charley and eight women and a few children surrendered. On May 30 the troops renewed their advance up Willow Creek but discovered that the refugee Modoc had turned off to the northeast, probably crossing the southern part of the Gerber Block, and had entered Langell Valley. Their trail led along the east side of the valley to a canyon, most likely Miller Creek, where they disappeared into the bluffs and rugged terrain of the rim along the east margin of the valley (Thompson 1971:111-112; Landrum 2000).

In time Dr. Cabaniss, one of the military force, found the camp and engaged Scarfaced Charley, another Modoc leader, in discussions about surrender. This led to a meeting with Captain Jack who assured

Cabaniss that he would put down his arms the following day. Because of the end of daylight, however, the troops moved on to camp at the Wilson Ranch and the matter remained unresolved. On May 31 Schonchin John, Scarfaced Charley, ten women, and nine children surrendered. The capitulation of the Eastern Band of Modoc thus probably occurred in Miller Canyon (Landrum 2000). But the wily Captain Jack and three other men took off in the uneasy twilight of the new day. The pursuit thus resumed and took the troops back to Willow Creek where, at last, Jack, a couple of men, two boys, three women, and some children gave up. Erwin N. Thompson has written: "It was a sad ending for this man who with less than 70 men had defeated the army repeatedly for seven months" (Thompson 1971:112-115).

The conclusion of the Modoc War in 1873 led to the military trial and execution of the alleged leaders of the conflict at Fort Klamath. The surviving Modoc were then sent into exile in Oklahoma. A few Modoc, however, integrated into the Klamath Indian communities, especially at Bly and Beatty. The removal of the Modoc set the stage for rapid spread of Euro-American settlement in their lands. The filings on lands proceeded rapidly in the 1870s and the 1880s when a new people with a dramatically different lifeway seized the opportunities of a place which had sustained Captain Jack and his people (Murray 1959:310-317).

Violence

The rough and tumble nature of society and the character of several of the earliest settlers of Langell Valley and the Gerber Block resounded through misdeeds. Told and retold so many times that what people think happened may have become more important than what did happen, these stories bespeak a lack of civility and the absence of societal controls which would have curbed some of the excesses. The tally of conflicts runs from the violence meted out toward the Modoc Indians to feuds and murders that erupted in this frontier society. The episodes included the following:

- Murder of the Jones Women

Virginia Kent wrote about an interview with the Kilgore family wherein she learned about the murder of a mother and daughter named Jones. These women had hired several men, enticing them to stay and work, but then refusing to pay them and finally driving them away. Finally one man had had enough--he shot both of them. The episode was not pegged to a year but probably happened in the 1870s or the 1880s subsequent to the Kilgore family settling in Langell Valley in 1871 (Kent 1972:4).

- Calavan-Laws Dispute and Murders, 1882

Prior to 1880 Henry C. Laws and his family settled on the Rimrock Ranch, owned over the last century by the Grohs family (Grohs 2000). Henry Laws was born in 1842 in Illinois; his wife, Mattie, was born 1834 in Kentucky. Their sons included: Robert L., born in 1863, Joseph R., born in 1867, Henry L., born in 1869, and James O., born in 1873 (Bureau of the Census 1880).

The Calavans, former neighbors of the Lawses in Big Valley,

California, drove a herd to Langell Valley in 1881 to spend the winter. The Calavans soon found one of their steers and others belonging to friends in Big Valley mixed in with the Laws's livestock. The Calavans reported their discovery to their friends in California. According to one account, H. C. Laws tried to sneak up on the elder Calavan and murder him with a heavy club. Calavan deflected the blow but suffered a nearly severed ear and broken shoulder. He managed to open his knife with his teeth, staggered to his feet, and turned on Laws who escaped. These events set the stage for the conflict of February 13, 1882. James and Frank Calavan, aged eighteen and fifteen, ran into H. C. Laws on a narrow trail. There was an exchange of words and shots. Laws killed James Calavan's horse and shot Frank Calavan in the back. Jim escaped on foot through the snow and later found his badly wounded brother in their cabin at Corral Valley. Jim set out to Langell Valley for help and returned shortly before his brother died (Good 1941:66-67).

A lynch party formed in Langell Valley to pursue Laws. Sensing that he was in trouble, H. C. Laws escaped. A trial aborted in Alturas for lack of jurisdiction and Laws was set free. Almost immediately he was arrested and taken to Linkville where he was held in the Greenman Hotel, since there was no jail. Eighteen masked, armed men then swept into the building to seize Laws. In the melee with the vigilantes, the deputy sheriff, Lewis, who was guarding Laws, was fatally wounded. When a grand jury met in Lakeview, it voted to indict Laws for first degree murder, but by that time Laws had fled to Utah. An effort to capture him failed, and it was believed by many that Laws fled to New Mexico. In Klamath County bushwackers murdered Laws's eldest sons: one was shot down on a porch and the other was killed the same day. Their tombstone in the Linkville Cemetery reads: "Lee (Aged 19) and Joe (Aged 15) Laws, sons of H. C. and M. P. Laws, murdered by masked assassins, June 24, 1882" (Good 1941:68-70). Virginia Kent, a resident of

Langell Valley who in the 1970s interviewed a number of long-time residents, however, wrote: "The local version is different. Kilgore told us that he [Laws] wrote a letter to one of the Kilgore men after his escape and threatened to come back and kill him. Lloyd Gift heard that a party of men had found him at a cabin on the mountain, killed him, and threw his body in the pigpen. Later on his bones were gathered up and put in a gunnysack and buried (Kent 1972:6).

Whatever the version of accounts of these events, the Calavan-Laws dispute led to four deaths and many bitter feelings.

■ Goodlow-Shook Dispute, 1890

The Goodlow family was one of the earliest to settle in Langell Valley. Goodlow Rim bears the family surname. During the bitter winter of 1889-90 ranchers lost much livestock. The following spring a number took their surviving herds to Langell Valley where there was ample chance for changing brands. Dan Driscoll, who was a drover at that time, later recalled: "A family by the name of Goodlow lived at 'Goodlow Mountain' about five miles north of Lorella--a southern family, hospitable and neighborly, but not too scrupulous in business. Three grown sons were accused of changing brands on animals. . . ." Among the ranchers losing livestock was Dave Shook. In the summer of 1890, George Goodlow rode up to the Shook Ranch and called out to John Shook who was reading a newspaper on the porch. Driscoll recalled:

John walked up to the gate, carrying the paper in such a way as to conceal his pistol. That he was armed was no matter for remark, as practically every man carried arms in those days. Men even had rifles with them in the hayfields and pistols tied under their mowing machines. As the two met at the gate, both fired, Shook's shot being a moment the quicker, passing through Goodlow's heart, and resulting in his immediate death (Good 1941:70-71).

Virginia Kent noted that the Goodlows were believed to have transformed the "C" brand of the Colahan and Shook families into the Goodlow "8," an easy event with a branding iron. She further noted that with George Goodlow's death, his family sold out to Ben Abaloos, a Belgian (Kent 1972:6).

■ Murder of Arthur Langell, 1894

On September 7, 1894, a dispute flared between Arthur Langell and Frank Swingle "near a break in the fence of the Beekman property." Although the nature of the conflict is unclear, Swingle shot Langell to death and was charged with murder. A jury heard the case and deadlocked. A second trial resulted in a verdict of "not guilty" (Kent 1972:1-2; Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:22).

■ Shooting of Josh Buckmaster, 1890s

Dan Driscoll recalled: "Associated with the Goodlows was the Buckmaster family, one of whom, Josh, rivalled the Goodlows in his reputation for outlawry and is said to have had a price of \$1,000 on his head. Being met one day by a group of sheriff's deputies, he turned to flee, leaning low upon his horse's back, and received a bullet which traveled the length of his spine and came out at his neck without breaking a bone" (Good 1941:71).

■ Josh Buckmaster Shot Again, 1890s

The Shook family suffered the loss of a herd of mules which were driven off to Big Valley, California. Billy Shook, a Klamath County deputy sheriff, and others went in pursuit. When they found the mules, they found Josh Buckmaster. Dan Driscoll wrote: "When ordered to throw up his hands, he started shooting. When a ball hit his right hand and came out at the elbow, shattering his forearm, he managed to get the gun

into his left hand and continued shooting. He was captured only after his horse stumbled in trying to jump a wire fence (Good 1941:71-72).

■ Henry Goodlow's Prized Shot, 1890s

Dan Driscoll recalled that Henry Goodlow and Josh Buckmaster were not only neighbors but thieves. Word spread that Henry Goodlow was headed to Barnes Valley to the Batchelder-Earl Ranch, Driscoll and a deputy went in pursuit. Henry Goodlow escaped and fled either to Idaho or to Vale, Oregon, where he was tracked down by Billy Shook. Goodlow, who was getting a haircut, fired through the barber's apron draped over him and blew off Shook's finger. Goodlow continued shooting but was overpowered. Convicted and then paroled, Goodlow later settled in Harney County where he "became a respected citizen" (Good 1941:72).

■ Sheep and Cattlemen Conflicts, 1905

In the spring of 1905 troubles erupted between cattlemen and sheep herders along the Lake and Klamath county border. The lands involved the Gerber Block, Squaw Flat, Barnes Valley Long Valley, and Johnson Meadow. Silas Henry Obenchain, sheriff of Klamath County, investigated. Obenchain knew the area well. He had settled in 1885 in Langell Valley and worked for seven years as a cattle drover for Gerber Brothers of Sacramento, California. Obenchain reported that on April 13 nine masked vigilantes had burned Dave Elder's sheep camp, tied up a sheep herder, used his dog to round up the flock, and killed seventy-five head. The sheep were the property of Owen T. McKendrie. Reports on the number killed varied. McKendrie told the *Lakeview Herald* that he had lost "about 100 of his sheep." The editor of the *Klamath Republican* commented: "The difficulty between the cattle and sheep men is a very serious question and unless something is done to define the rights of the

two, it is impossible to tell what the results may be" (Anonymous 1905a, 1905b; Good 1941:237).

In 1983 Bill Noble of Langell Valley recalled that McKendrie may have had as many as 500 or 600 head of sheep killed. He identified the site as below Schnipps Valley on the ride a mile or two near Dog Hollow, not far from Dog Hollow Reservoir. Noble believed that the Kilgores and Swingles were involved in killing the sheep. He recalled that his father told him that the Kilgores shot into the campfire to scare the shepherders running flocks in the area (Noble 1983).

Orval DeVaul in 1983 stated that the sheep killing in 1905 occurred at the Casebeer Ranch, "just across the ford at the farthest end where the old road goes around the field." He said that at least 300 head of McKendrie's sheep were killed there and that it was done by people from Langell Valley (DeVaul 1983).

Also in 1905 vigilantes set fire to hay belonging both to Owen McKendrie and Louis Gerber. Shelton McKendrie had purchased a half stack of hay from Gerber; his stock were consuming it from both ends. The Gerbers had left a team and wagon at the site when the sheep killers arrived, pulled the wagon to one end, and left a threatening note pinned to it. They set fire to the haystack. Mrs. McKendrie, who was pregnant, came running with a sixteen-year-old boy, Archie White, and put out the fire. White, however, was overcome by the smoke and died. He was buried at Bonanza, Oregon (DeVaul 1983).

■ Murder of Owen (Shoan) McKendrie, April 20, 1918

On April 20, 1918, Owen T. McKendrie, a sheep owner and wool buyer for the firm of Tryon and McKendrie of Klamath Falls, was shot to death at Dry Prairie immediately northwest of the Gerber Block (Kilgore 1983). According to the *Evening Herald* (Klamath Falls, OR.), McKendrie came into the camp of William Holbrook and J. E. Paddock at Dry Prairie

north of Horsefly Valley. The site was Paddock's homestead. Reportedly McKendrie and Holbrook had sheep camps about a half mile apart. Holbrook and Paddock claimed that two shots were first fired at them from McKendrie's camp. McKendrie's employees denied such action. Two shots were reportedly fired at McKendrie. His horse reared and plunged and his body fell to the ground some 300 yards away (Anonymous 1918a).

McKendrie, born at Adin in Modoc County, California, was forty-two years old. He was of Irish descent and was actually named Shoan, but most referred to him as Owen (DeVaul 1983). He left a wife, two children, a mother, and two brothers, Creede and Fred McKendrie. McKendrie reportedly ran 20,000 head of sheep in Klamath County and purchased between 40,000 and 50,000 head per year for San Francisco firms. McKendrie was one of several who brought in sheep in the springtime. Local ranchers protested, arguing that the sheep cropped the ground clean and ruined the range for cattle (Noble 1983). Louis Gerber commented on McKendrie's death:

McKendrie was in many respects a remarkable man. Altho a man who had enjoyed limited educational privileges, he entered the stock business at an early age and by indomitable energy and ambition forced his way into the top rank in this line of business. He was the gamest man and the best loser I have ever met thus far in experience. He could take the biggest jolt or set-back in a business way and emerge with a cheerful whistle. In many years of contact with him, we had many tilts and business disagreements, but always ended them in the same warm friendship that has characterized our association (Anonymous 1918a).

McKendrie believed in profit-sharing. He had divided his business into seven partnerships. Tryon and McKendrie furnished bands of sheep but retained a 75% ownership; their partners had a 25% ownership and secured a salary (Anonymous 1918b). A number of McKendrie's

employees were Basques, known locally as "Bascos" (Noble 1983).

When the investigation of McKendrie's death commenced, Silas W. Buckmaster was among the witnesses called. Buckmaster had settled in 1873 at Dry Prairie. His impaired eyesight impeached his testimony (Anonymous 1918c). Jim Santiago, one of McKendrie's workmen, testified that McKendrie was shot twice: first by someone from firing from a tent and second by J. E. Paddock who stood outside the tent. Santiago claimed that McKendrie was shot in the back (Anonymous 1918d). William Holbrook testified that he shot in self-defense, alleging that McKendrie had raised his gun (Anonymous 1918e). On April 20, 1918, William Holbrook and J. E. Paddock were found guilty of manslaughter in the death of Owen T. McKendrie. They were assessed court costs and sentenced from one to fifteen years (Anonymous 1918f, 1918g).

These events in the immediate vicinity of the Gerber Block led to ten violent deaths within a period of about forty years. They suggest that Langell Valley and the region east of Goodlow Rim attracted many with tendencies to try to settle disputes personally and violently. The rule of the gun and the vigilante rather than the rule of law governed this society for many years. It was little wonder that a western fiction writer like Zane Grey found the setting fertile for crafting a novel. Events were sometimes larger than life and were all too often, life-threatening.

Ranching and Subsistence Living

The magic and isolation of the Lost River country was grasped by its residents and visitors. In 1924 or 1925, Zane Grey, a dentist turned writer, visited the region and transformed it into a fictional setting for his novel *Forlorn River: A Romance* (1926). Silas and Louise Kilgore met Grey who was in the region researching the setting and local characters to use in his novel. When it was published, local residents scrambled to identify who was who among the thinly fictionalized characters (Juillerat 1983).

Grey's grasp of the setting spilled out in this work about the Lost River and its people:

That seemed the way of Forlorn River. It has its beginning in Clear Lake, a large body of surface water lying amid the Sage Mountains of northwestern California. It had begun well enough at its source under the beautiful rounded bare mountains of gray sage, and flowed bravely on for a few miles, then suddenly it became a lost river. That was what it was called by the Indians.

It meandered around under the foothills with their black fringe of juniper, into the wide gray valleys where thousands of wild horses roamed; to and fro across the open country as if seeking escape, on toward the dark pine-timbered ranges of Nevada; and back again, a barren little stream without creeks or springs to freshen it, a wilderness waterway, dear to the Indian and horse-hunter and cowboy; slackened by the thirsty Clay Flats to the west, and crowded away on the north by the huge red bluff that blocked entrance into Wild Goose Basin, forced at last to describe a wandering hundred-mile circle from its source, a miserable sand-choked outlet into the vast level ranch and pasture-land which had once been the bottom of Tule Lake (Grey 1926:1-2).

Many who resided in Langell Valley, the Gerber Tract, and Barnes Valley embraced a subsistence life style. As ranchers there was not much choice in the matter between the 1870s and the 1930s. Their lives were in many ways like the fictional figures in *Forlorn River*. The settlements were isolated. Initially only trails and rudimentary wagon

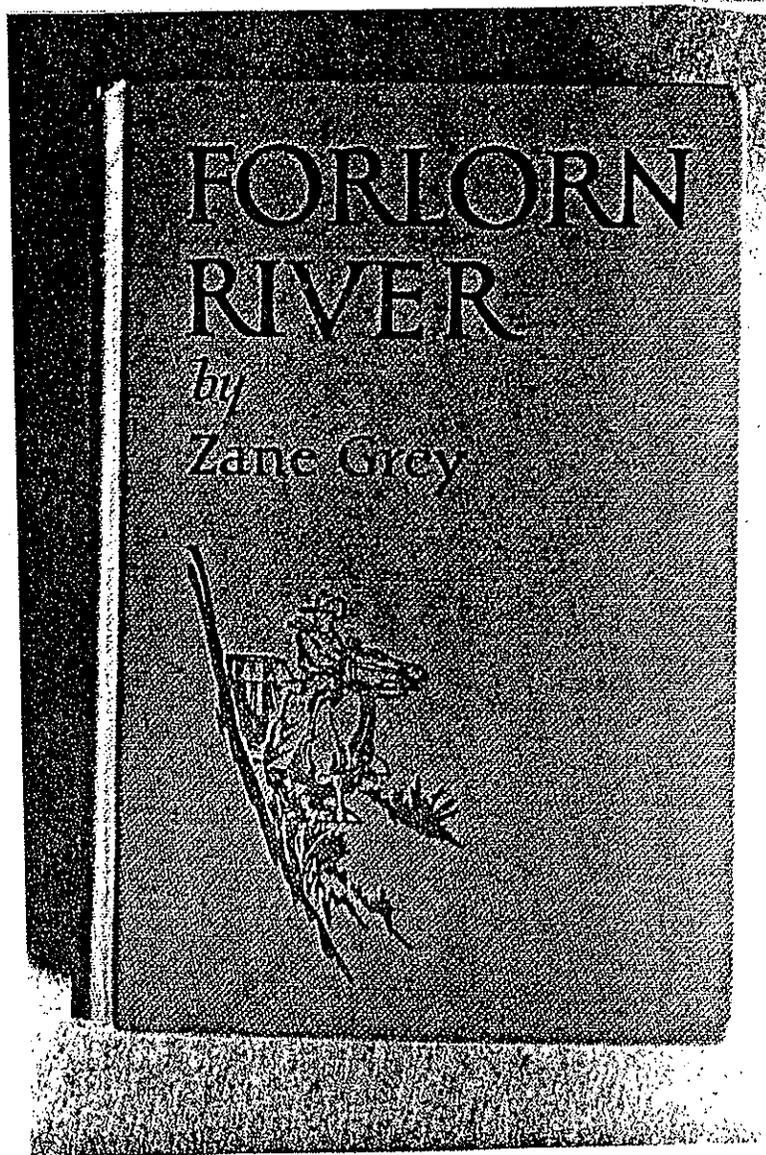


Fig. 8. Embossed cover of first edition of *Forlorn River: A Romance* by Zane Gray (1926). (Bill Johnson Collection, Klamath Falls, OR.)

roads joined farms to communities such as Bonanza and Klamath Falls. In the 1920s the primary connectors became part of a graded, graveled county round system. The farms were without electricity and telephones. Those who lived in the region simply had to make do and that usually

required almost constant expenditure of energies. They felled and hauled logs to construct claim cabins. They cut timber, milled it, and erected their own homes, barns, and outbuildings. They cut, cleared, and constructed fences. They planted gardens but ran the risk of losing their crops in sudden plunges of temperatures. They set out fruit trees and harvested their small orchards. Families raised peas, rhubarb, apples, and pears. They stocked up supplies on trips to town--to Bonanza, Merrill, or Klamath Falls, but not until 1910 could they go to the store in Lorella, founded by Immanuel J. Pool and tended after 1911 by postmaster Moses James. From 1913-27 the James and Fordney store at Lorella met local needs, then Willard and Wilfred Noble purchased it (Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:11-12; Randall 2000).

George Masten Miller came to Langell Valley in 1870 with his parents, George S. and Mable (Walter) Miller. He recalled in 1948:

There were lots of deer, antelope, sage hens and prairie chickens in Langell Valley at that time. As children, we could catch the young goslings that were almost as large as their parents, by running between them and the water in Lost River. We would put them in pens where they were kept for a time after which they would be turned out and would not run away. We also gathered many eggs from the sage hens, prairie chickens and ducks (Miller 1964:13).

Hunting, fishing, and using livestock on the farm were an important part of subsistence. The region abounded in wildfowl and deer. Some fished for suckers, as did the Indians, in the early twentieth century in Lost River. Minnie (Bussey) Dillard Davis, a granddaughter of David and Elizabeth Haynes who founded Haynesville (later Lorella), came to Langell Valley in 1880. She recalled: "Every spring there were great quantities of fish, sometimes called salmon [suckers or mullet] that would come up to Bonanza and my father would catch a big tub full with a pitch fork, and oh how we would enjoy eating them. I think they used to

weigh about 10 or 12 pounds each (Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:33).

The ambitious family was able to "make do," especially if it had a smokehouse, and most farmers erected one for curing hams and bacon and jerking meat. Orval DeVaul recalled killing hogs and making bacon. He said that the Gerbers killed fourteen or fifteen hogs a year, some weighing 300 pounds:

They'd render all the lard out of them, fat out of them, make lard out of it. And the hams, they'd trim them down, smoked them, salted them. They kept them away in a kind of cellar or something so they'd stay about so cool. They kept good. Used to put a lot of smoke of them. Smoke the heck out of them and they was just coated all over brown (DeVaul 1992).

Women saved some of the fat for making soap. They sun-dried and canned fruit and stored turnips and potatoes in root cellars. Careful management enabled some families virtually to live off the land (Randall 2000; Noble, L. 2000).

Each family sought to generate cash income. While sale of cattle, sheep, wool, or horses were the primary means, subsidiary enterprises were often important. Wilfred Noble explained a common enterprise in the early twentieth century. "Most families had around 15 head of cows they milked," he said (Noble, L. 2000). Orval DeVaul noted: "Most all of them had a little dairy. Had a little bunch of cows, pretty near Durham cows. There was no creamery, so they'd churn it and make butter and put it down . . . and salted it down" (DeVaul 1992). Some hauled milk to the cheese factory in Malin, but when the factory opened a branch in Langell Valley, the trip was much shortened. Other families made butter, salted it, and set out for as much as three weeks on the road to find purchasers in order to secure cash to buy supplies (Noble, M. 1983; Kent 1972:4). "Once a year they went to Ashland to get supplies," recalled Luther Noble. "Ashland was their primary source." Excess milk for which there was no market was poured into churns, set in the sun, and turned

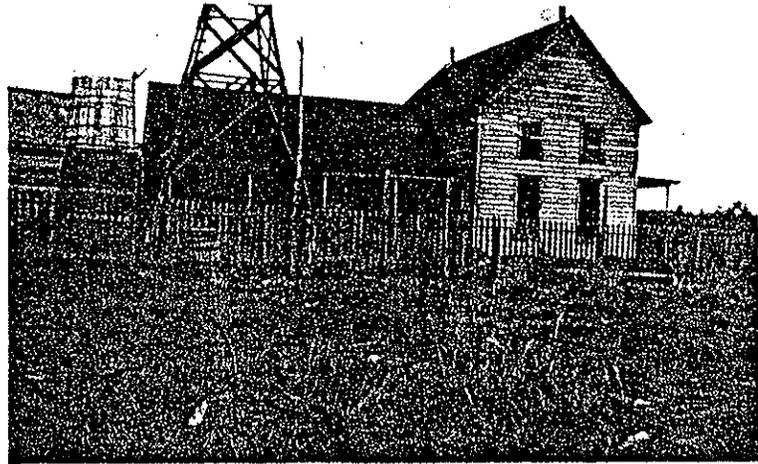
into cottage cheese. This made excellent food for fattening hogs (Noble, L. 2000).

Some raised money by trapping. Older boys and men pursued white weasels, beaver, muskrat, and mink, selling their hides in Klamath Falls. Another source of modest income came from county scalp bounties on bobcats, coyotes, and porcupines (Noble, L. 2000; Grohs 2000).

Others engaged in illegal activity--the manufacture of moonshine during Prohibition. The Gerber Tract was ideally situated for such illicit enterprise. It was distant from the county sheriff in Klamath Falls; it lay adjacent to an isolated border between Oregon and California; it possessed numerous small springs, a critical element in the production of spirituous liquor; and it contained a number of canyons or blind draws not likely to draw visitors. A still operated at "Slick" Wilson's place at Dry Prairie in T38S, R13E, Section 2, in the 1930s and into the 1940s (Gerber 1983). Orval DeVaul recalled: "pretty near every place there was a spring there was a moonshine operation." He stated that Barnes Valley was good country for stills (DeVaul 1983). Mary (Gift) Noble recalled that moonshiners also worked in the Long Branch watershed in the far northeast corner of the Gerber Tract (Noble, M. 1983).

Because of the lack of electricity and the heat of summers, the labor of cutting, hauling, and storing ice was another common labor. Frank Grohs recalled that his family had an ice house, heavily insulated, and that blocks of ice cut in winter on Lost River might last well into the summer (Grohs 2000).

Livestock raising occupied the greatest energy and produced the best return for those who lived in the Gerber Tract or its surrounding country. Sheep, cattle, and horses were all once raised, but, by the 1920s, both sheep and horses lost out to cattle as the primary focus for ranchers. The ranchers engaged in almost unceasing labor to manage



Horsefly ranch, where Gerber Reservoir located.

Fig. 9. Louis and Ida (Campbell) Gerber's home with windmill and water tank in Horsefly Valley on Miller Creek, ca. 1904 (Gerber Papers, Gerber Ranch, OR.)



Fig. 10. Frances E. Campbell and David Campbell, parents of Ida (Campbell) Gerber, ca. 1900, on ~~(left)~~ other couple not identified. (Gerber Papers, Gerber Ranch, OR.)

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and maintain herds. This included doctoring animals, moving them to summer or winter pasture, cutting and stacking hay, branding, rounding them up, moving them to market, and countless other activities. Orval Devaul recalled the hard labor at the old Gerber Ranch in the Horsefly area where they cut the hay, loaded it onto wagons, and hauled it to sheds and barn (DeVaul 1992).



Fig. 11. Original Gerber Ranch in Horsefly Valley, ca. 1904. House, windmill, and outbuildings. This site is now covered by Gerber Reservoir. (Bureau of Reclamation, Klamath Falls, OR.)

One of the largest and most successful of operations was developed by Ida (Campbell) Gerber and Henry and Mariam Gerber and their daughters: Sylvia (Gerber) Bruce, Margaret (Gerber) Cheyne, and Marilyn (Gerber) Livingston. Ned Livingston, husband of Marilyn (Gerber) Livingston, assessed the family operations in 1974. The family had 706.5 acres in the Bly Ranch which produced about 900 tons of meadow hay each year. The family owned 280 acres in Langell Valley, yielding about 300 tons a year in hay and alfalfa. The mountain grazing

on the Fremont National Forest, Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, State of Oregon, and Bureau of Land Management lands was 5,373 acres. The family had a half interest in 802 acres of summer grazing land held jointly with the Circle 5 Ranch. Henry and Mariam Gerber had 6,600 acres at Red Bluff, California, held jointly with their three daughters, as well as lease land in that area for winter pasture (Livingston 2000).

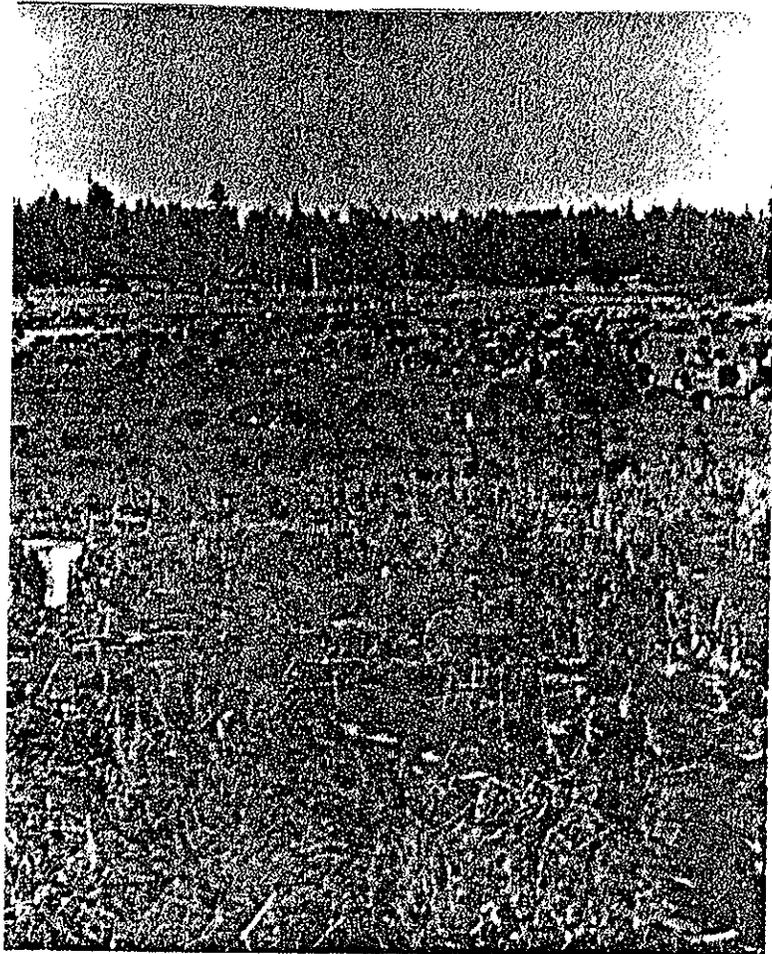
Fig. 12. Henry Gerber on the range near the Oriana Corrals, ca. 1930. (Gerber Papers, Gerber Ranch, OR.)



Livingston described the family's grazing strategies. Near the end of November they trucked their cattle from Klamath County to the Red Bluff area. "Most of the cows calved in California on the winter range," he wrote, "and were returned to Oregon in Klamath County about the 15th of May, at which time the cattle were permitted on the forest and

the leased lands. The cattle were then turned out on the leased lands,

Fig. 13. Cattle from the Gerber Ranch near Oriana Corral prior to fencing of the meadow (Gerber Papers, Gerber Ranch, OR.)



the Forest Reserve and the BLM lands, where they grazed during the summer." The cattle spending the summer in Oregon were the breeder cows and their calves and the "heifer end of the weaners." The Gerber Ranch placed the steer weaners on pastures at Bly and ran them until they were sold in the fall. Livingston concluded: "The cows and calves would stay on the summer range until the Forest Service required them to be gathered, at which time they would be taken to the Bly ranch on pasture, fed hay until they were ready to be removed again to Red Bluff (Livingston 2000).

No other operations were as large or complex as that nurtured during the twentieth century by the Gerber family, but several other ranchers in Langell Valley developed comparable systems of moving their cattle through the seasons to use both their own lands and public holdings to secure adequate feed to sustain their herds. The Grohs family of Langell Valley and Rimrock Ranch ran many head of cattle. In the first half of the twentieth century the operations of Bill Campbell, Louis Gerber, Frank Grohs, and the Kilgore family were the largest in the vicinity of the Gerber Block. Frank Grohs, Sr., recalled in 1983 that some slaughter houses sent cattle buyers to the Klamath Basin. In the 1930s and the 1940s he drove his livestock to Malin to sell to the Moffett Meat Company. Other ranchers drove their livestock to Dairy or to Montague, California (Grohs 1983).

Of the many individuals and families connected with the Gerber Block, a few have endured over succeeding generations to graze livestock and remain either in that area, adjacent Langell Valley, or in the Klamath Basin. Representative of these families are the Campbell-Randall family, Campbell-Gerber family, Grohs family, Kilgore family, and the Casey-Noble family. In 1984 a number of members of these families wrote histories and biographical accounts which were published in *The History of Klamath County, Oregon*. These narratives contain genealogical information, accounts of migration, and vital statistical data on a number of individuals prominent in the development of Langell Valley and the Gerber Block. Some of these families also contributed biographical information to the *History of Klamath County* (Good 1941) and to the special issue of *Klamath Echoes* of 1972 concerned with Langell Valley and Bonanza.

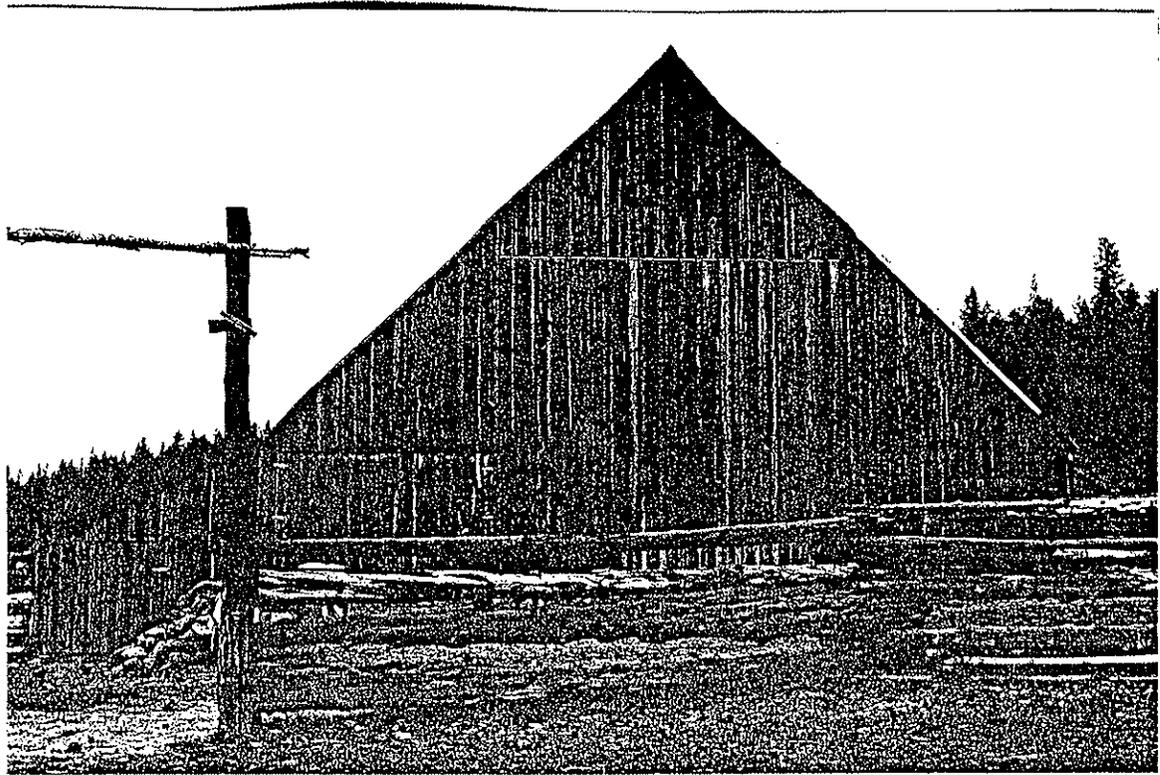


Fig. 14. Barn at Gerber Ranch erected ca. 1894 on Barnes Creek, T38S, R14E, Section 20, W.M.. (Stephen Dow Beckham, May 6, 2000).

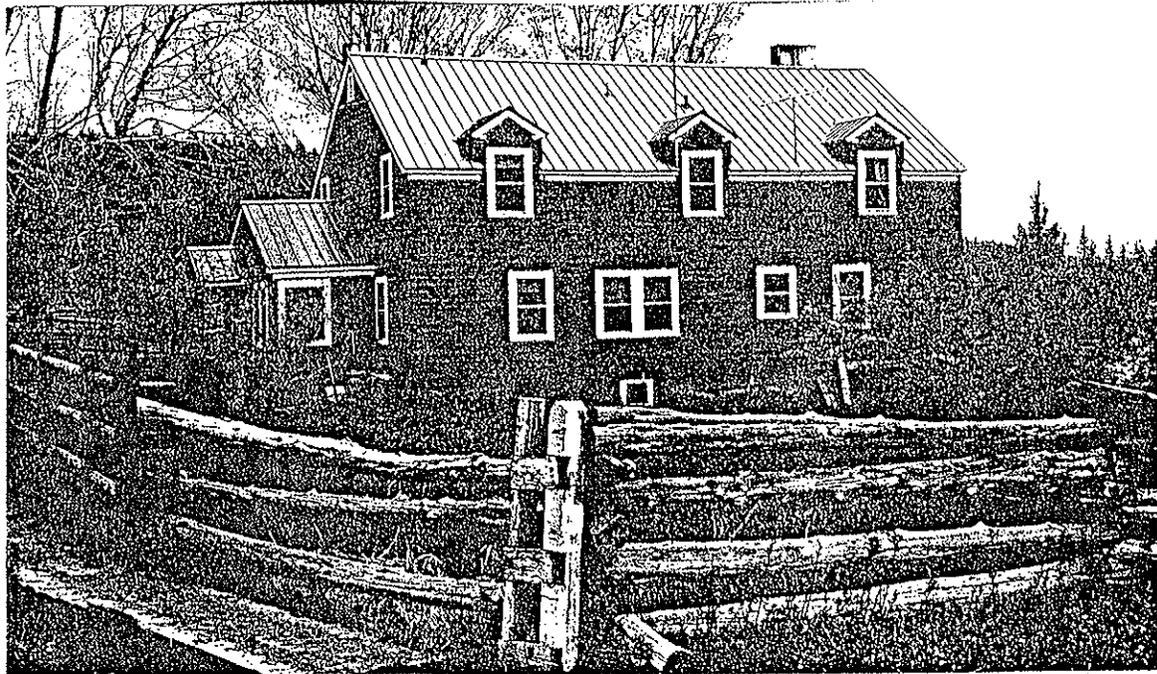
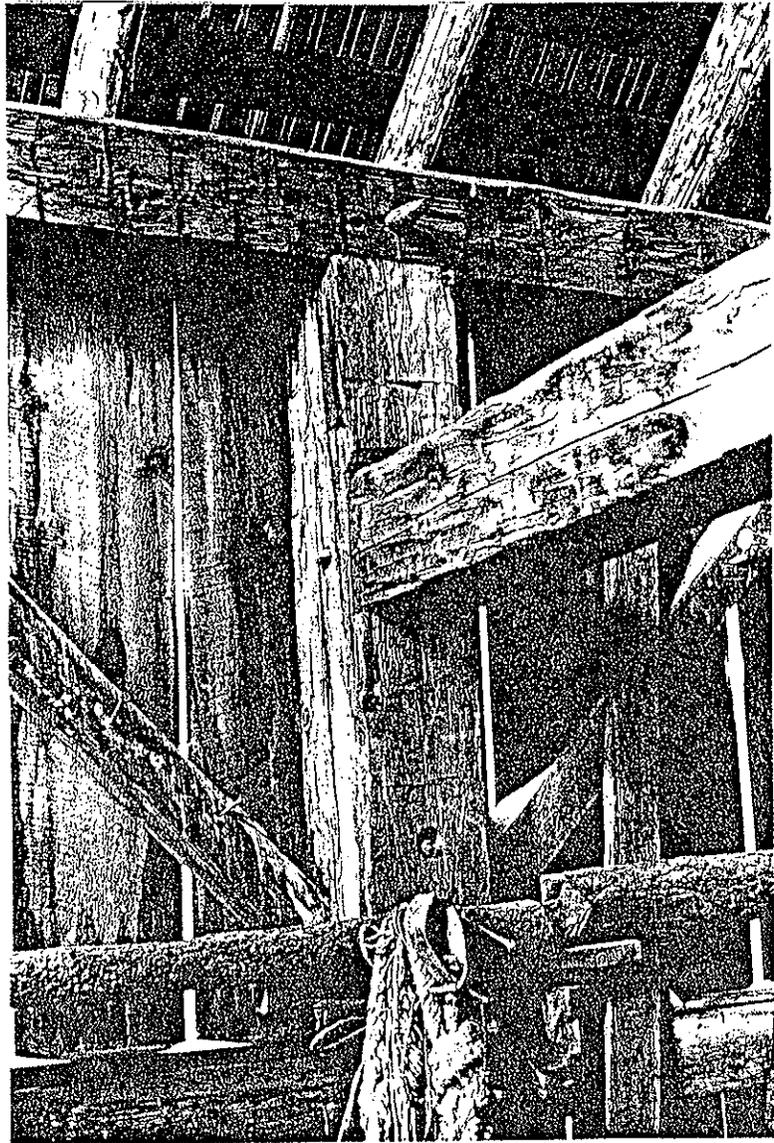


Fig. 15. Residence of Louis and Mariam Gerber erected after the burning of the original house at this site on Barnes Creek, Gerber Ranch, T38S, R14E, Section 20, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, May 6, 2000).

Fig. 16. Mortise and tenon construction in framing of barn at Gerber Ranch, ca. 1894. (Stephen Dow Beckham, May 6, 2000).



Logging and Lumbering

The Gerber Block merges with the western side of the Fremont National Forest. Scattered throughout the area are good stands of ponderosa pine. The timber was often used locally for the construction of claim cabins, corrals, fences, outbuildings, and barns. It was also tapped as an export, when, in the 1940s, limited harvest commenced federal lands in the area.

Wilfred and Willard Noble were the most ambitious loggers and sawmill operators in the district. In 1927 they established a mill on their property on Goodlow Mountain. They continued in partnership until Willard purchased the Lorella store. Wilfred then moved the sawmill to Barnes Valley where it ultimately burned in the 1930s (Klamath County Historical Society 1984:332). Wilfred "Bill" Noble recalled in 1983 that he and his brother logged about two million board feet of timber at their old ranch and sold it at \$16/thousand board feet as box material to a firm in Sacramento, California. They used horse teams to drag the logs to the mill (Noble 1983).

A man named Kitts operated a bandsaw to cut lumber at Keno Springs; his mill was steam-powered. The Kitts Mill site is identified on maps in T38S, R12E, Section 10, W.M. The location is surrounded by lands in the Fremont National Forest and lies northwest of the Gerber Block. A man named Yarr also logged in the vicinity of the Gerber Block. He took his timber out via the Keno road and hauled it to Hilt, California, for milling. The place known as Sawmill Field, sometimes leased by the Noble family for cattle grazing, was also the site of a sawmill, possibly the one operated by Kitts (Noble 1983). Sawmill Field is located in T38S, R12E, Section 15, W.M.

The "Greek Mill" reportedly operated in the 1930s in T13E, R38S, Section 24. J. D. and Chris Manos from Klamath Falls cut dimensional

lumber and used a wagon and teams to haul the cut. The site included cabins to house the logging crew (Gerber 1983; Livingston 1983; Randall 2000). Orval DeVaul recalled that this sawmill was near Paddock Butte and that it operated between three and five years (Devaul 1992).

Just north of the Gerber Block the Pelican Bay Lumber Company engaged in logging operations, driving a railroad south of Yainax Butte to haul logs to its mills near Klamath Falls (Randall 2000).

Limited timber harvest on public lands commenced in 1940 under the oversight of the Grazing Service and, since 1946, has been the concern of the Bureau of Land Management for the public lands in the Gerber Block. This activity is discussed in the section, "BLM Management of the Gerber Block."



Fig. 17. Ties on the roadbed of the abandoned right-of-way of the Pelican Bay Lumber Company, 1983, T38S, R14E, Sections 1-2, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

Place Names in the Gerber Block

Although a variety of names are associated with specific places in the Gerber Block, the origin of many of them is shrouded with the passing of time. It is evident that many places were identified because of natural features such as Willow Valley, Antelope Flat, Alkali Spring, Wildhorse Creek, and Bear Valley. Some, such as Woolen Canyon, gained their identity through livestock use. The following were probably named in the following manner:

Barnes Valley (T39S, R15E, W.M.)

The valley was named for James Barnes, a veteran of the Rogue River Indian wars, who ran cattle there in the 1870s. Barnes subsequently settled on the west side of Goose Lake (Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:18).

Ben Hall Creek (T38S, R13E, Sections 33-35, W.M.)

Benjamin Hall, born December 25, 1862, was the son of Ichabod Hall who emigrated with his wife and family to Oregon in 1858. Ben Hall was a reclusive bachelor (Klamath County Historical Society 1984:237).

Casebeer Ranch (T39S, R14E, Section 9, W.M.)

Edwin and Caroline Casebeer lived in this area in 1910, but the site was initially developed by Owen McKendrie/McKindree. Born in Ohio in 1850, Edwin Casebeer was a sheep raiser. His wife was born in 1854 in Missouri. Their children included Edwin J. and Susie M. Casebeer and Caroline's son, James O. Watts. In 1910 three hired herders resided with the family (Bureau of the Census 1910; Noble 1983).

Orval DeVaul recalled in 1983 that this was the site of the killing of sheep belonging to Owen McKendrie. Vigilantes came in and burned some of McKendrie's hay and some belonging to Louis Gerber as well.

Mrs. McKendrie was pregnant but, with a sixteen-year-old boy, Archie White, managed to put out the fire. White, however, succumbed to smoke inhalation and died as a consequence. He was buried near the Noble family plot at Bonanza (DeVaul 1983).

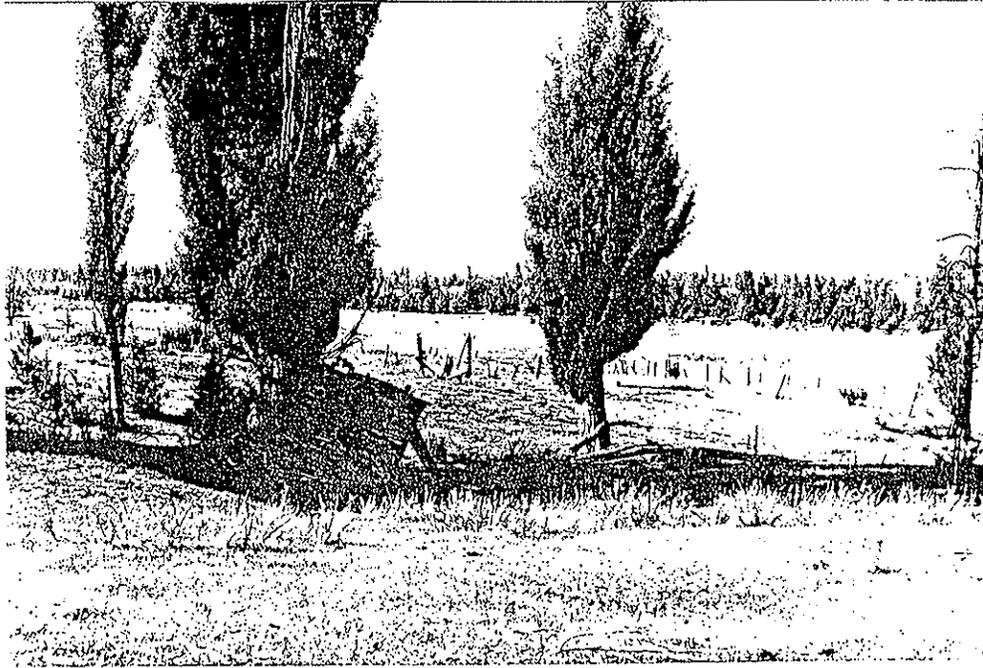


Fig. 17. Site of Edwin and Caroline Casebeer ranch, T39S, R14E, Section 9, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 18, 1983).

DeVaul Lake (T39S, R13E, Sections 10, 15, W.M.)

In 1905 William and Laura O. DeVaul filed a homestead on Goodlow Mountain near the later site of Gerber Reservoir. They lived in this area, on the Owen McKendrie place (later known as the Casebeer Ranch), and finally at the foot of Goodlow Mountain. In 1920 they moved to Barnes Valley (Klamath County Historical Society 1984:189).

Gerber Dam and Reservoir (T39S, R14E, W.M.)

Louis Gerber secured a homestead in this vicinity in 1895 (BLM n.d.f). Gerber was born in 1854 in Buffalo, New York, and moved in 1860 with his parents via the Isthmus of Panama to Sacramento, California. Louis and his brother, John, established Gerber Brothers, a major wholesale meat business. Louis worked as a buyer, traveling frequently through northern California and southern Oregon. In 1885 he filed for a homestead in the Gerber Block and slowly built up a large ranch, driving his herds to Cottonwood and Montague, California, for shipment by rail to the slaughterhouse. Louis Gerber married Ida J. Campbell in 1899. Their son, Henry Gerber, subsequently operated the Gerber Ranch, yet held by his daughters in 2000. Louis Gerber died in 1930 (Good 1941:282-283).

Goodlow Rim and Mountain (T39S, R12E and R13E, W.M.)

N. S. Goodlow was born about 1844 in Illinois; his wife, Josephine, was born about 1853 in Wisconsin. The Goodlows resided in Langell Valley in 1880. Their children included: George, Henry, Oney, Otis, and Bell Goodlow (Bureau of the Census 1880).

Grohs Reservoir and Ranch (T41S, R15E, W.M.)

Frederick Peter Grohs, born in Germany in 1827, immigrated with his parents to the United States and, in 1852, crossed the plains to California to mine for gold. He married Mary L. Brandeaux. From 1873 to 1883 Grohs was a brewer in Auburn, California. He then acquired the Rim Rock Ranch on the Oregon-California border. In time the family acquired substantial additional lands in Langell Valley (Klamath County Historical Society 1984:234).

Kilgore Ranch (T41S, R14E, Section 5, W.M.)

Several generations of descendants of James and Mary Kilgore,

overland emigrants of 1854, have resided in Langell Valley. Silas W. and Louise (Flackus) Kilgore, married in 1912, settled in this vicinity in 1915 (Klamath County Historical Society 1984:280-281). Edward Kilgore, born in August, 1852, and his sons, Ivan and Herald Kilgore, lived in Langell Valley in 1900 (Bureau of the Census 1900).

Langell Valley (T39S, T40S, T41S, R12E, R13E, W.M.)

The valley took its name from Joseph, Arthur, and Nathaniel Langell who settled there in 1868. Joseph Langell, born in 1802, traveled around Cape Horn with his son, Nathaniel, and in 1854 came to the Rogue River Valley. Nathaniel Langell was born in 1831 in Nova Scotia. Arthur Langell was born in 1832 in New York and emigrated west to join his father and brother. Joseph Langell died in the valley between 1878 and 1882 (Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:21).

Lost River (T39S, T40S, T41S, R12E, R13E, W.M.)

Identified and named in 1846 as McCrady River by John C. Fremont, this stream became "lost" when it entered Langell Valley from its origin in Clear Lake. The river dissipated over a large, swampy area. Eventually the waters rejoined to flow north and west again as a river. Channelization projects mounted by the Bureau of Reclamation and local farmers have converted this meandering stream into straight channels in Langell Valley (McArthur 1974:454).

Malone Dam (T41S, R14E, Section 18, W.M.)

James and Mary W. Malone lived near this site on Lost River at the southern end of Langell Valley. James Malone was born in October, 1862, in Mississippi; his wife, Mary, was born in July, 1867, in Oregon. Their children included Robert L. and Jessie E. Malone (Bureau of the Census 1900). James Malone became postmaster of the Langell Valley station

in 1890. He served for forty years until the station closed on March 15, 1930 (Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:9).

Miller Creek (T39S, R13E, W.M.)

George S. Miller, a rancher, resided on Miller Creek prior to the Modoc Indian War. Miller was born in Illinois and emigrated overland about 1861. His wife's maiden name was Mable Walter. In 1869 the Millers drove livestock into the Klamath Basin and selected land in Langell Valley. In 1870 he brought his family to the area. The Millers fled with the outbreak of the Modoc War, living for a time in Linkville and then relocating the Willamette Valley (Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:4; Miller 1964:13-14).

Noble Ranch and Reservoir (T39S, R13E, W.M.)

George W. Noble, Jr., born in 1877, in Nebraska, and his wife, Nova Q. L. (Casey) Noble, born about 1888, settled in Langell Valley where they had a homestead. Noble had worked for a number of years for Louis Gerber in driving cattle to Montague, California, for shipment to the Gerber slaughterhouse at Gerber, California. The Nobles' children included: Wilfred, Willard, Harry, Velma, and Luther (Klamath County Historical Society 1984:332; Noble, L. 2000).

Olete Post Office (T38S, R14E, W.M.)

This post office opened on March 25, 1892, in the home of William T. "Horsefly" Wilson. The designation derived from the names of Wilson's daughter, Ora Letetia Wilson. In 1899 the station moved to the home of John M. Dillard about two miles to the south on Horse Creek. Mypathia McKendrie became postmistress in 1903. The station closed on January 30, 1904 (Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:20).

Oshea Ranch (T39S, R14E, Section 30, W.M.)

John O'Shea was an Irish sheepherder who lived in this vicinity. For many years the remains of his cabin identified the site that bears his name (Noble 1983).

Paddock Butte (T38S, R13E, Sections 23-24, W.M.)

This feature was named for J. E. Paddock who drove livestock in this vicinity. On April 20, 1918, Paddock and William Holbrook murdered Owen McKendrie near this site. Paddock was sentenced to serve one to fifteen years in the state prison for manslaughter (Anonymous 1918f, 1918g).

Pankey Basin (T39S, R14E, Section 27, W.M.)

This area was named for William Pankey who took a Desert Land Claim at Pankey Flat. William Pankey was born in February, 1863, in Illinois; his wife, Nellie, was born in June, 1872, in Oregon. She was a sister of Silas Obenchain (Bureau of the Census 1900). Pankey, a resident of Langell Valley, failed to secure sufficient water to sustain the claim. Later Jim Vincent lived in a cabin in the Pankey Basin about 1905-10 (Noble 1983).

Schnipps Valley (T39S, R13E, Section 25, W.M.)

This property has been owned for many years by the Noble family (Randall 2000). No one is able to identify Schnipps nor does the name appear in the federal census schedules, 1880-1920. Bill Noble in 1983 stated that the Swingle family once had this area and later it passed to the Nobles. George W. Noble, Jr., constructed the corrals for sheep and horse use. The property at his death passed to Bill Campbell (Noble 1983).

Orval DeVaul in 1983 recalled that this valley was the location of

the Swingles' horse camp prior to World War I. He stated that Holly Swingle assisted his father, Frank Swingle, in building a corral where the men gathered up horses in the spring, bred mares, and kept stallions penned up. The U.S. Army sent in a buyer to purchase horses and took them to the railroad at Montague or to Redding California (DeVault 1983).

Vistillas (T39S, R15E, Section 14, W.M.)

This post office was established on May 17, 1890, with Edward S. Tull as postmaster. The location of the station shifted frequently depending upon who was serving as postmaster. At least ten persons served as postmaster before the station closed on May 15, 1943 (Helfrich and Helfrich 1972:19-20).

Wilkerson Horse Camp Spring (T38S, R13E, Section 32, W.M)

Thomas H. Wilkerson, born in 1843 in Missouri, was a breeder and raiser of horses in this area. In 1900 Wilkerson and his wife, Julia, the mother of nine children, were enumerated in the Langell Valley precinct (Bureau of the Census 1900). In 1910 Wilkerson, a widower, resided in this district with the following children: Eugene W., William L., Geneva A., Lulu L., and Kenneth C. A divorced daughter, Clementina Wyley and her son, Gerald Wyley, also lived with the family (Bureau of the Census 1910). In 1920 Wilkerson resided with two unmarried sons: Eugene W. and Kenneth C. Wilkerson (Bureau of the Census 1920).

Gerber Dam and Reservoir

Irrigation projects held considerable promise in the Klamath Basin. Although much of the land was arid with a climax vegetation of juniper, sagebrush, and bunchgrass, the basin contained lakes, marshes, and seasonal streams. These labors commenced in 1878 with the construction of the Ankeny Canal which diverted water from Link River into Linkville, subsequently the city of Klamath Falls. The Van Brimmer and Adams canals were more ambitious projects which led to the development of thousands of irrigated acres. On June 17, 1902, however, the federal government became a major player with the passage of the Reclamation Act. Starting work as the Hydrographic Survey, then becoming the Reclamation Service, and eventually identified as the Bureau of Reclamation, this federal agency had direct impact on the Gerber Block (Bureau of Reclamation 1924:52; Good 1941:103-104; Hayden n.d.).

Reclamation Service engineers visited the Klamath Basin in 1903 and 1904. John T. Whistler mounted a horseback survey to assess the irrigatoin potentials, especially Clear Lake, harnessing the water on Miller Creek, and drawing water from Upper Klamath Lake (Hayden n.d.:4). The Reclamation Service set terms for a massive federal project: all conflicting water rights and claims would have to be adjudicated, all claimants on Lower Klamath and Tule lakes would have to surrender riparian rights, Oregon and California would have to cede Lower Klamath and Tule lakes to the federal government and enact laws permitting the manipulation of water levels in those drainages, and Congress would grant the Secretary of the Interior power to terminate the navigability of the two lakes (Good 1941:104).

Central to the project was the harnessing of water flowing through Lost River. This meant controlling the levels and flows out of Clear Lake,

increasing seasonal flows in Lost River, and distributing irrigation water to tens of thousands of acres in the Klamath Basin between the head of Lost River and its terminus in Tule Lake. Engineers identified the Horsefly Valley and the Miller Creek watershed in the Gerber Block as integral elements of the network of developments. On February 9, 1905, Congress authorized changing the levels of Upper and Lower Klamath lakes, Tule or Rhett Lake, and Goose Lake or any river or other body of water in Oregon and California which might be connected with the Klamath Basin project (Department of Interior 1972[1]:95-97). The Secretary of Interior authorized the project on May 17, 1905. Also in 1905 the legislatures in Oregon and California ceded state rights in Upper and Lower Klamath lakes and Tule Lake to the United States and the Oregon legislature passed a law permitting the United States to make blanket filings on unappropriated waters in the basin (Bureau of Reclamation 1924:52-53; Hamele 1920:57-58).

In 1913 the *Bonanza Bulletin* announced that a rock dam with spillway was proposed for Miller Creek as part of the Horsefly Irrigation Project. Records maintained since 1904 confirmed a maximum annual flow of 6,730 cubic feet per second out of Miller Creek. The dam was to have a tunnel and concrete gate house (Anonymous 1913a). The local promoters applied to the State of Oregon and received a permit for the project and a reservoir site. Their plan was to proceed on their own, but they had to secure a "formal relinquishment" to the waters in Miller Creek from the Reclamation Service in order to proceed (Anonymous 1913b).

The plans of local investors for the Horsefly Irrigation Project were not realized. Whether they failed to raise sufficient revenues to fund their project or whether they could not secure permission from the Reclamation Service to proceed is unclear. Instead, the project in the Miller Creek watershed languished until 1923 when it became an integral part of the federal program for water distribution in the Klamath Basin.

The Bureau of Reclamation anticipated that construction of Gerber Dam and Reservoir would facilitate flood control, especially in lands surrounding Tule Lake, and would store irrigation water for lands along the east side of Langell Valley (Bureau of Reclamation 1923:83).

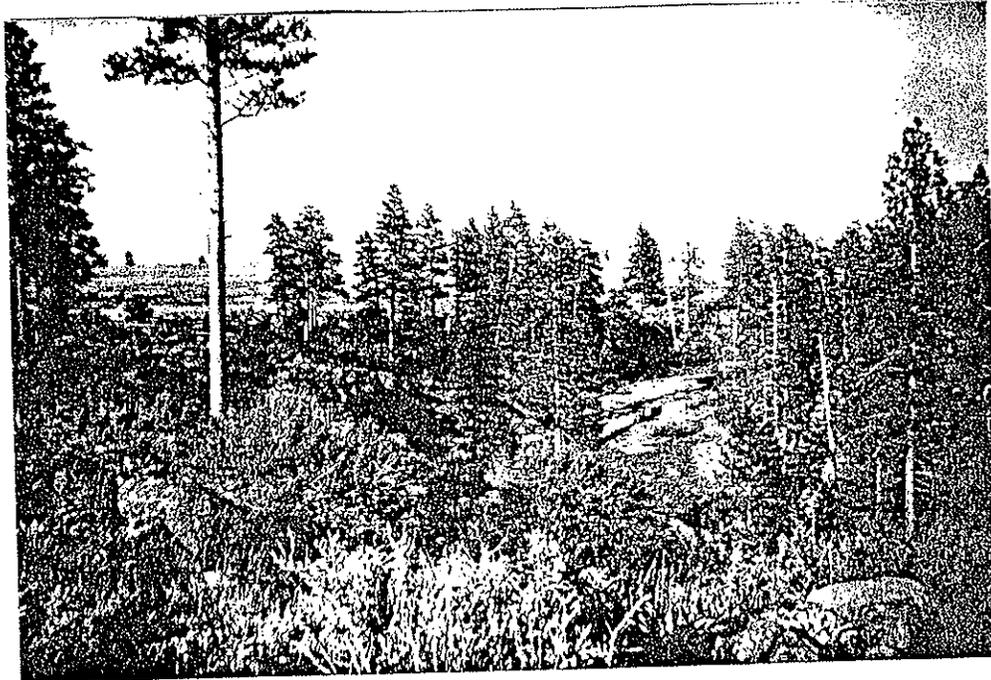


Fig. 18. Miller Creek and the Horsefly Valley, site of the projected dam to create Gerber Reservoir, June 10, 1905. (Photo No. 58, Bureau of Reclamation, Klamath Falls, OR.)

Following preliminary design, the Bureau of Reclamation began work in the spring of 1923. During April engineers worked on plans for a dam and examined foundation conditions. On June 7 they completed foundation excavations to test conditions for the dam on Miller Creek. As construction got underway, J. C. Whitney, superintendent of the project, discovered sand deposits within four miles of the dam site suitable for mixing with concrete (Bureau of Reclamation 1923:iv-vi).

On June 12 the voters in the Langell Valley Irrigation District approved by a ballot of thirty-six to four to bond themselves for \$700,000 toward the construction of Gerber Dam and Reservoir. On July 20 the Circuit Court validated the favorable vote and the United States entered into the cooperative agreement with residents for the dam and irrigation improvements on the east side of Langell Valley. The project involved an outlay of nearly \$25,000 to acquire lands within the reservoir site (Bureau of Reclamation 1923:vi).

W. D. Miller, a contractor from Klamath Falls, secured the project with a low bid to build Gerber Dam for \$150,480. Other bidders included A. Guthrie & Company of Portland, Oregon, \$193,500; Morrison-Knudsen Company of Boise, Idaho, \$179,755; and Dunn & Baker of Klamath Falls, \$218,910. The engineers had estimated the dam at costing \$168,037. The Bureau let the contract to W. D. Miller on November 1 and opened bids to construct eighteen miles of telephone line from Malone Dam to Gerber Dam (Bureau of Reclamation 1923:65-66, 83).

Work at the dam site commenced in March, 1924, with clearing of trees and preparing the workmen's camp. Blasting and excavation for the foundation ran from March 12 to July 20. Not until August 12 did the men commence pouring concrete. Inclement weather conditions forced termination of the project on December 19. At the same time that the dam was underway, the Bureau opened bidding on March 17 for construction of the "North Canal" along the east side of Langell Valley. The Bureau rejected all bids and proceeded with its own employees on that project (Bureau of Reclamation 1924:vi-x, 24-25).

Work on the dam resumed in the spring of 1925 and was mostly finished by July. At the year's end the project was effectively complete. Workmen had excavated 15,952 yards of material and poured 11,883 cubic yards of concrete to build a "variable radius archtype" dam with a length of 485 feet and a height of 88 feet. The Bureau of Reclamation reported:

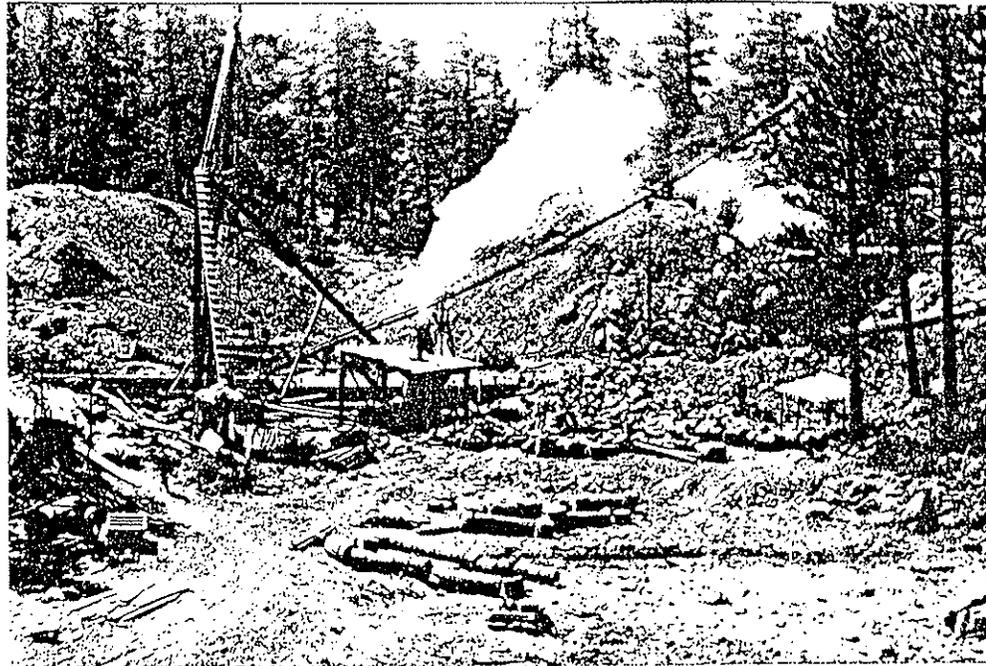


Fig. 19. Steam engine and foundation work for Gerber Dam, September 5, 1924. (Bureau of Reclamation Photo No. 548).

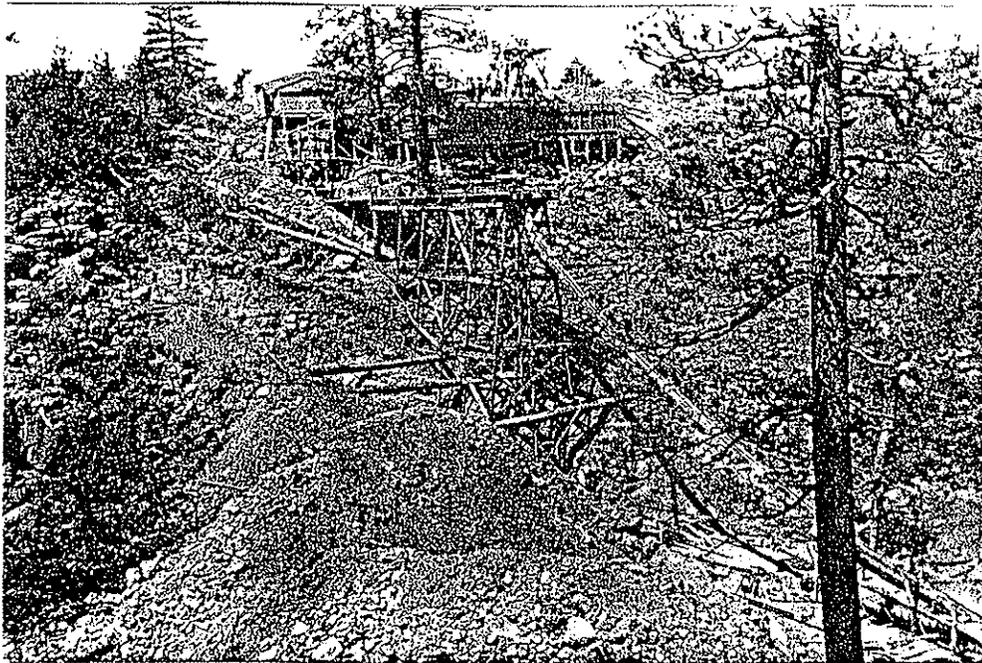


Fig. 20. Foundation excavation and flume for pouring concrete at Gerber Dam, September 5, 1924. (Bureau of Reclamation Photo No. 572)

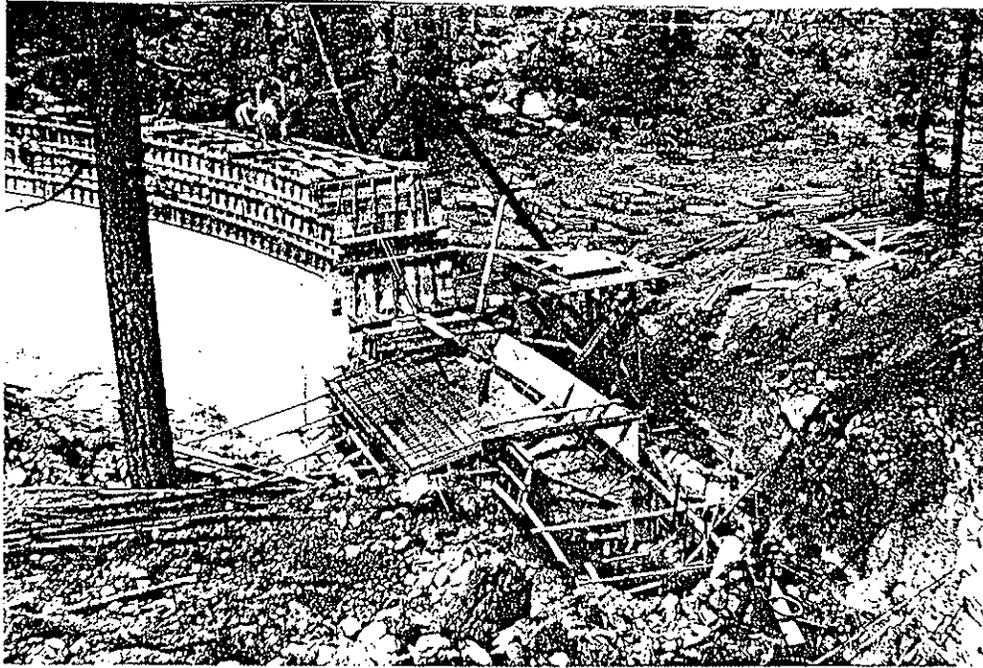


Fig. 21. Concrete pouring on Gerber Dam, October 7, 1924. (Bureau of Reclamation Photo No. 566)

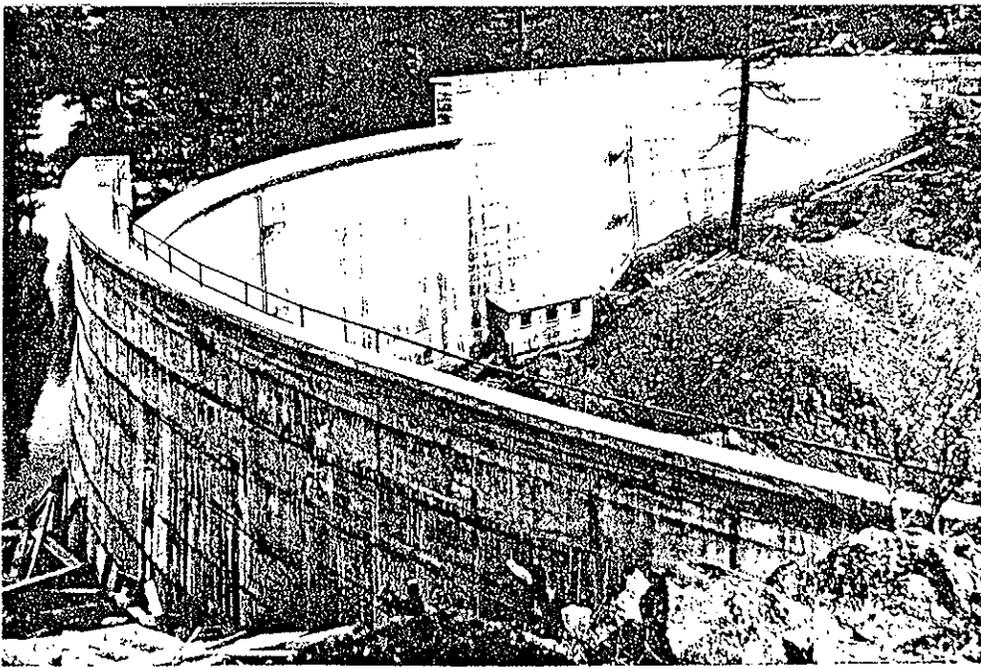


Fig. 22. Gerber Dam completed but prior to filling of Gerber Reservoir, Annual Report, 1925. (Bureau of Reclamation Photo)

"Relations between the engineering and contractor's forces were harmonious. The contractor has tried at all times to do a first class job. The only criticism that might be made is that he did not prosecute the work as vigorously as he should during the best part of the construction season" (Bureau of Reclamation 1924:23-24).

In April, 1925, the Bureau opened bids for construction of the gate tender's cottage and barn at Gerber Dam and for construction of the "Gerber road and fence." The contractor completed these projects during the summer. The Bureau considered Gerber Dam completed on June 1, 1925. It had a capacity of 94,000 acre feet. The reservoir released water into the North Canal reaching for twelve miles along the east side of Langell Valley and serving 7,134 acres. Located at 4,835 feet elevation, the reservoir had a natural gravity system to distribute water (Hayden n.d.:9). The canal was primed and began operating on May 19 (Bureau of Reclamation 1924:1-2, 17, 19, 28).

The irrigation project in the Gerber Block had immediate consequences for the lands along Lost River. The Bureau of Reclamation assessment was highly favorable:

In Langell Valley good land under canals can be bought at \$16 to \$20 an acre. The land is not prepared for irrigation and the purchaser must pay the full water right charge, which, while not yet announced, is likely to be about \$65 an acre. There was considerable activity in land transfers in Langell Valley during the year. About 2,000 acres were sold to around 14 purchasers, most of whom were from Owens Valley, Calif.

The influx of investors from Owens Valley was a consequence of the predatory raid of the City of Los Angeles on the water resources of the Owens River and the dislocation of several hundred farming families. The impact of water from Gerber Reservoir was immediate. In 1925 farmers planted, for the first time, 500 acres of sugar beets and lettuce--with a yield of seventeen carloads shipped out. Potato production increased from 1,400 to 2,000 acres in 1925. Producers in Langell Valley shipped

out 100 carloads with a return of \$300 per acre (Bureau of Reclamation 1925:46, 54).



Fig. 23. Gate tender's cottage at Gerber Dam, 1925, Annual Report. (Bureau of Reclamation photo).

The construction of Gerber Dam and Reservoir in the Gerber Block was a turning point for residents in Langell Valley. Their arid lands had the real prospect of transformation into productive fields for vegetables and alfalfa as well as for grazing of livestock. The Bureau of Reclamation project yielded a good road into the Horsefly Valley and the laying of a telephone line to the Gerber Block. A region once isolated moved closer to the network of commerce and communication in the Klamath Basin.

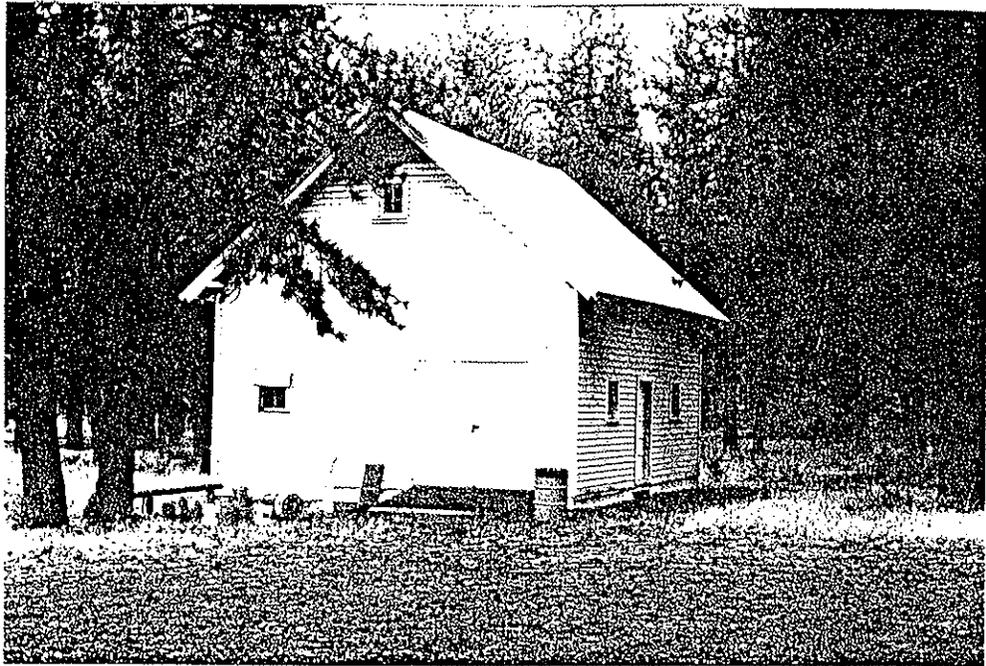


Fig. 24. Gate tender's garage and warehouse erected in 1925 at Gerber Dam. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

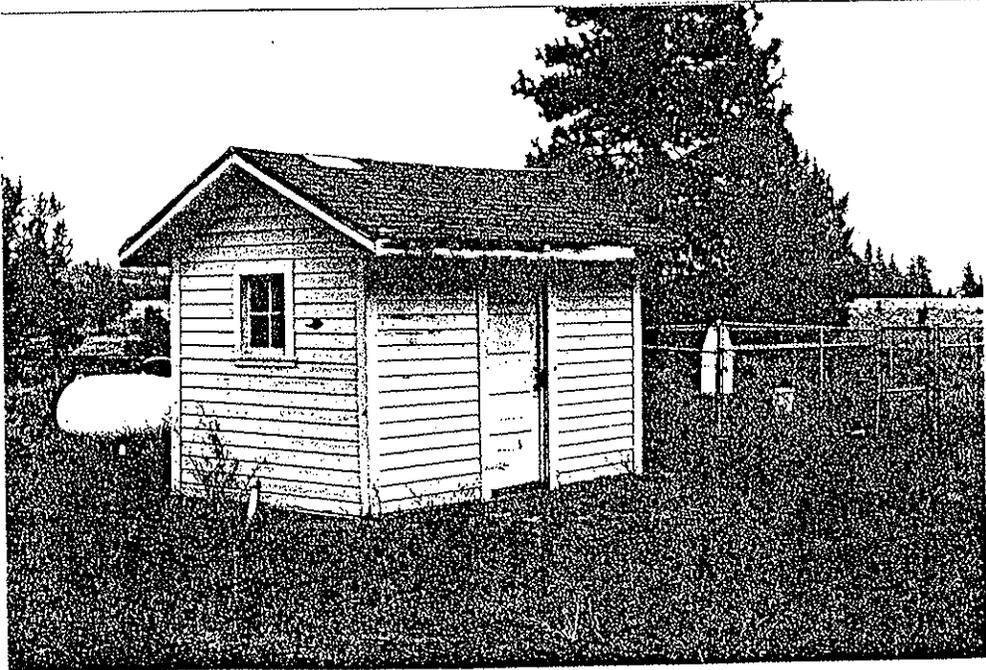


Fig. 25. Gate tender's outbuilding erected in 1925 at Gerber Dam (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

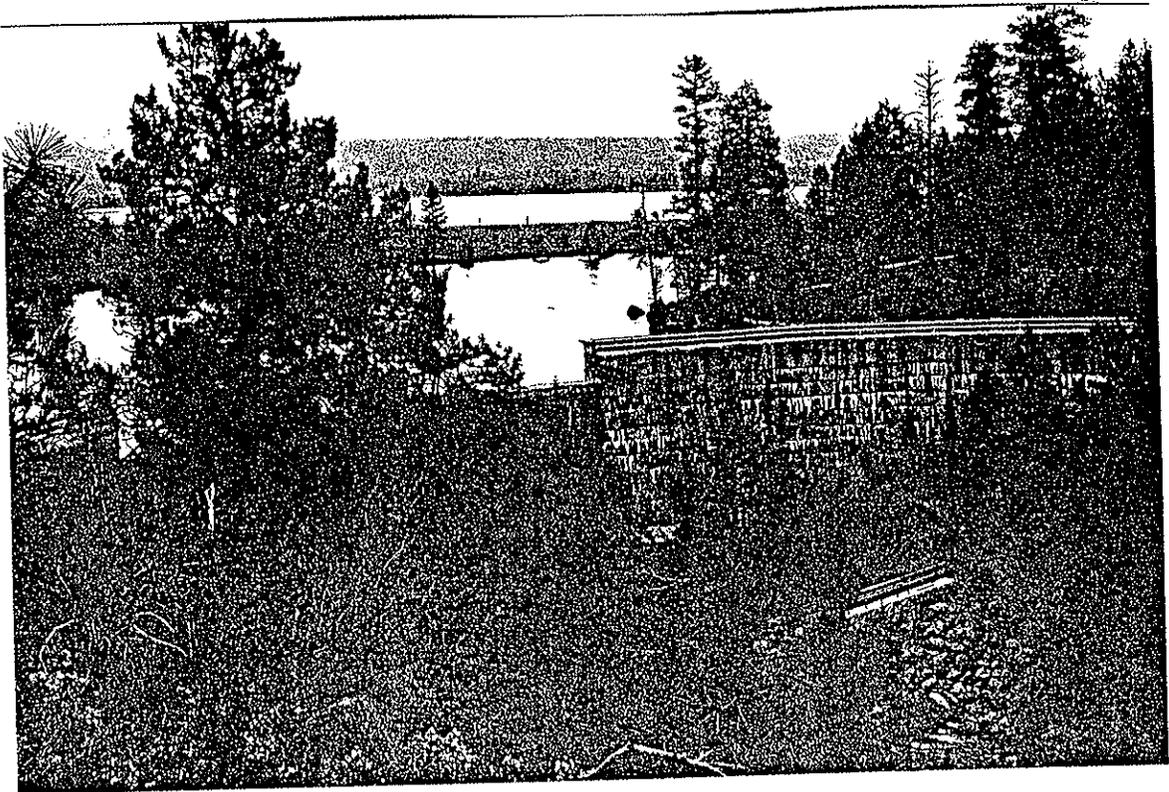


Fig. 26. Gerber Dam and Gerber Reservoir. (Stephen Dow Beckham, May 6, 2000).

Civilian Conservation Corps

The onset of the Great Depression in 1929 created widespread economic dislocation and personal distress. In spite of his reputation as a humanitarian, President Herbert Hoover was philosophically opposed to widespread government intervention into the economy or to the mounting of federal programmatic remedies to the difficulties. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a different president. A pragmatist, he was willing to permit his administration to try to execute a "new deal" for Americans. One of the components of the program was the Civilian Conservation Corps. Created in 1933 during the first "Hundred Days" of the Roosevelt administration, the CCC recruited young men from across the country, organized them into units and camps, provided good food and adequate clothing and shelter, gave them jobs, extended basic educational opportunities, especially in manual labor, and paid a modest monthly stipend.

The program was primarily a relief effort to end suffering and create a flow of modest income to the families of the CCC recruits, but it was also a reform effort. The CCC was to fight fires, replant logged over lands, stabilize soils, and create a much-needed infrastructure on federal lands. CCC camps created local markets for eggs, milk, cheese, meat, and other commodities. In rural areas, where most camps were located, they generated a new social vitality and break from the monotony of work, deprivation, and isolation endured by hundreds of thousands of Americans.

The Civilian Conservation Corps established a number of camps in the Klamath Basin in the 1930s. These included Camp Bonanza near Lorella, Camp Klamath at Merrill, Camp Bly at Bly, Camp Klamath Falls at Klamath Falls, and camps at Tule Lake, Clear Lake, and the Lava Beds in nearby northern California (CCC 1936a). Company 557 stationed at

Camp Bonanza mounted numerous projects in the Gerber Block in the 1930s. Its men left an important imprint on the federal lands in eastern Klamath County and on the lives of those who lived in Langell Valley. Company 557 at Camp Bonanza and Company 3878 at Silver Lake were the only two in the Medford District of the CCC whose primary work was focussed on grazing (Anonymous 1937).

Company 557 was founded on May 24, 1933, at Fort Knox, Kentucky. It was initially an "all-Indiana" company under Captain L. L. Hamilton and Captain James A. Milton, Jr. The men began duty at Wheeler Springs near Ojai, California, in June, 1933. They occupied a tent camp in the Santa Barbara National Forest. As initial enlistments expired in October and November, 1933, new men enrolled. Such was the nature of CCC companies. The units were in almost continual flux of membership. On May 5, 1934, the men evacuated Camp Wheeler Gorge and moved to Camp Badger Meadows F-158 in the St. Joe National Forest in Idaho. During their tenure there the unit fought in the Selway fire near Pierce, Idaho. On October 1, 1934, the unit moved to Camp Sunset Valley F-369 at Gaviota, California. At this point new enrollees from Kentucky filled the ranks. On April 29, 1935, the unit moved to Camp Grizzly in the Coeur d'Alene National Forest near Wallace, Idaho, to mount a program of blister rust control and road construction. On October 20, 1935, the unit was relocated to Camp Bonanza near Lorella in Langell Valley (CCC 1937a).

When the CCC arrived in Langell Valley, the men found primitive conditions at their new home. "The camp was only partly completed, so most of the men for some time were used in making it liveable," noted the camp newspaper. Captain Winthrop W. Williams, Infantry Reserves, from Indiana, assumed command on November 7. John Blanchard was the camp's educational adviser. The unit's primary assignment was to work in the newly created Bonanza Grazing Unit, the first organized in

the United States under the Taylor Grazing Act (CCC 1937a).

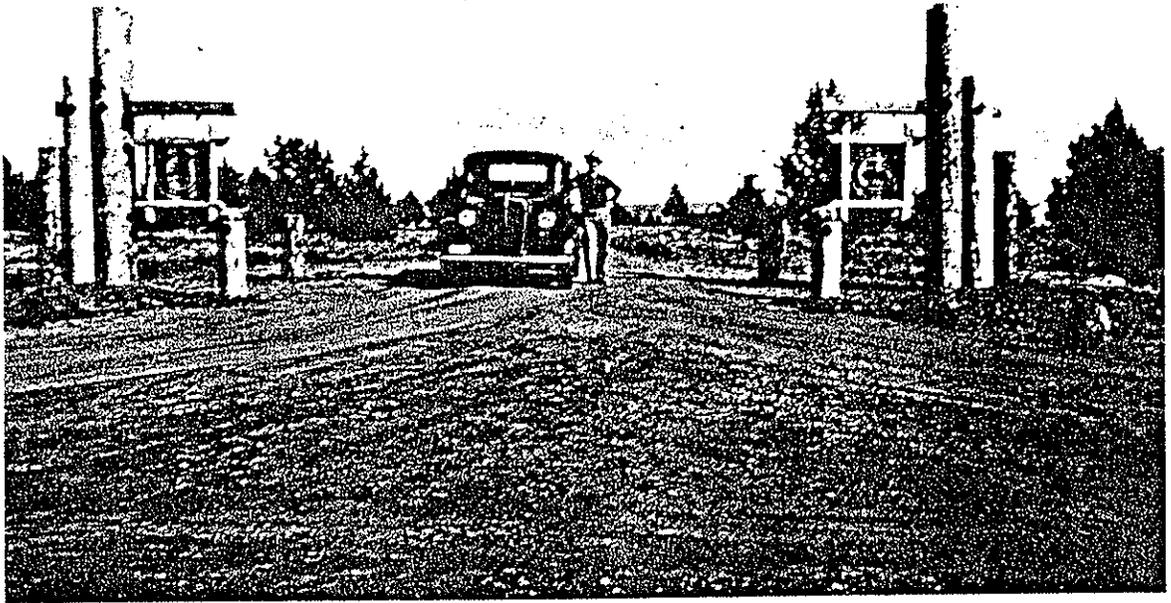


Fig. 27. Main entrance to Camp Bonanza with rustic signs.
(Klamath County Historical Museum)

Chester R. Hunt, Superintendent Field Director for the Division of Grazing, of Reno, Nevada, was in charge of development of improvements in the Gerber Block. John E. Dawson was the field superintendent. Hunt and Dawson drew up plans for four initial projects:

- Seventeen miles of Rock Jack Drift Fence, an east-west line along the Oregon-California stateline.
- Twenty miles of road construction parallel to the border, a route to be known as Stateline Road.
- Twenty miles of road through the center of the Gerber Block, a north to south route with connections to Barnes Valley Road.
- Forty-three miles of telephone line for fire protection and community use.

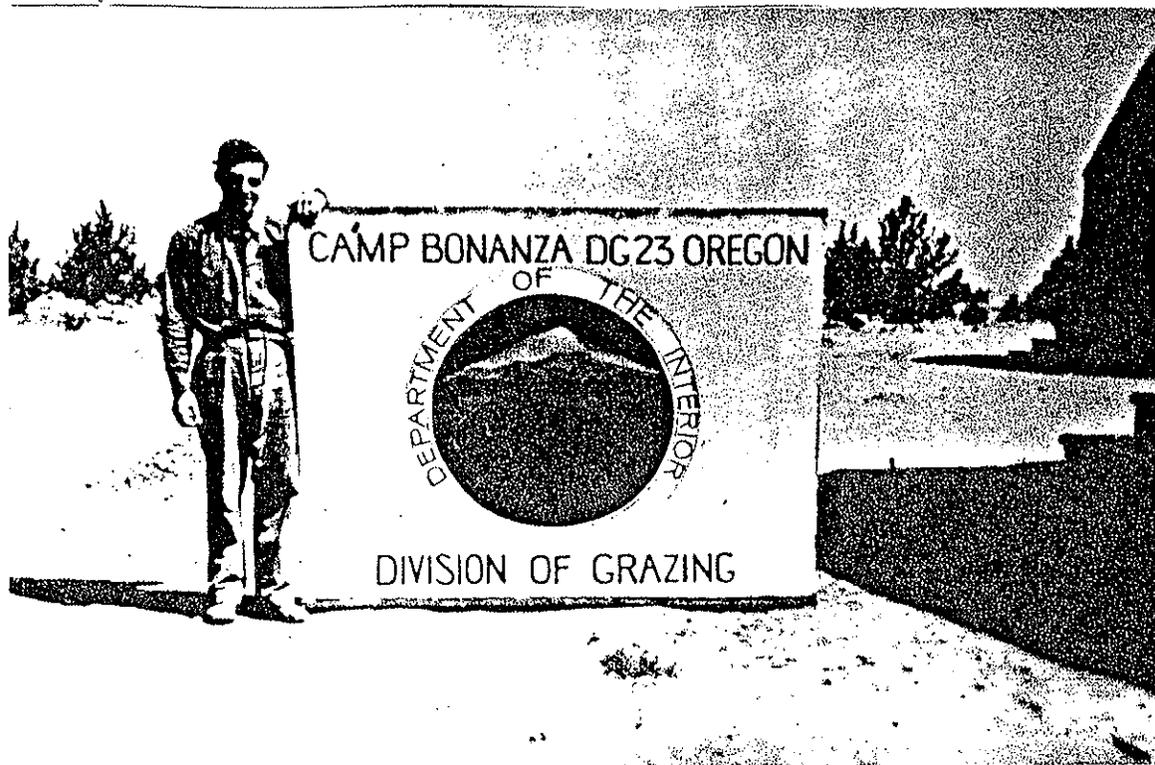


Fig. 28. Camp Bonanza Division of Grazing 23, Oregon, a member of the CCC and the camp sign (Klamath County Historical Society)

Additionally the CCC was to work on watershed improvements and mount a water supply survey (CCC 1935a).

By December, 1935, Camp Bonanza had assumed an appearance of stability and permanence. In addition to the field-based projects in the Gerber Block, the men had a woodworking shop, a dark room for processing photographs, a typing station, a basketball league, and, on Thursday nights, movies in the mess hall (CCC 1935b).

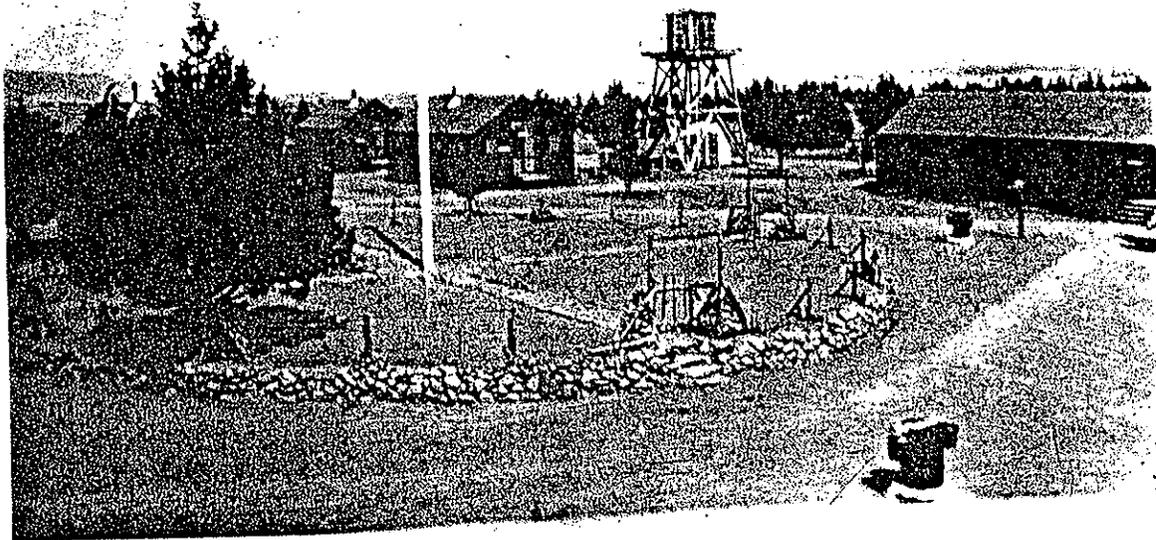


Fig. 29. Flagpole, barracks, and water tower at Camp Bonanza.
(Klamath County Historical Museum)



Fig. 30. CCC men and trucks at Camp Bonanza. (Klamath County
Historical Museum)

Fig. 31. CCC recruit and "values" board at Camp Bonanza. (Klamath County Historical Society)



As work progressed, the commanders of the camp sought ways to reward the men for their labor. In September, 1936, for example, the camp trucks hauled the men for a day's outing to Crater Lake. The work projects in 1935-36 included improvement of springs, drilling wells, constructing small dams, constructing fences, opening forty miles of truck trails, and implementing programs to eradicate poison plants and

undesirable rodents (CCC 1936b). In October and November, 1936, the camp leaders expanded the field trips. Sixty men on October 25 went to Crater Lake National Park where they spent three hours hiking. Another contingent traveled to Crescent City, California--a journey of 250 miles--to visit the Pacific Ocean and the redwood forests. The trip was a reward to fifteen men who had fought a fire at Antelope Flat. They traveled to the CCC camp at Gasquet, stayed overnight, spent a day in the Crescent City area, returned to the camp at Gasquet, and then returned to Camp Bonanza. Some men on Thursday nights traveled to Klamath Falls to take dancing lessons at Helen Thyranert's Studio. Eight to ten young women who lived in the town participated as dance partners(CCC 1936c, 1936d).



Fig. 32. The cook and helpers at the Camp Bonanza mess hall. (Klamath County Historical Society)

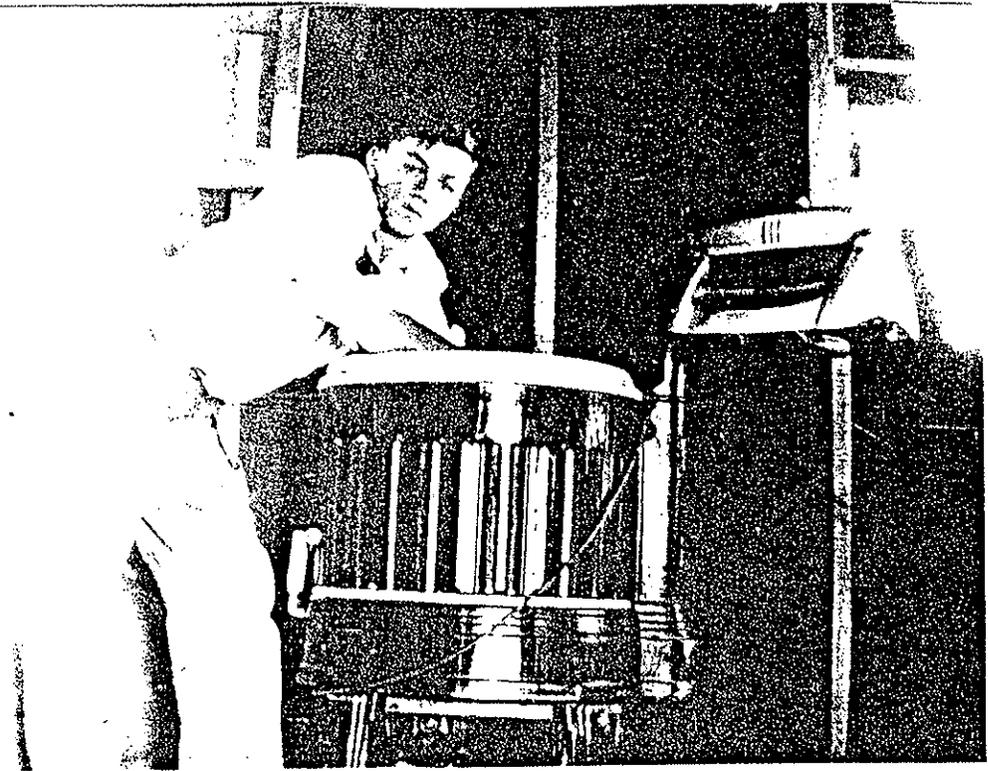


Fig. 33. CCC recruit doing his laundry at Camp Bonanza. (Klamath County Historical Society)



Fig. 34. Hanging out the laundry at Camp Bonanza. (Klamath County Historical Society)

Bonanza Company No. 557 earned "excellence" awards for its operations. In June, 1936, Chester R. Hunt, Regional Supervisor, cited it as the outstanding CCC camp for April among twelve engaged in grazing projects in Oregon, Nevada, and California. The men received a navy-blue pennant marked with a large white "E" for "excellence" (CCC 1936a).

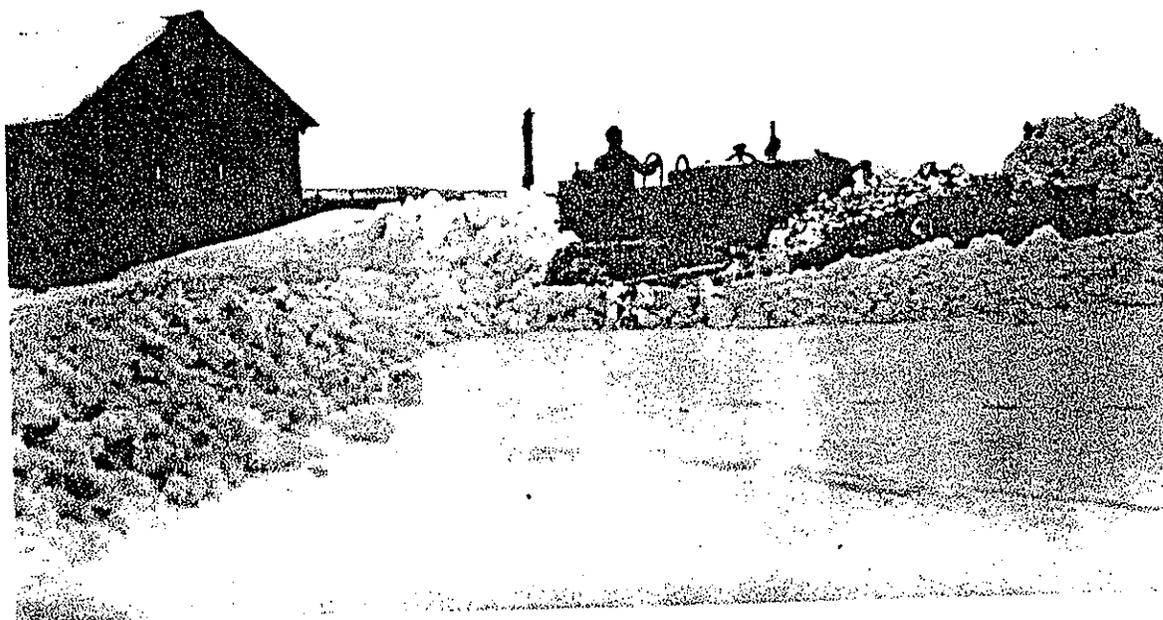


Fig. 35. CCC Caterpillar operator moving snow drifts to open a farm yard in January, 1937. (Klamath County Historical Society)

The winter of 1936-37 was harsh. Snow fell for days, piled into drifts, cut off roads, and threatened the survival of livestock. W. D. Campbell of the Bonanza Unit District Grazing Advisory Board requested help from the men at Camp Bonanza. The CCC crews went to work to open roads and create access for cattle to haystacks buried in the deep drifts. They succeeded in opening the road between Langell Valley and the

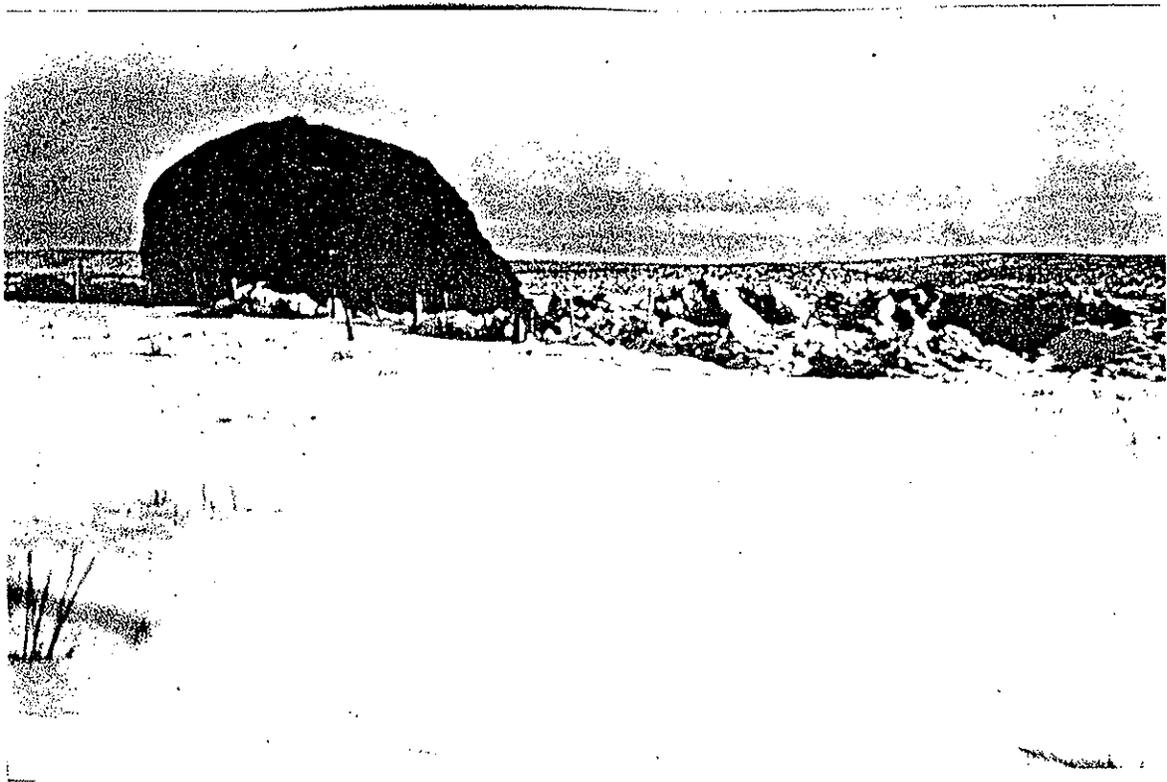


Fig. 36. Haystack and snowdrifts in Langell Valley, winter of 1935. (Klamath County Historical Society)



Fig. 37. CCC snow removal crew, winter at Camp Bonanza. (Klamath County Historical Society)

Gerber Ranch. This permitted the movement of an estimated 1,000 head of cattle to winter feeding and better shelter in Langell Valley. The operators of the Star Caterpillars worked in sub-zero weather to plow the roads. Estimates placed some drifts as much as twenty-five feet deep. They opened some twenty miles of trails and roads, using two cats and working double shifts (CCC 1937b; Stahl 1937).

Winter months were a popular time for movies. The men, however, may not have found all of the films compelling. February movies included: "Story of a Storage Battery," "Manufactured Abrasives," "Valves: Their Manufacture and Uses," "Murder in the Museum," and "Via Pony Express." The venue was a mix of instructional films and entertainment options. A number of men took classes, learned photography, wrote the monthly newspaper, and worked in the dark room (CCC 1937c). Local residents in Langell Valley sometimes participated in camp events. On April 4, 1937, Camp Bonanza hosted an open house. The men offered a tour of the facilities and the showing of the movie, "Suicide Squad" (CCC 1937d).

Winter months were also a time for education. During the winter of 1936-37 programs at Camp Bonanza were varied. Twenty-nine men enrolled in a course in leather-making. They hand-tooled leather to produce match book covers, handbags, billfolds, belts, wrist bands, and cigarette cases. Other men enrolled in correspondence courses. They pursued skills in making blueprints, maintenance of diesel engines, and auto mechanics through the California Department of Education. Films covered subjects such as terracing farms, making binder twine, and building Boulder Dam (CCC 1937e). The camp also participated in a traveling library program, receiving book collections from the regional headquarters in Medford. The titles were primary detective stories and western novels (CCC 1937g).

Some of the men were aspiring writers and poets. Stanley

Senefield, for example, wrote about his service in the CCC:

My life in the C.C.C.
Is as pleasant as can be,
And I can think of nothing better,
Which will ever happen to me.

I have learned a lot since I've been here
Although only for a year
But my time is slowly drawing nigh
When to all of you I bid good-by.

I am leaving a wiser man,
Thinking safely as I can.
Often a fellow forgets to wait,
Until the time when it is too late.

When I get home my thoughts will turn.
I'll forget the forests which burned,
But after all I am content;
With the year in the C.C.C. I've spent.
(CCC 1937f)

The facilities at Camp Bonanza included a mess hall with small stage and backdrops; a kitchen with cooler; a shop with lathes, band saws, sanders, and bench saw; the orderly room outfitted with desks, chairs, and filing cabinets; a canteen and area with two pool tables; barracks, and a bath house with "individually lighted mirrors, fully equipped laundry, regular toilet seats, and running water urinals." The camp also had its own press, a mimeograph which printed the monthly newspaper under the advice of Mrs. Winthrop W. Williams, the wife of the commanding officer (Anonymous 1937).

Clyde Stahl was in charge of several of the projects in the Gerber Block in 1936-37. The focus was upon range improvements and management of livestock. The CCC built three sets of corrals. These included the Timber Hill [or Notch] Corral, Stateline Corral, and Oriana Corral. Bill Noble, a resident of Langell Valley, hired on with the CCC for three months at \$40/month to help build the corrals along the Oregon-

California stateline (Noble 1983). The men in 1937 completed twenty miles of boundary fence. Stahl noted: "This fence will discontinue all drift from the Fremont National Forest. Feed from the District consumed by drift stock is a considerable loss to permittees who graze approximately 2500 cattle over this portion of the district." Stahl also noted work on rodent control: "It is officially estimated that the Rodents have decreased at least 50% compared to the previous year. A 7000 acre area was covered by the rodent control crew in the past season" (Stahl 1937). The rodent eradication program was devised by the U.S. Biological Survey and sought to exterminate jack rabbits, pocket gophers, and ground squirrels (CCC 1937g; Stahl 1937). The CCC men constructed portable corrals in the midst of jack rabbit colonies which permitted the rabbits but not sheep or cattle to enter. "Inside the corrals," wrote a reporter for the *Medford District News*, "a poisoned banquet is spread for the unsuspecting marauders." The ground squirrels and pocket gophers were killed by soaking grain in strychnine and spreading it near the burrow entrances (Anonymous 1937).

The CCC targeted larkspur, a poisonous plant for cattle, the death camas, which killed sheep, and poison parsnip which grew in wet areas. The men used mattocks to dig out these plants and also targeted milk weed and loco weed (Anonymous 1937).

Other projects in 1937 included construction of a dam measuring 240 feet long by eight feet high to impound water covering an estimated 100 acres. The CCC anticipated building additional dams at Woolen Canyon, Timber Hill, and Midway. CCC spring improvements followed a basic formula: "Wherever practical, springs will be developed to add to the supply of available water. The springs are boxed with lumber or concrete. The water is piped down the hill to fire-hollowed logs. If the supply of water suffices, several troughs may be set in series connected by valves" (Anonymous 1937).

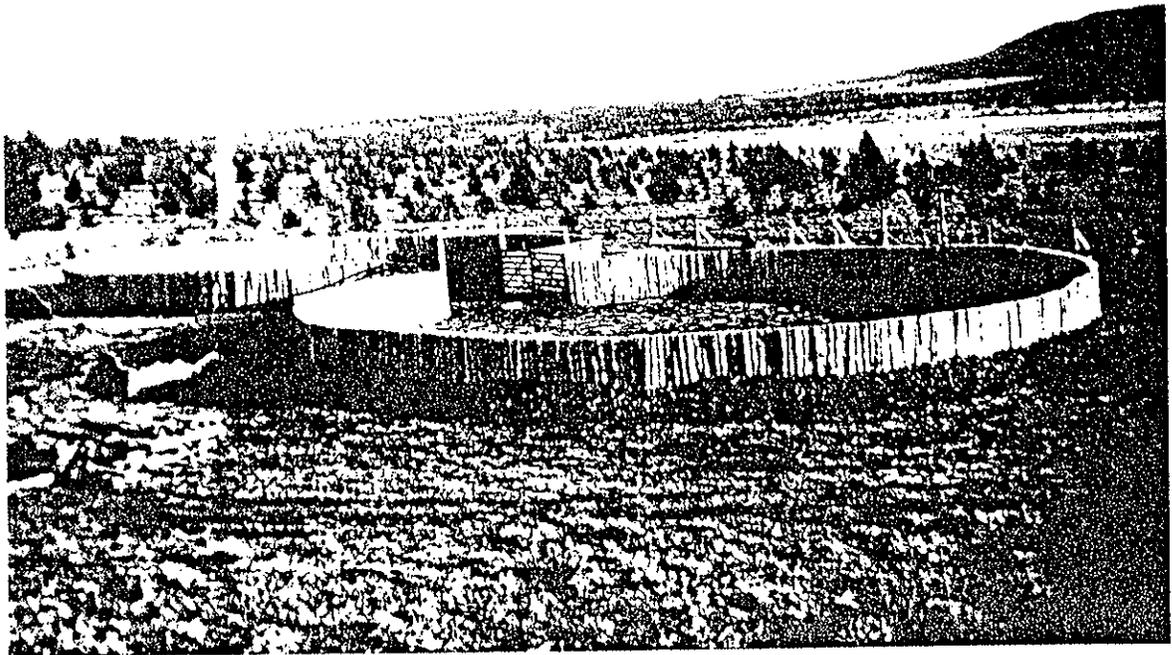


Fig. 38. Stateline Corral, ca. 1937, T41S, R14E, Section 21, W.M. (Klamath County Historical Society)

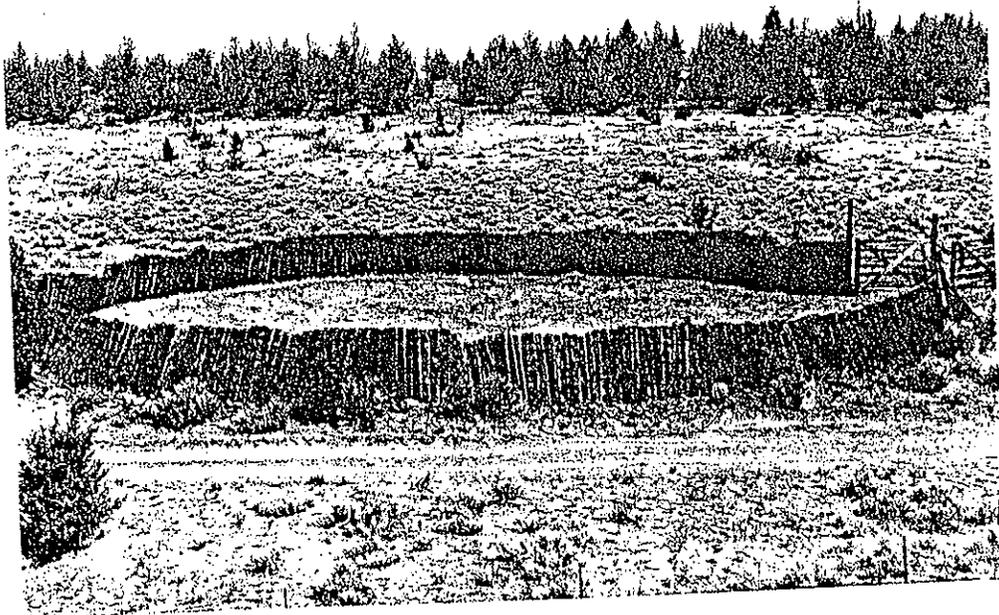


Fig. 39. Left side of Stateline Corral, T41S, R14E, Section 21, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983)

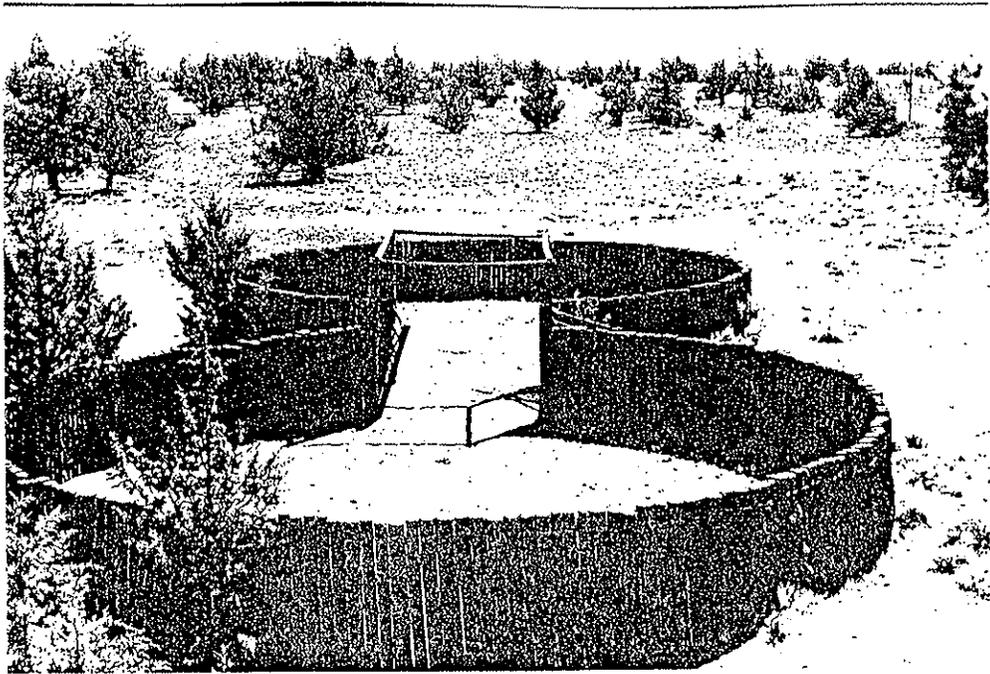


Fig. 40. Notch Corral on the Oregon-California stateline, T41S, R14.5E, Section 21, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983)

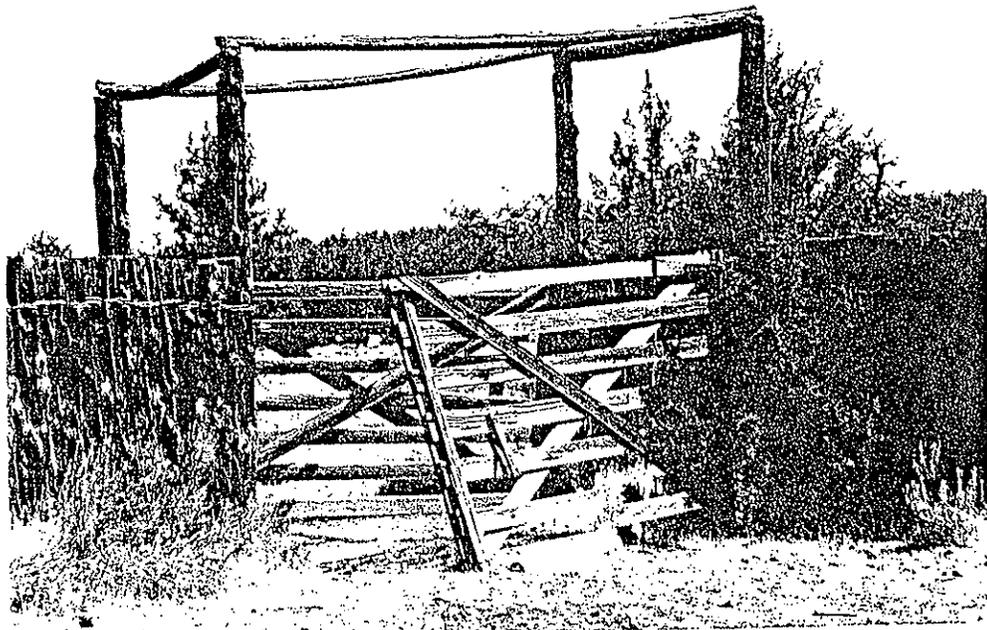


Fig. 41. Gates at Notch Corral, T41S, R14.5E, Section 21, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983)

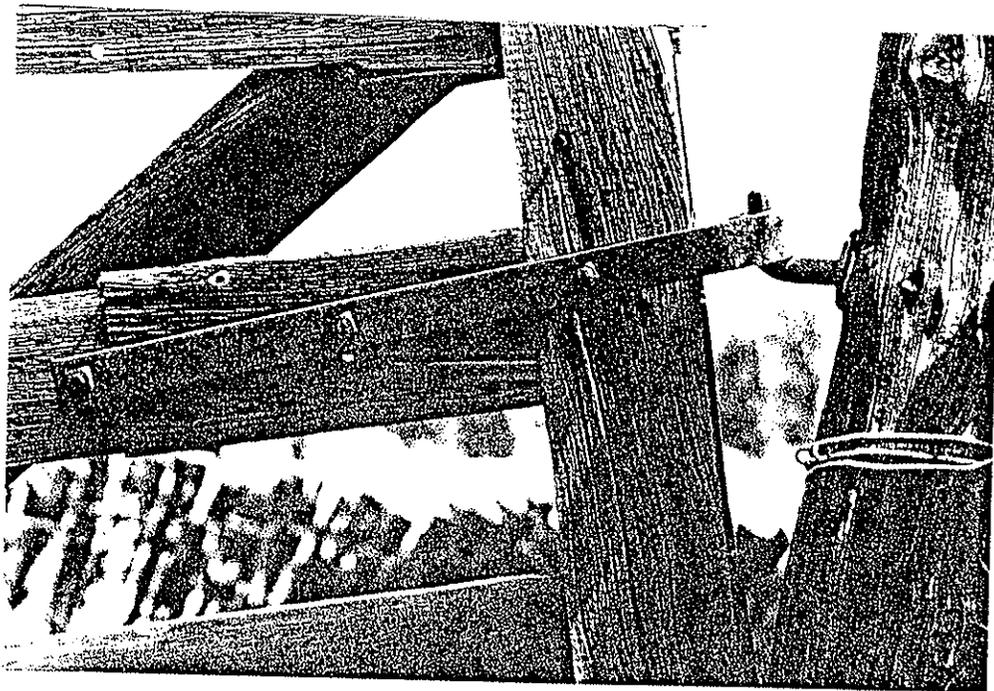


Fig. 42. Gate detail, Notch Corral on the Oregon-California stateline, T41S, R14.5E, Section 21, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

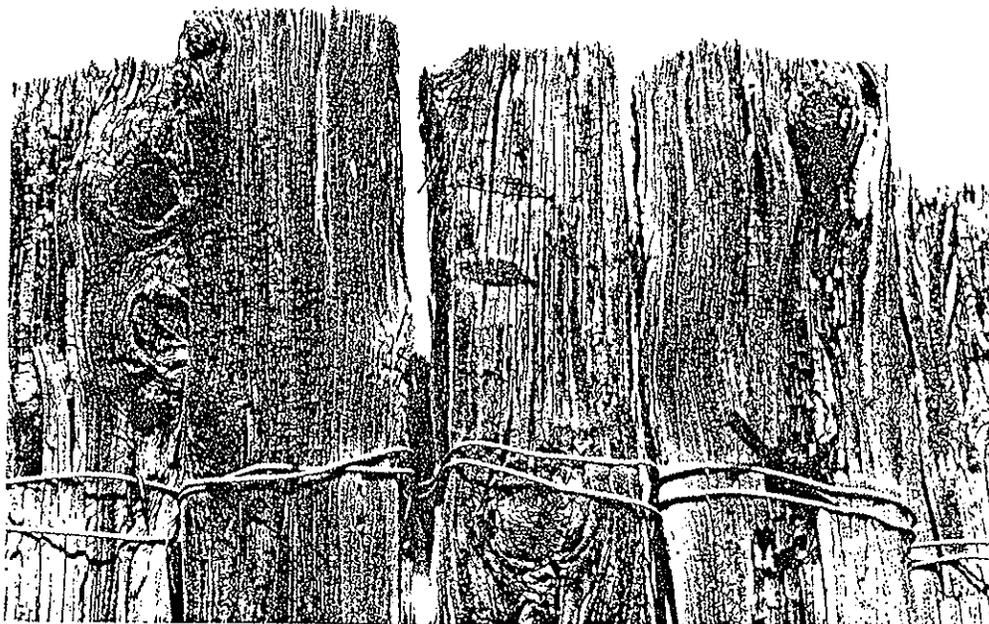


Fig. 43. Wire binding and vertical juniper posts in the Notch Corral, T41S, 14.5E, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

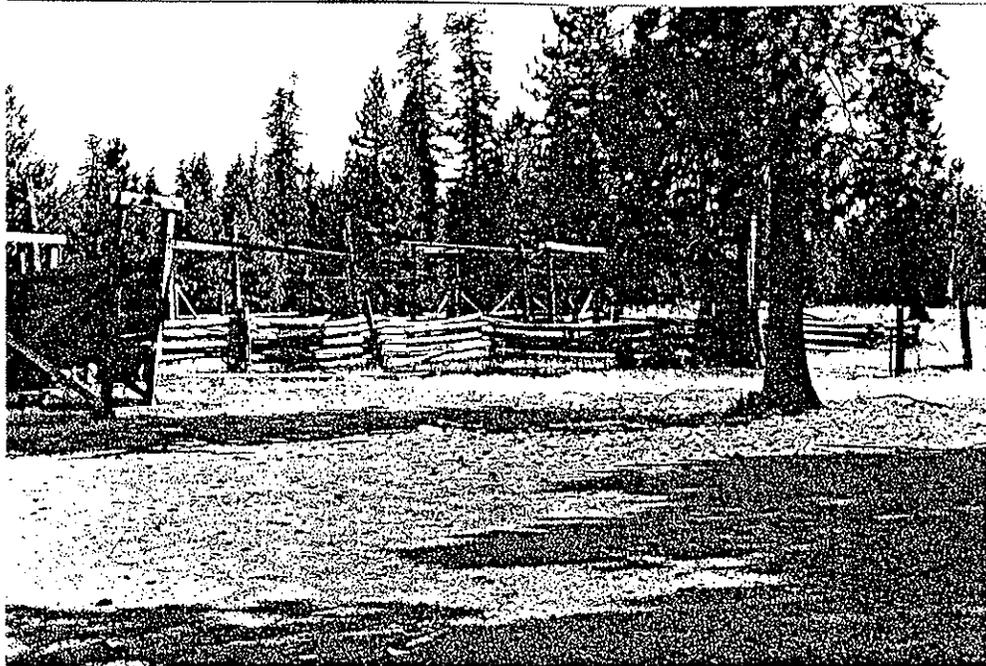


Fig. 44. Oriana Corral, T38S, R14E, Section 36, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).



Fig. 45. Oriana Corral, T38S, R14E, Section 36, W.M. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983)

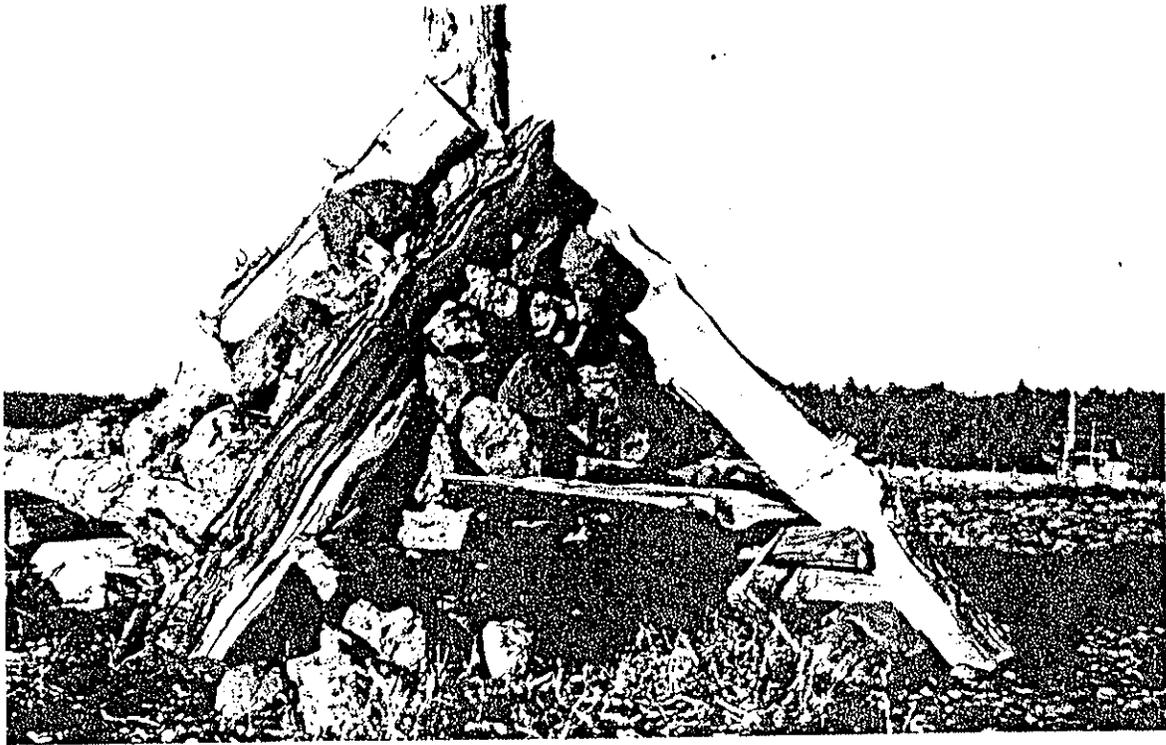


Fig. 46. Rock jack base for telephone line on Oregon-California stateline, ca. 1937. (Klamath County Historical Society)



Fig. 47. Remains of CCC-constructed telephone line on Oregon-California stateline west of Three Mile Reservoir. (Stephen Dow Beckham August 20, 1983).

The CCC established an important telephone communication system to link all who grazed livestock in the Gerber Block. By 1937 the men had constructed sixty-five miles of telephone line, making a circuit of Langell Valley and "bringing the rancher members into instant communication with Camp Bonanza and the fire lookout stations" (Anonymous 1937).

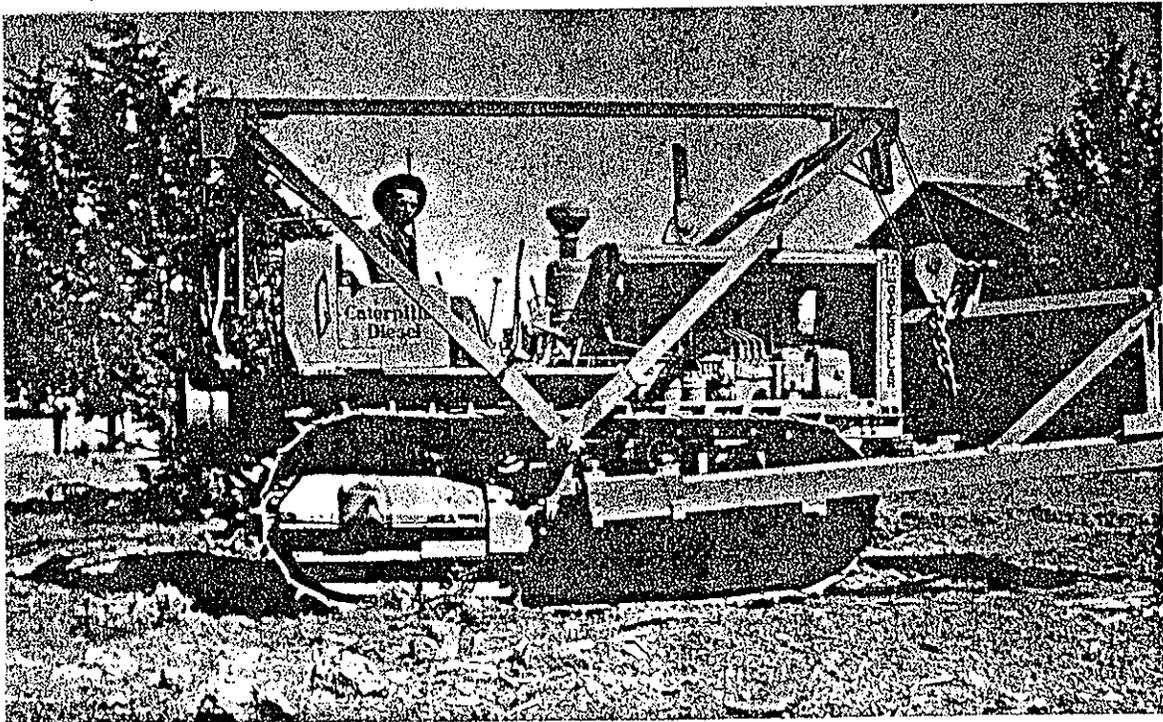


Fig. 48. CCC Caterpillar at Camp Bonanza in 1930s. (Klamath County Historical Society).

One of the major assignments for the men at Camp Bonanza in 1937 was to fight a fire which swept through the southern portion of the Gerber Block (Grohs 2000; Noble 2000). Probably ignited from a CCC "spike camp" campfire, the blaze burned an estimated 12,000 acres, of which about 10,000 were publicly-owned (Noble 2000). Sometimes

referred to as the Willow Valley Fire, this event killed many juniper trees and left an impact on the vegetation of the region for decades (BLM 1978a).

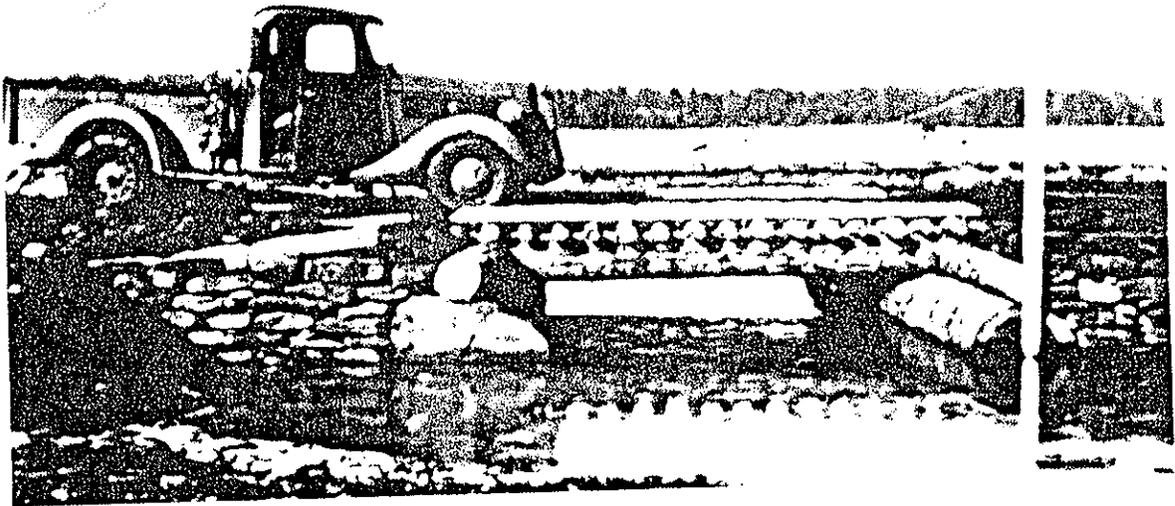


Fig. 49. Pickup truck on bridge constructed by the CCC in the Gerber Block in the late 1930s. (Klamath County Historical Society)

On October 12, 1937, Company 5457 arrived at Klamath Falls by train from North Carolina. This unit of between 200 and 225 men moved into Camp Bonanza immediately and assumed the tasks under the direction of the Grazing Service in the Gerber Block. Charles Martin, a member of this company, had enlisted in 1934. He and other southern CCC men found the bitter winters a challenge. The barracks, he recalled, had but two stoves heated by coal and were not insulated. The men had three woolen blankets. Some, like Martin, learned to ice

skate while stationed at the camp. Martin and others seemed to enjoy their enlistment in the CCC. Martin summed up the sentiments of many when, in an interview in 1997, he said: "It was a great experience for young people. It took a lot of kids off of the streets and gave them something to do. The pay was not that great, but they got their food, lodging, and medical care which was a great asset to them" (Martin 1997).

The Civilian Conservation Corps created significant improvements in the Bonanza Grazing Unit, today a major portion of federal lands under management of the Bureau of Land Management in eastern Klamath County. Roads, corrals, telephone lines, drift fences, spring improvements, trails, fire-fighting, eradication of noxious weeds, and extermination of ground squirrels were all projects mounted in the Gerber Block. Additionally the CCC men participated in local basketball games, boxing matches, and dances. And, during the rough winter of 1936-37, they opened roads and trails and earned the appreciation of local residents for helping save their livestock.

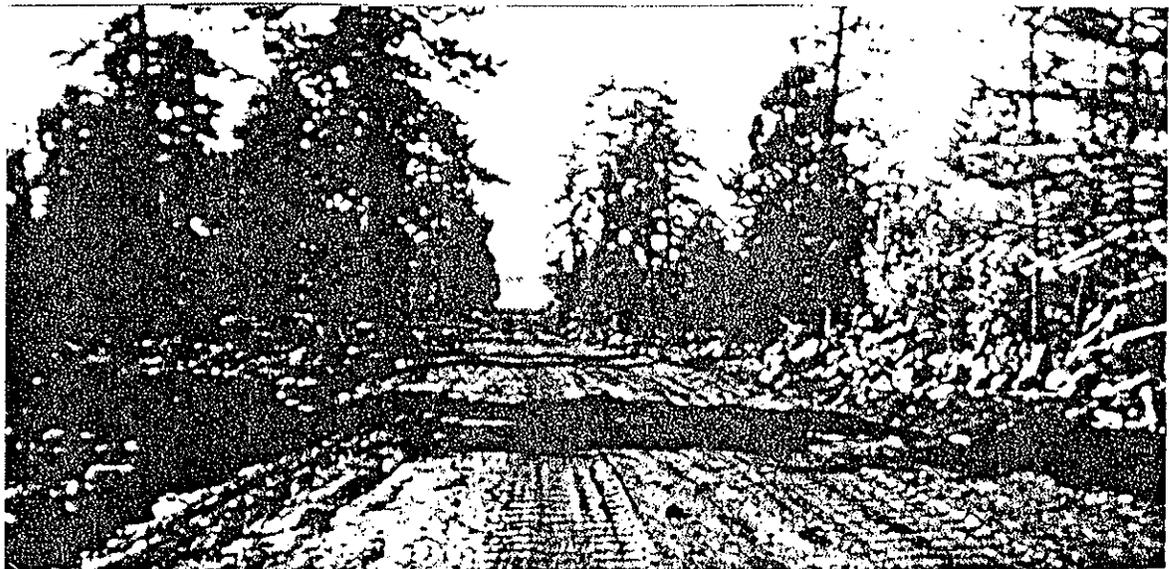


Fig. 50. Road in the Gerber Block constructed by the CCC in the 1930s. (Klamath County Historical Society)

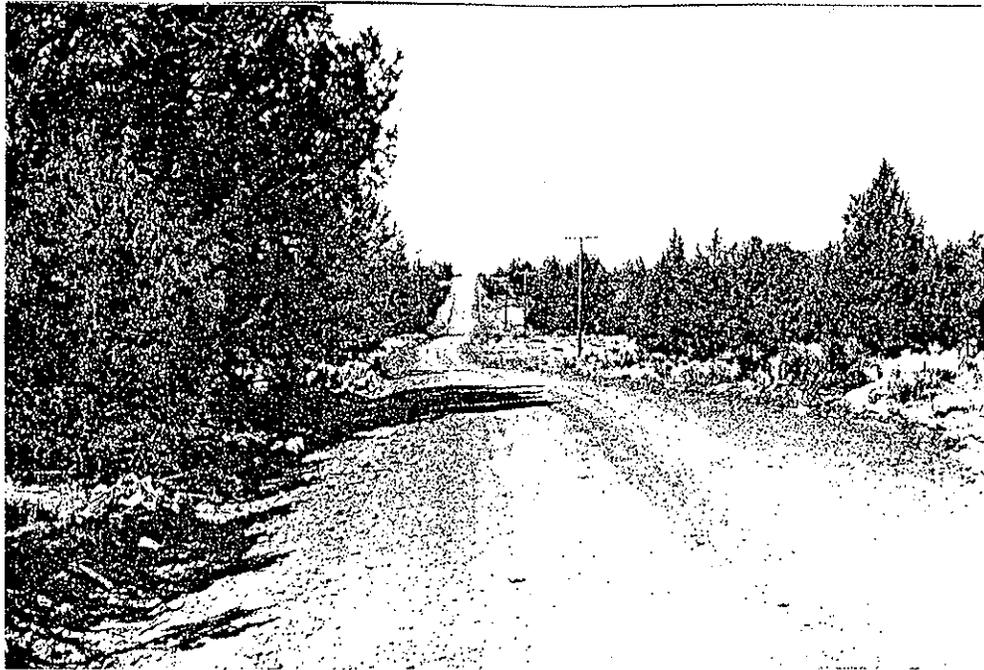


Fig. 51. Stateline Road, part of the major road system constructed by the CCC in the Gerber Block in the years 1934-41. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).



Fig. 52. Rock jack drift fence and telephone line, projects of the CCC in the Gerber Block. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

Oregon Grazing District No. 1

Managing the Range

Stock raisers in Langell Valley and the Gerber Block realized by 1933 that the range was in seriously deteriorated condition, that competition between interests was only making the situation worse, and that legislation was pending to expand the Fremont National Forest to the west to encompass public domain lands where they had grazed livestock for more than sixty years. To try to come to terms with mutual problems and to try to block tighter grazing controls administered by the U.S. Forest Service, these men on June 14, 1933, formed the Southern Oregon Grazing Association. The original members were the following: John Horn, President, Henry C. Gerber, Secretary, C. S. Swingle, George Noble, F[rank] Grohs, C. Walker, Lyman Fitzhugh, Oscar Campbell, Will Campbell, Lawrence Campbell, Lester Boggs, and Clarence Walker (Southern Oregon Grazing Association 1933).

J. F. Kimball, a Klamath Falls lumberman who opposed the expansion of the Fremont National Forest, expressed his great pleasure to Gerber upon the formation of the new grazing association. "I shall be very happy to do anything I can to assist your organization in its efforts to protect the interests of the Langell Valley and the Southern Oregon stockmen," he wrote on June 16. Kimball was a close friend of Gerber's uncle, Dr. Merryman of Klamath Falls. Harold Merryman, Dr. Merryman's brother and an attorney in Klamath Falls, drafted for \$5.00 a bill which the Southern Oregon Grazing Association submitted to Congress to create a federal grazing district (Kimball 1933; Gerber 1983).

On July 3, 1933, Henry Gerber wrote to W. S. Boyer, chief of the Field Division of the Department of the Interior, about the agenda of the Southern Oregon Grazing Association:

As the condition now exists, most all the government land open to grazing is being used by itinerant sheep men who do not pay

taxes in this section of the country and who own or rent very little land, thus making it almost impossible for land owners in this section to enjoy the privilege of grazing their livestock on any public domain. It is our intention that the taxpayers and land owners should have a prior right to a portion of this land and enjoy some protection from transient bands of livestock.

Gerber stressed that his organization was exclusively of cattlemen, but that they recognized that sheep raisers who owned land could share equal rights but not in the same area. Gerber wrote: "it is impracticable to graze cattle on the same area as sheep." He echoed the conflicts which had between interests in the Gerber Block for decades and which had led to the death of Owen McKendrie in 1918 (Gerber 1933a).

Henry Gerber worked diligently to expand the network of those opposing expansion of the Fremont National Forest and of creating a grazing district on the public domain east of Langell Valley. In early July, he learned that the Kiwanis Club of Ashland, Oregon, opposed the Fremont expansion, especially where it might entail the acquisition of private lands (Galey 1933). On July 21 Gerber enlisted the support of Herman Oliver, a prominent rancher in the John Day Valley east of John Day, Oregon. Gerber told Oliver: "It is evident that our organizations are asking for approximately the same privileges and it may be the best of our interests that we work together" (Gerber 1933b).

J. H. Favorite, an employee of the Division of Investigations of the Department of Interior, provided advice to the Southern Oregon Grazing Association. He sent to Gerber copies of grazing regulations on public lands in the Owens Valley-Mono Basin of California where some 400,000 acres of public lands, bounded by forest reserves, were under intensive grazing. He assured Gerber that stockmen in that area were generally satisfied with the federal administration (Favorite 1933a, 1933b). Favorite became more and more interested in the efforts of the stockraisers of Langell Valley and the Gerber Block to try to organize. On August 28 he

told Henry Gerber that he would come to Klamath Falls to discuss setting up a grazing district (Favorite 1933c). Favorite mapped public domain lands in the vicinity of Langell Valley and the Fremont National Forest to illustrate the potentials for a federal grazing district (Favorite 1933d).



Fig. 53. Henry Campbell Gerber (1904-1974), dynamic and determined force in range improvements in Oregon. (Gerber Papers, Gerber Ranch, OR.)

Walter Pierce, former Oregon governor and member of the House of Representatives in the 1930s, had sponsored legislation to transfer public domain lands in the Gerber Block to the Fremont National Forest. The reasoning was that hundreds of acres contained fine stands of old

growth pine. The Southern Oregon Grazing Association, however, thought that the Pierce bill would close off private grazing on the lands or that the Forest Service would institute its tight regulations. Henry Gerber felt that the Forest Service was an organization "who in our opinion do not have the interest of the stockmen at heart, and create laws which are almost impossible for successful Stockmen to abide by." Gerber argued that Pierce was poorly informed and said:

As the situation now exists, the officials in charge of the grazing in the Forest Reserves make certain laws regarding the time limit allotted for grazing purposes. Regardless of the feed situation in any territory, or the economic condition of the country, they absolutely refuse to deviate from their set laws in order to help the stockmen survive (Gerber 1933c).

When Congressman Pierce ascertained that H.R. 4934, the bill to give the President the authority to change the boundaries of the Fremont National Forest, had provoked a negative reaction in the Klamath Basin, he sought to mollify the Southern Oregon Grazing Association. He explained to Gerber and other ranchers that he had merely sponsored a bill promoted by the Lakeview Chamber of Commerce (Pierce 1933).

As the political agenda of the Southern Oregon Grazing Association mounted, the stockraisers from Langell Valley decided to petition President Franklin D. Roosevelt for the withdrawal of public domain lands lying between their ranches and the Fremont National Forest for inclusion in a federal grazing district (Gerber 1933d). They viewed the Pierce bill with concern, for it would transfer nearly 250,000 acres from public domain lands in Klamath and Lake counties to the Department of Agriculture. Gerber argued that his grazing association had a better alternative--a federal grazing district of 100,000 acres. He wrote to Walter Pierce on December 29:

You know that in this country when a stockman has fed hay

to his livestock for approximately five months, he must run them pretty cheaply for the remainder of the year in order to keep his overhead within reason. Our Association is not in favor of using the range before the grass has started, but we do think the laws as set down by the Forest Service at present are too strenuous" (Gerber 1933e).

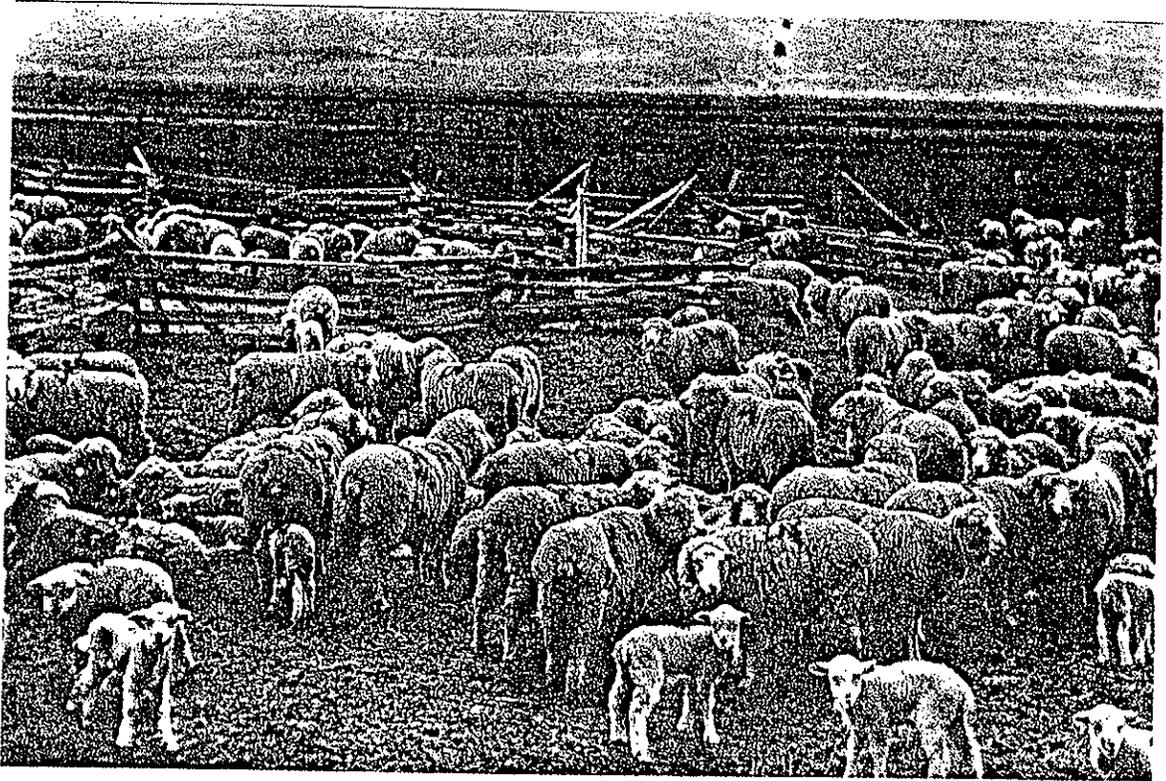


Fig. 54. Sheep in Langell Valley, a source of tension and confrontation between stock interests in the Gerber Block over many decades. (Klamath County Historical Society)

On December 30 Henry Gerber wrote to Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of Interior, enclosing the petition of his associates for a grazing district. He reported that the stockmen signing had used the grazing area for more than fifty years. The issue, Gerber said, was that "each year [the range has been] over-grazed by itinerant sheep owners from other states. These transient bands of livestock have depleted the range to such an extent that the forage thereon is almost wiped out" (Gerber 1933f). Gerber also sent the petition to Senator Charles McNary, Senator

Frederick Steiwar, and Representatives Charles Martin and James W. Mott. "Please to not form the opinion that this is any land grabbing deal," he argued, "however, we do want some systematic regulation of the public domain which is fit only for grazing purposes" (Gerber 1933g).

The Southern Oregon Stockmen Association sought a set aside of T39S, R13E and R14E; T39S, R15E, Sections 18, 19, 30, 31; T40S, R14E, R14.5E, and R15E; and T41S, R14E, 14.5E, and 15E, W.M. The petition recounted how the lands were rocky and suitable for grazing only between March 1 and November 15 each year. They claimed that the area was primarily suited best for grazing, not timber harvest, and that the district was essential for the preservation of the livestock industry in that part of the Klamath Basin. They argued that creation of a grazing district would "not only protect and conserve the forage growth on the lands in question, but at the same time will be of inestimable benefit to the stockmen using the lands along the line of the [district] and stabilize the livestock industry" (Horn et al. 1933).

The signatories to the 1933 petition of the Southern Oregon Livestock Association included: Henry C. Gerber, Ida J. Gerber, W. R. Campbell, Dewey Horn, F. P. Grohs, C. E. Walker, Wilfred Noble, Mary Hefner, Thomas Hefner, George Noble, A. C. Duncan, Claude H. Noble, Everett Malone, William Cleary, Jessie E. Hilton, F. E. Lilly, W. L. Wilkerson, George A. Kuehl, E. W. Wilkerson, L. W. Campbell, O. S. Campbell, T. F. Boggs, G. I. Swingle, W. D. Campbell, John S. Horn (Horn et al. 1933). The petition prompted the introduction in Congress of legislation to assist the ranchers of Langell Valley. The "Bill to Authorize and Direct the Secretary of the Interior to Set Aside Certain Land in Klamath County, Oregon, and to Create a Grazing District Thereon," became H.R. 7595 when introduced on February 2, 1934. The legislation called for cooperative agreements to foster the preservation of the land and its resources and to stabilize the livestock industry. It prescribed that only

bone fide settlers and residents could qualify for grazing rights. It authorized the Secretary of Interior to make improvements such as fences, wells, and reservoirs on the public lands and, when individuals had made such improvements, they were to be reimbursed for their efforts (Anonymous 1933).

On January 8, 1934, Congressman Pierce wrote to Henry Gerber to inform him that *H.R. 6462*, the Taylor Grazing Bill, introduced on January 5, was revised and reintroduced (Pierce 1934a; Johnson 1934). Pierce was deeply concerned to learn whether or not his bill, *H. 4934* to expand the Fremont National Forest would prove objectionable to Gerber's associates if the public domain lands in the Gerber Block were eliminated from transfer to the Fremont National Forest (Pierce 1934b). On January 13 Gerber received a copy of the amended Taylor Grazing Bill. He wrote immediately to Congressman Pierce about his objections to having any of the Gerber Block transferred to the U.S. Forest Service. Gerber's statement was filled with insight into why ranchers in Langell Valley and the Gerber Block sought to create their own grazing unit rather than endure the oversight of the Fremont National Forest.

As you are probably aware, this locality in particular is subject to peculiar seasons; one year the grazing season might commence April 1, while the next year the grazing land might not be ready for use until June 1. This variation depends largely on the length of the winter. Occasionally we have extreme winters and livestock men under these circumstances are short of hay in the spring of the year. However, regardless of these circumstances, the laws as set up by the Forest Service at present, would compel one to keep his livestock in his own fields regardless of the fact that he was probably out of hay and that the range would be capable of carrying this livestock. This arbitrary attitude is taken merely because the law said no livestock could be turned out until some specific date was agreed upon six months or a year prior to this date.

The views of our association are that no grazing area can be satisfactorily administered unless the livestock men using the area

have a certain amount of authority in the regulation of such an area. Furthermore, that any grazing area cannot be governed by any general laws which would cover areas scattered throughout the United States. Our association and the livestock men in general in this territory, do not think the entire grazing area should be administered by one department as any one department can form too many arbitrary laws which would practically eliminate a disliked group of stockmen. For instance I will cite my own particular case.

My father settled in this country in 1880. He continuously ran from 1,000 to 2,000 head of livestock and after his death, several years ago, my mother and I have continued to operate as in the past. About 1905 the National Forest Service established various forest boundaries and included the land therein for the propagation of national forests and for grazing purposes. The livestock men operated in the reserves by paying a sum as agreed upon by the Forest officials. There were at that time territories, and the livestock men were naturally opposed to paying any fee for grazing when they could get along without the added expense. Later the country became more densely settled, the grazing areas were reduced, the livestock increased and there came a time when there was not enough free range to carry the livestock. At that time, my father made application to the National Forest Service to graze on their areas. Their reply was, you were given an opportunity to obtain a permit some ten years ago, but you do not accept, therefore it is just too bad in your case, --and they have continued with this policy for the past twenty-eight years and we have been unable to put more than 100 head of livestock on the National Forest which adjoins our holdings" (Gerber 1934a).

Gerber further explained that he felt that the U.S. Forest Service dominated the Lakeview Chamber of Commerce and, for that reason, the Chamber had encouraged Pierce to introduce the bill to expand the forest boundaries (Gerber 1934a).

Congress seemed determined to drive the agenda to change the boundaries of the Fremont National Forest. It held hearings on the boundary revisions of the Fremont on H.F. 4934 on February 6 (House of Representatives 1934b). On February 20, S. 1983, "An Act to authorize

the revision of the boundaries of the Fremont National Forest in the State of Oregon," passed the Senate and was referred to the House Committee on Public Lands. The political momentum for the Forest Service to control the grazing in the Gerber Block was rolling (House of Representatives 1934a).

Once he had reviewed the Taylor Grazing Bill, Gerber concluded that it offered the most attractive solution to the problems confronting cattlemen in Langell Valley and the Gerber Block. He wrote to John Elder, a rancher near Paisley, in early 1934: "As you know, no one bank, business concern, or monopoly of any kind can or ever have served a community without prejudice; therefore I think the passage of the Taylor Bill is essential to the best interests of all stockmen" (Gerber 1934b).

By early February, 1934, *H.R. 7595*, the bill sought by the Southern Oregon Grazing Association, was before the Committee on Public Lands. The committee sent the legislation to the Department of Agriculture for an assessment (Pierce 1934c). The politics of the situation deepened during the spring. In early June, Gerber met with John Scharff of the Forest Service. Gerber told him that local foresters had been telling the ranchers that the Forest Service had the authority to transfer the public domain lands in the Gerber Block into the Fremont. "I have definite information that this is not so," Gerber wrote, "and furthermore that the [D]epartment of the Interior is not in favor of losing control of any land under their jurisdiction." Gerber shared these comments with John Horn, president of the association, and concluded: "But for the love of Pete dont' show this letter to Scharff as I tried to handle him with silk gloves. You know we are not sure of anything and we might have to deal with these men after all" (Gerber 1934c).

Both Gerber and Scharff were, to some degree correct. In April, 1934, Congress authorized the boundary changes of the Fremont. The President was permitted to revise the boundaries up to six miles from the

existing lines to include all public domain lands within those areas. In October, 1935, however, President Roosevelt's proclamation on the expansion of the Fremont National Forest exempted the Gerber Block. That remarkable exemption was to a very large degree because of the initiatives of Henry Gerber (Bureau of Land Management 1980).

On June 28, 1934, Congress passed the Taylor Grazing Act, a bill sponsored by Representative Edward T. Taylor. Prior to this law, Congress had created only a few federal grazing areas. These included the Mizpah-Pumpkin Creek unit of 108,804 acres in Montana, and units in Utah and California. The Taylor Act was sweeping, for it became the vehicle between 1934 and 1936 for the withdrawal from further private entry or transfer of land to the states of 142,000,000 acres in eleven western states. The Taylor Act called for the "orderly use" of the range, weighing of "the fullest information and advice concerning physical, economic, and other local conditions," consideration of "the seasons of use and the carrying capacity of the range," and preservation of wildlife. The law was founded on participatory range management. The U.S. Grazing Service, working with local property owners, would establish grazing district and advisory boards and determine programs and allocations of Animal Units per Month (AUMS) (Beckham 1984).

As soon as Gerber learned of the passage of the Taylor Act, he wrote to J. H. Favorite of the Department of the Interior to ask for help to expedite a grazing unit under the law in the Gerber Block. He wanted quick action to preclude the aggressive plans of the Forest Service to expand the boundaries of the Fremont (Gerber 1934d). Tensions were high. John S. Horn wrote to Gerber on June 22 that Scharff of the Forest Service had been talking again about the plans to fold the Gerber Block into the Fremont. "As you say we might want to deal with them," he added, "believe it best not to antagonize them" (Horn 1934). The following day--June 23--the Southern Oregon Grazing Association

resolved that the Fremont National Forest boundaries be retained as defined and threw its support behind the Taylor Act, even though the new law was not defined by regulations and implementation (Southern Oregon Grazing Association 1934).

The eagerness of the ranchers of the Klamath Basin to engage the Taylor Act led to a visit by officials from the Interior Department. Gerber was delighted and wrote to John S. Horn on July 24: "This is certainly good news to us and coming right at a time when the Forest Service was trying to put one over on us. I think the Interior Department appreciates the help we have given in passing the Taylor Bill, as we are one of the first three to get recognition from the Interior Department" (Gerber 1934e).

On July 25, W. C. Mendenhall, Director of the U.S. Geological Survey, informed the Secretary of the Interior that the lands in the Gerber Block were "chiefly valuable for grazing and raising forage crops." He recommended that the application for the creation of the Southern Oregon Grazing District be promulgated, that hearings be held, and that the district be established. This action came twenty-seven days after the passage of the Taylor Act (Mendenhall 1934). On July 27 N. F. Waddell, Acting Director in Charge of Grazing, issued notice for a hearing at Klamath Falls on October 11, to establish the Southern Oregon Grazing District. The Oregon District was authorized on July 17, Colorado District No. 1 on July 20, and Mohave Grazing District in California on July 26. The quick work of Henry Gerber had catapulted the agenda of the Southern Oregon Grazing Association to the top of the priority list in the nation under the new Taylor Act (Waddell 1934a). The notice went out on July 31 and identified the lands in the Gerber Block that would be the subject of the upcoming public hearing. State officials, residents, and livestock owners were invited to participate (Walters 1934).

As the summer passed, however, the Interior Department set a

preliminary meeting on September 28 in Klamath Falls to explain the proposed regulations under the Taylor Act (Waddell 1934b). The *Evening Herald* (Klamath Falls, OR.) reported the day before the session that Oscar L. Chapman, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, and a corps of his assistants, including Ferrington R. Carpenter, the newly appointed head of the U.S. Grazing Service, were to participate. Others in the federal entourage included J. H. Favorite of the Office of Investigations, John F. Deeds, Geological Survey, T. C. Havell, General Land Office, Hugh H. Bennett, Director of Soil Studies, Rufus Poole, Solicitor's Office, and Fred W. Johnson, Commissioner of the General Land Office. This was the top federal contingent concerned with implementation of the Taylor Grazing Act in the nation (Anonymous 1934a). Stockmen jammed the Klamath County courthouse to hear the regulations. Rufus Poole of the Interior Department presided, replacing Chapman who was compelled to rush back to Washington, D.C. As of September 28, 1934, Poole announced that the Interior Department had received fifteen applications for grazing districts in Oregon (Anonymous 1934b).

Ferrington R. Carpenter, a "good old boy" from Colorado, a rancher, and a brilliant attorney who had graduated from Harvard Law School, chaired the meeting. He explained that the proposed district would be larger than anticipated, reaching from Langell Valley on the west to the Fremont Forest on the east, embracing some 165,000 acres. He left open to the public the option that it could form a district under the Taylor Act or could go under the range management of the Forest Service. Carpenter said: "You fellows are sitting in a good spot. You can go either way, although there is no pushing and pulling between our department and the [F]orest [S]ervice. It is entirely up to the local people to decide which they want to do" (Anonymous 1934c).

The local stockmen divided themselves into two committees. Speaking for the sheep-raisers were Dennis O'Connor, W. H. Casebeer,

William DeVaul, Elmer Stanley, and Thomas Hefner. Representing the cattle-raisers were F. P. Grohs, W. D. Campbell, C. J. Swingle, John S. Horn, and Henry C. Gerber. They listened to Carpenter; then they listened to Kavanaugh, the Assistant Regional Forester. The stock-raisers of the Klamath Basin liked the prospects of the Taylor Act best. The Southern Oregon Grazing Association polled its members and they voted twenty-nine to two to proceed. Following the vote, Carpenter met with the association and told them what to do. They were to send out applications to those seeking grazing rights. They were to give preference to those owning land and having prior use. They were to classify the applications and assess the regulations. They were to get the program working by the advent of grazing in March and have it completed by October (Anonymous 1934c).

Following the hearing on October 11, 1934, in Klamath Falls, the Taylor Act began to gain momentum in Oregon and elsewhere in the West. Hearings followed for the Jordan Valley Grazing District, April 11, 1935, and the Steens Mountain Grazing District, April 16, 1935 (Funk 1934). The district leadership from Langell Valley influenced other parts of Oregon both by correspondence and interaction. John S. Horn attempted to weave a tight net of connection among his association members. Henry Gerber--and his right hand assistant and typist, Marian Gerber--were pivotal players in those efforts. On January 24, 1935, he wrote to Henry C. Gerber, F. P. Grohs, C. J. Swingle, and W. D. Campbell: "The time is short; roads are bad, and I have been very busy. So we will have to work fast if we do anything" (Horn 1935a).

The stock raisers of the Klamath Basin found encouragement that they were taking the right steps to organize under the Taylor Act. Carpenter stressed that the process was not from the top-down, but participatory. Speaking at Vale, Oregon, on December 15, 1934, Carpenter said:

Now we have come down to the proposed method of administering a grazing district. District advisory boards of stockmen will be elected by the permittees. These boards will devise the rules, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior. The total personnel proposed by the Grazing Division at the present time is only twenty-one. At the present time I am the only member of the Grazing division, but we expect to have twenty more.

You realize that the government men are only going to be coordinating and supervising the agents in governing these grazing areas. We will have to, and are going to, depend on the local committees to apply these principles in classifying these applications, and to apportion out the permits in a fair manner.

We cannot, of course, allow the local committee men to go out and strong-arm their neighbors off the range. We expect them to set the rules, classify and work over the list of applicants for permits. Once these applicants are worked over, we expect to follow the example of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, which publishes the acreage allowed to each man, and the idle acreage for which the government pays him rental (Klemme 1984:10).

In late March, 1935, the Southern Oregon Grazing Association was ready to hire a grazing supervisor, establish grazing fees, commence marking trails, and to secure maps to mark grazing allotments (Horn 1935b). On March 22 the association promulgated its fee schedule. For Ida Gerber, widow of Louis Gerber, and for Henry and Mariam Gerber, the assessment was \$120 due on April 1. The costs were \$.10/head for 1,200 cattle. Horses were billed at \$.20/head and sheep at \$.02/head. The Gerbers had no sheep and did not intend to run horses on the public domain (Horn 1935c). The association's list of potential allottees and their livestock follows.

Table 3
 Potential Allottees and Livestock Ownership
 Grazing District No. 1

Rancher	Sheep	Cattle
Baker, Clarence E.		50
Baker, Teddy		20
Campbell, L. W.		100
Campbell, O. S.		450
Campbell, W. D.		800
Casebeer, W. H.	1,800	
Cleary, W. M.	2,000	
DeVaul, William	2,000	100
Duncan, A. C.	350	
Fitzhugh, L. A.		75
Gerber, Ida & Henry		1,500
Gift, L. & M. Tuttle		130
Grohs, F. P.		700
Heffner, Thomas	850	
Hilton, Jessie		60
Holbrook, G. L.	2,000	
Horn, Dewey		250
Horn, John S.		250
Kilgore, S. W.		150
Lewiston Bros.		50
Malloy & Daugherty	2,100	
Malone, Everett		10
Noble, George		500
O'Connor Bros.	4,500	
O'Keefe, Con J.	6,900	
Partridge, George A.	300	17
Shafer, Bob		75
Schuck, Clifford J.		600
Stanley, Elmer	1,400	
Swingle, Charles J.		400
Vernon, W.		20
Walker, C. E.	8	100
Walker, L.		100
Wilkerson, K. C.		50
Wilson, W. E.		35
McCartie, C. & J.	2,500	

Bieler, T. M.		56
Noble, W.		100
O'Sullivan, Dennis		24
Totals:	26,708	6,772

(Southern Oregon Grazing Association 1935)

These figures suggest the tremendous pressure on the lands in the Gerber Block by the mid-1930s. The allocations for nearly 34,000 head of livestock were those anticipated by local land owners. Eliminated from the calculations were the itinerant herds which, in former years, had passed through the area in search of food.

In the first week of April, Secretary Ickes issued orders creating Grazing Districts 1, 3, and 4 in Oregon. Of these, the Gerber Block gained distinction as Grazing District No. 1, the first in the nation established under the Taylor Grazing Act (Ickes 1935a). The date stamp on Ickes's order is April 8 for Grazing District No. 1. For District No. 4 on the Owyhee it was April 3. And for District No. 3, it was April 8 (Ickes 1935b, 1935c). The Gerber Block, for all purposes, however was unequivocally the first in Oregon and the nation. The first public hearing under the Taylor Act had occurred at Klamath Falls on October 11, 1934. The unit east of Langell Valley was identified as Grazing District No. 1.

On May 20 Secretary Ickes informed the Secretary of Agriculture that the Gerber Block had been identified as Grazing District No. 1 on April 8 and that the proposed expansion of the Fremont National Forest, which involved as well parts of Grazing District No. 2, was in conflict with the Department of Interior's implementation of the Taylor Act. Ickes stated:

A copy of the order relative to Oregon Grazing District No. 1 is attached. The organization of this district has been completed by the election of a local advisory board and that board has

determined range allocations. Information at hand indicates that most of the land involved in this conflict is principally useful for grazing purposes. The district also embraces other public lands for which conservation of natural resources is necessary but not possible under the Fremont National Forest extension act. Furthermore I am informed there is strong local sentiment in favor of administration of the land under the Taylor grazing act.

Ickes concluded: "After careful consideration of the facts now before me, I am of the opinion that the lands in Oregon Grazing District No. 1 should remain in that district" (Ickes 1935c). On July 10, John F. Deeds, Acting Director of the Division of Grazing, issued licenses for Oregon Grazing District No. 1 and requested that Secretary Ickes implement the restrictions required under the Taylor Act (Deeds 1935). The grazing unit came under the initial administrative jurisdiction of Region 3, Nevada, but was ultimately transferred to Region 4, Oregon (Terrett 1936).

The Grazing Service mounted several programs in the Gerber Block in the 1930s. It encouraged the appointment of wildlife representatives to the advisory boards to foster enforcement of game laws, protect big game, control hunting, control predatory animals (not viewed as integral to the ecosystem), protect upland game birds, and protect migratory fowl. The Grazing Service mounted land classification studies under Section 7 of the Taylor Act, determining the value of water sources for public use and advising on the rejection of homestead applications when lands were not chiefly valuable for farming. The Service carried out range surveys. The work included compiling historical data on past range use and determining the extent, character, best season of use, forage producing capacity, and rate of stocking. The Service also examined the qualifications of livestock operators and launched a mapping program of the grazing units. It facilitated communication between CCC camps by installing radios. The progress was steady. The Gerber Block, Oregon Grazing District No. 1, by 1937 had completed

range surveys and major CCC projects were either finished or underway (Secretary of the Interior 1937:334-337, 340).

The steps taken by the stock raisers of Langell Valley and the Gerber Block were significant. They grasped that cutthroat competition for decades had depleted the quality of the range, fostered violence which had beset their community, and left unresolved the tensions between local grazers and itinerant herders. The onset of the Great Depression had only made matters worse. They had taken matters into their own hands by forming the Southern Oregon Livestock Association. They were fortuitously positioned by their initiatives to seize the day when they learned of the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act. John S. Horn and Henry C. Gerber pushed the agenda and, as a consequence, they formed the first grazing unit under the Taylor Act in the United States.

Ferrington R. Carpenter did not forget the ranchers of Langell Valley and the Gerber Block. On January 4, 1968--on the thirtieth anniversary of the Federal Range Code--he wrote to Henry C. Gerber: "Congratulations for your long & distinguished term of service in this work. You and Harry Stearns of Prineville, Jack Shumway at Redmond and J. C. Cecil at Burns, are the only original advisers still serving. I often think of those days in Klamath Falls when we thought the Forest Service was going to gobble up the open range. We beat them to it & your District was No. 1 for the United States" (Carpenter 1968).

Subsequent History Under the Taylor Act

Oregon Grazing District No. 1 worked steadily on reaching its objectives. The reduction in livestock, participatory control of the public range by local landowners, and significant improvements in the infrastructure of the Gerber Block were driven by the local Advisory Board, the Grazing Service, and CCC projects in the late 1930s. Several years passed, however, before the hard decisions had to be made

about who would get grazing rights and how much the allocation would be.

The Advisory Board met on December 16-17, 1940, at Bonanza CCC Camp. The members were Henry Gerber, John Horn, Dennis O'Connor, L. A. Fitzhugh, K. C. Wilkerson, and Frank Grohs. G. L. Hankins, District Grazier, Milo H. Deming, Range Examiner, and two assistants represented the Grazing Service. The Grazing Service reported that the district contained 89,801 acres and had a carrying capacity of 8,231 AUMs. Comparison with actual use records, however, and review of use in 1938-39, led the Advisory Board to set the total carrying capacity at 14,686 AUMs. It observed: "The actual use records for 1940 show a total use of about 18,000 AUMs secured on the Federal range and other control lands which are unfenced within the district. Proportionately this meant use of approx[imately] 15,000 AUMs on Federal Range alone." The Board based the allocation on the following data:

Table 4
Range Use, Gerber Block, 1940

Unit Name	Actual Use	Carrying Capacity	Tentative Allotment
Willow Valley	4,363	4,737	2,824
Horse Fly	9,769	6,463	7,377
Dry Prairie	800	1,230	2,419
Pitch Log	1,508	2,256	2,394
Totals:	16,400	14,686	15,014

The Advisory Board founded its recommendation of 15,000 AUMs in the Gerber Block on the ratio of 2.5 to 1. This meant that for each AUM of federal range, a rancher needed to have 2.5 AUMs of base. Local owners had two classes of property with a total of 38,577 AUMs. "The advisory board favors this basis of proportioning range privileges for this

district," it concluded (Bonanza District Advisory Board 1940-49).

In January, 1941, the Advisory Board wrestled with the difficult matters of making AUM allocations. Tensions existed because of the differing classifications of the base lands and were mirrored in the minutes which read: "Mr. Gerber stated that he had heard that a number of the small operators who were Class A operators were planning to vote out Class 2 property at the general meeting in the afternoon if the question was put to a vote." Grazier Hankins explained the Federal Range Code and its relationship to this situation. The Board accepted his account. Gerber then reported to the meeting that the Board recommended that Class 1 and 2 properties, alone, be considered as the base for allocations. Hankins explained the matter again, describing the surveys and classification studies mounted by the Grazing Service and the Soil Conservation Service to help set the AUMs. Gerber asked for a vote. Lloyd Gift moved and it was seconded that the "general group go on record as favoring the decision of the Advisory Board and that no vote by the general group on this question was necessary." Approval of this motion was a turning point. The stockraisers of Langell Valley and the Gerber Block had surrendered self-interest and empowered their elected representatives to work the federal officials on setting the AUMs. The minutes reflected a participatory mood: "The balance of the day was taken up with individuals relative to the working out the adjustment in their applications to meet the adjustment required, if any, in the recent classification of range rights" (Bonanza District Advisory Board 1940-49).

In March, 1941, Marvin Klemme, special agent of the State Land Board, met with the Advisory Board to discuss possible land exchanges, leases, or other means to assist stock raisers in the Gerber Block. The State of Oregon retained substantial interests: 576 acres in the Horsefly Unit, 998 acres in Willow Valley, and other lands in Dry Prairie (Bonanza

District Advisory Board 1940-49).

In subsequent years the Advisory Board wrestled with equitable assignment of responsibility and finding funds to finance construction of fences and, with the closing of Camp Bonanza, putting together a fire prevention, watch, and repression program. It had to come to terms with road maintenance, repair of cattle guards, increase in coyote population, hiring of a range rider, fence repair, and special requests of allottees to increase the number of livestock beyond their allocations (Bonanza District Advisory Board 1940-49).

The Langell Valley Soil Conservation District--led by Lloyd Giff, Oscar Campbell, and Cecil Conley--met jointly with the Advisory Board to try to facilitate cooperative work. Of special interest were projects to build small dams for stock water on private lands and repair and maintain the irrigation ditch running from Willow Valley Reservoir to Langell Valley. In 1944 Giff persuaded the Advisory Board to permit the expansion of the Langell Valley Soil Conservation District to include most of the Gerber Block. The Grazing Service was highly supportive of this cooperation and offered to expend up to fifty percent of costs on projects such as stock watering reservoirs (Bonanza District Advisory Board 1940-49).

The old tensions between local residents and the Forest Service did not diminish with the implementation of the Taylor Act. In 1943 the Forest Service renewed efforts to change the western boundary of the Fremont National Forest and absorb thousands of acres in Grazing District No. 1. The foresters offered to transfer three sections adjacent to Dry Prairie to the Grazing District. The Advisory Board engaged in animated discussion of the proposal which would have included fenced allotments in the district, a number of which were operating under ten-year, adjudicated allotments. The sentiments of the Board were revealed in its records: "The Advisory Board further recommended, and that it be entered into the

minutes, that the Grazing Service inform the Forest Service that they did not want them sticking their damn nose in Grazing District 1 in any way" (Bonanza District Advisory Board 1940-49).

The Grazing Board continued to receive and tried to reconcile a variety of problems. One was the matter of the local land owners who did not use their base lands for grazing but devoted them, instead, to crop production. Some who did this insisted on retaining their grazing allotments but placed their livestock on other lands than their base when they were not in the Gerber Block. Or there were matters which arose as a consequence of land exchanges between individuals and the federal government and the ways in which those transfer of land might affect allotments of grazing rights. Several meetings were concerned with the Federal Range Code, proposed amendments to it, and how to expend funds for general range improvement programs (Bonanza District Advisory Board 1940-49).

The surviving minutes for the decade of the 1940s confirm that the Taylor Act was highly significant in implementation in the Klamath Basin. The Gerber Block, Oregon Grazing District No. 1, was a pioneer in carrying forward the idea of participatory range management. It started the process of stewardship on the public domain by bringing the local landowners into programmatic contact and relationship with the federal employees charged with maintaining public interest. This is not to say that the adjudications were not with problems, but, on the whole, the system worked. The violence which had sundered families and fostered bitter enmities in the Gerber Block and Langell Valley disappeared. Cooler tempers and clearer heads were involved in formulating better decisions about the land and its use.

World War II

The entry of the United States into World War II led to military preparations throughout the country and especially along the West Coast. The Army constructed troop training facilities at Camp Abbot near Bend and Camp Adair near Corvallis. The Army put in airfields at Floras Lake, North Bend, and Newport. The U.S. Navy constructed the Tongue Point Naval Station, the Astoria naval airfield, and the Tillamook Blimperoon, a facility for personnel, maintenance, and housing of anti-submarine blimp patrols operating from the Straits of Juan de Fuca to the California border.

Wartime projects also involved the establishment of the Marine Barracks and U.S. Navy Auxiliary Air Station at Klamath Falls. The Marine Barracks, subsequently the campus of the Oregon Technical Institute, were founded as a medical facility to treat men from the Pacific theater of operations suffering from malaria and filariasis. The facility was constructed to house 5,000 with dormitories, sick bay, laboratory, dispensary, mess hall, laundry, maintenance shops and other buildings. The Marine Barracks closed on March 1, 1946. The U.S. Navy established Kingsley field for pilot training. Although the field closed in 1946, it was reactivated by the U.S. Air Force in 1954 as part of the Air Defense System and operated until 1981 as a federal facility (Klamath County Historical Society 1984:47-48).

During World War II the Navy, under the War Powers Act, sought sites for gunnery ranges. In November, 1943, most of Grazing District No. 1--the Gerber Block--was selected as a gunnery range. The Navy also selected a site in Guano Valley. The location was on the Sheldon Antelope Refuge but also included portions of the Zetus Spaulding Ranch (Campbell 1943). Gunnery practice--a combination of bombing and strafing--presumably commenced immediately. In August, 1944, the

Navy wanted to expand its practice to the Willow Valley Reservoir. While the Grazing Service was affirmative about such use, it raised several concerns with the commander at the Naval Air Station in Lakeview: 1) the high potential for fires in the months of July-September, 2) public use of the road and fire control activities via the route near the reservoir, and 3) the large numbers of cattle and horses grazing near the reservoir until November (Pollard 1944). The records are not entirely clear, but it appears the Willow Valley site was not used. Instead, the Grazing Service received a telegraph on March 21, 1945, reading: "NAVY REQUESTS USE ISLAND GERBERS RESERVOIR SWSW 8, N 1/2 NW 1/4 17, 39 S 14 E, AS BO[M]BING AND STRAFING SITE ACTIVITIES NAVAL AIR STATION, KLAMATH FALLS (Anonymous 1945). The Grazing Service filed no objections (Ikeler 1945).

On April 24, 1945, Abe Fortas, Acting Secretary of the Interior, noted that the Bureau of Reclamation had granted permission for the bombing and strafing of the island in Gerber Reservoir on April 10, 1944, and that the U.S. Grazing Service and Interior Department likewise had no objection "so long as a military necessity exists." When the war ended, however, Fortas said that the such use could continue no longer than six months (Fortas 1945).

On June 26, 1945, Oscar L. Chapman, Acting Secretary of the Interior, revoked the use of the island in Gerber Reservoir as a "bombing and strafing site for activities of the Naval Air Station, Klamath Falls" (Chapman 1946). The bombing and strafing appeared to exact no particular problems for livestock owners. Herbert A. Pollard, District Grazier, explained why on July, 1945:

In gunnery range No. 1, which includes approximately 1/2 of Bonanza District No. 1, the use by the Navy has been confined to the period November 1, to March 31, when the Grazing District is closed to all grazing. There has been no bomb damage to the range for the reason that bombing has been confined to certain

reservoirs and rocky islands therein. There have been no fires started and no forage lost therefrom (Pollard 1945).

In a noisy manner World War II came belatedly to the Gerber Block. Remote from the main currents of the 1940s, the war caught up with the country beyond Goodlow Rim for three months--April to June, 1945. During that period planes streaked out of the skies and swept in low over the sagebrush, junipers, pines, and bunchgrass to unleash a hail of bullets and practice bombs filled with water at the "island." Once a hill rising above the Horse Fly Ranch, the island at Gerber Reservoir had become a footnote in the nation's military history.

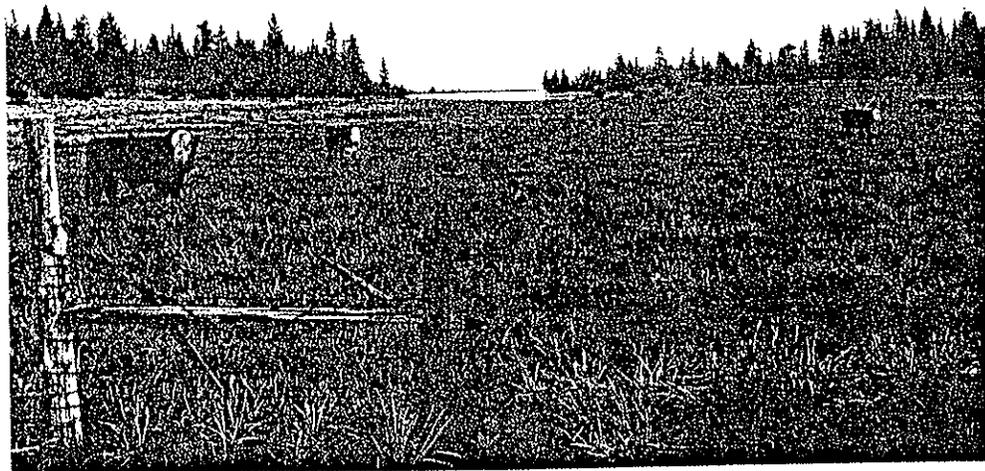


Fig. 55. Cattle on the Gerber Ranch with Gerber Reservoir and the bombing site in the distant background. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

BLM Management of the Gerber Block

In 1946, Congress merged the Grazing Service with the General Land Office to form the Bureau of Land Management. Since 1946, the BLM has been responsible for management of the Gerber Block. These 112,000 acres of public lands in the Gerber Block have undergone revised management strategies since the implementation of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1935.

On October 21, 1976, Congress enacted the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). This act gave the BLM a mandate to retain existing public lands in federal ownership and to manage them for multiple uses. Multiple-use was defined as "management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people." In real terms, FLPMA affirmed the multiple-use resource management policy in effect in 1976.

On July 5, 1978, the Department of the Interior adopted new grazing regulations, the first major revision since the 1930s. The new regulations took effect on August 4, 1978. Among the revisions was the reduction of the ten-year permit system to short term contracts on a case-by-case basis. The new permits were conditional, subject to suspension, cancellation, or modification by the BLM. Clearly the role of the District Advisory Committee had vanished and the responsibility of the federal grazing experts was in the ascendancy (Anonymous 1978b:3-5).

The 1978 regulations prohibited unauthorized range improvements, littering of public lands, and making false statements to gain grazing privileges. They required compliance with state and federal laws regulating wild horses and burros, marking livestock, maintenance of health, sustaining environmental quality, and protecting wildlife and

plants. The changes confirmed the impact of environmentalism in the United States and the growing awareness that the public lands belonged to all Americans--not just to the local ranchers who for decades had used these properties. The realization was a difficult and sobering one. The regulations further held permit-holders of grazing allotments responsible for damages from trespass and for unauthorized grazing on public lands. The teeth in the regulations came in threats of criminal penalties for violation of state or federal conservation laws (Anonymous 1978b:5-7).

By the 1980s the Gerber Block was administered as part of the BLM's Lost River Resource Area (now designated the Klamath Falls Resource Area). Public lands in that area constituted nearly 187,000 acres in thirty-five townships. The management missions were multiple: range, timber, watershed, cultural resources, wildlife, and recreation. The mounting number of uses meant a diminution of allocation of AUMs for grazing and an increase in other activities such as timber management, identification and protection of cultural resources, and improving recreational opportunities.

Timber in the Gerber Block--once the target of the U.S. Forest Service--was initially managed for salvage to remove dead and dying trees only. No legal authority existed to cut green trees. The Materials Act of 1947 changed this situation and allowed harvest of green timber. Recorded sales commenced in 1940 and, by 1978, totalled 55,502M board feet. Some of the larger cuts were made in the years 1953-57 and then tapered off (Bureau of Land Management 1980). Since 1980 and the construction of permanent roads, the BLM has engaged in selective harvests of timber, providing employment to local loggers and sawmill workers. The BLM has implemented a program of an uneven-aged, or multi-aged forest. Since 1962 the program has subjected more than 2,200 acres to pre-commercial thinning in the Gerber Block. The

reduction of the stocking has contributed significantly to the health of the stands. This management strategy has continued through the 1990s (Johnson 1993).

Fire management until 1980 was totally focused on suppressing wild fires in the Gerber Block. The majority of these fires were ignited by lightning. In 1980, the BLM initiated a more proactive program of "underburning," setting fires during favorable conditions, to reduce fuel loads to their natural levels. The goal is to remove the dangerous build-up of combustible materials in the forest while protecting the pine stands. In the twenty years of this program, more than 15,000 acres have been "underburned" in the Gerber Block (Foran 2000). Some stands have been underburned two or three times to reduce fuels. This program has mitigated the potential for catastrophic fires which, driven by large fuel-loads on the forest floor, sweep into the canopy and destroy the older pine trees. The lessons of major fire were etched vividly in the great burn which swept more than 10,000 acres of the southern portion of the Gerber Block in 1937.

One of the important commitments of the Department of the Interior was for recreational use at Gerber Reservoir on Miller Creek. On November 12, 1965, the Secretary of Interior issued a withdrawal order on 160 acres to create a Gerber Recreation Area and a site for the Gerber Fire Guard Station. Subsequent to 1965 the BLM has developed camping sites and other amenities, including a boat launch, at the Gerber site. The reservoir is a popular destination for campers and those who want to fish for bass, crappie, sunfish, and perch (Bureau of Land Management 1980; Johnson 1993).

The BLM has worked diligently on maintaining the health of riparian habitats used both by wildlife and cattle. In 1987 the agency proposed that the Gerber Block become a "Riparian Demonstration Area." This scheme has concentrated both federal and volunteer work on

improving water quality, stabilizing stream channels, restoring riparian vegetation, and improving wildlife habitat. Projects have included riparian fencing, planting of black cottonwood and willow, collecting baseline data, and monitoring the improvements and overall trends in riparian areas (Johnson 1993).

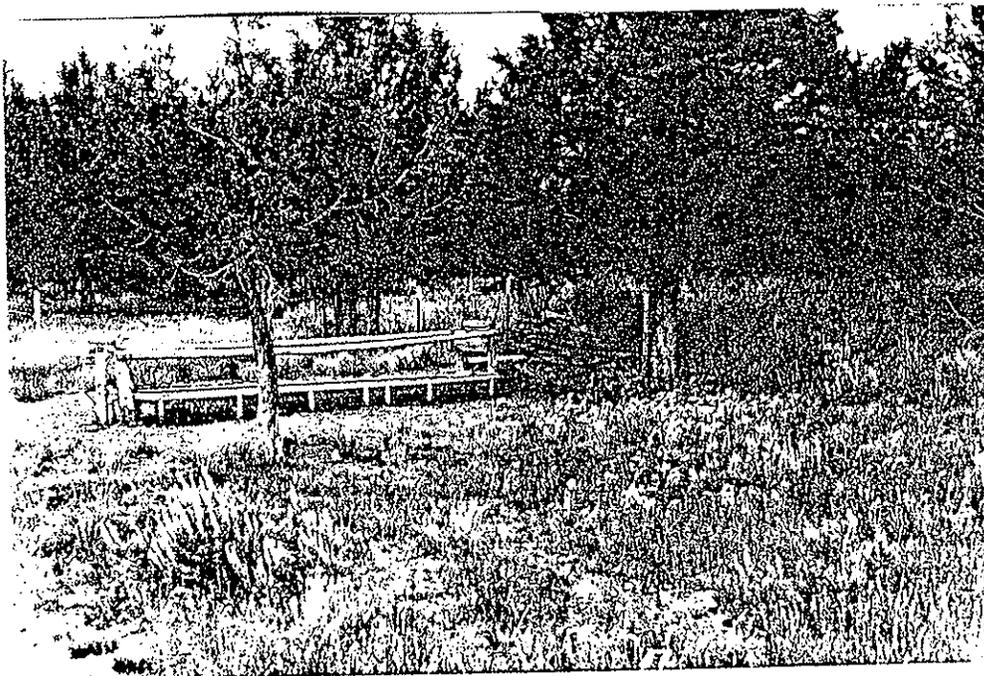


Fig. 56. BLM spring improvement, Norcross Spring, Gerber Block. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

Fig. 57. BLM roads provide access to most of the Gerber Tract. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

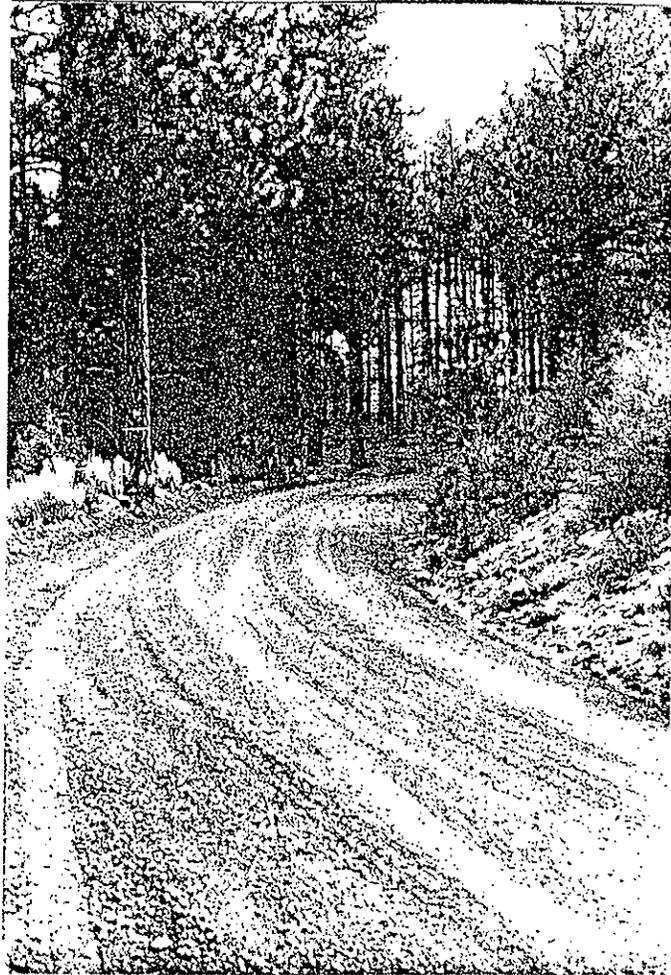




Fig. 58. A chained area in the far southwest corner of the Gerber Tract, a range improvement strategy abandoned in the early 1970s. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983).

In 1968, the BLM and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife cleared 1,450 acres of juniper in a mule deer winter range at Willow Valley. A heavy ship's anchor chain was pulled between two caterpillar tractors to uproot the junipers. The objectives of this treatment were to remove the juniper overstory and to restore native grasses and shrubs for deer and cattle forage. Junipers have invaded many habitats because of fire suppression and have crowded out vegetation beneficial to deer and livestock.

Throughout the period of BLM administration of the Gerber Block, the agency has encouraged and assisted in development and maintenance of reservoirs. Some of these were initiatives on private lands surrounded by the public holdings; others were federal projects. Kilgore Reservoir, for example, is on public lands but is a project of the

Willow Valley Irrigation District and Johnson Stock Company. From an initial capacity of 300 acre feet, it was increased to 2,206 acre feet in 1946. The Bumpheads Reservoir is on public land, but that at Three Mile Flat is on private holdings. Collectively the labors of the Bureau of Land Management, Soil Conservation Service, local irrigation districts, and private owners have enhanced the holding of water in the Gerber Block and enabled the survival of both domestic livestock and wildlife in the area (Bureau of Land Management 1980).

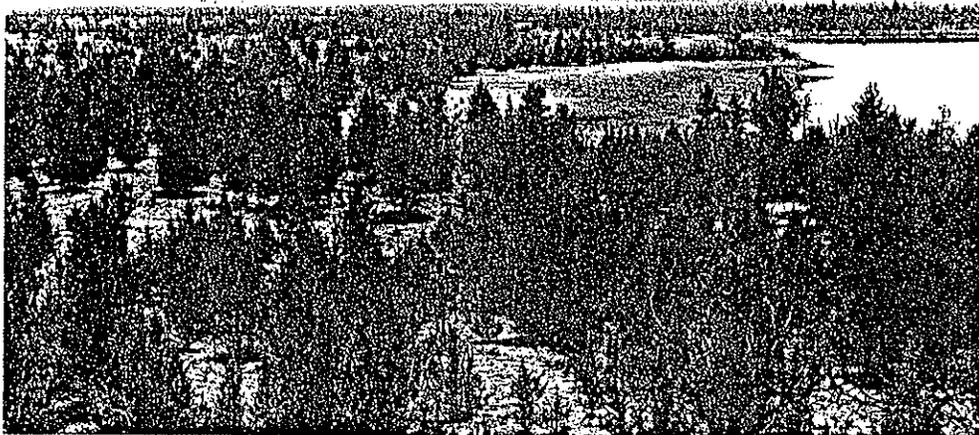


Fig. 59. Bumpheads Reservoir on the right and view south over the Gerber Block from The Bumpheads. (Stephen Dow Beckham, August 20, 1983)

The Gerber Block has thus, since 1935, come under increasingly programmed federal management. The U.S. Grazing Service, Civilian Conservation Corps, Soil Conservation Service, and the Bureau of Land Management have, for nearly seven decades, had impact on the land

and its resources. Prior to that the Bureau of Reclamation tapped the Miller Creek watershed and, with its road construction, facilitated access into the remote region. Even the U.S. Navy for a few months during World War II turned its energies on a target in the Gerber Block.

The imprints of the federal government on the Gerber Block have thus been several and of lasting duration. Importantly, the increasing role of the government brought to an end the era of violence and tension which pitted too many against one another in this remote part of Oregon. Ranchers understood by the 1930s that the range resources of the Gerber Block were in jeopardy. They helped prepare for a new era in their management. Ready and eager, they responded with the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act to embrace modern range strategies. The approaches have changed over the decades, but it is clear that the Gerber Block is a healthier ecosystem today than it was seventy years ago. The challenge is to continue to meet human needs and yet be good stewards of the land.

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