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The Account of a Trip  
Along the

Pacific Coast Extension

of the

Chicago  
Milwaukee & St. Paul  
Railway



**"No one can controvert the visible fact of  
growing crops."**

# Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway

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General Passenger Agent.

**CHICAGO**

# OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WEST IN AGRICULTURAL, STOCK-RAISING, MERCANTILE AND PROFES- SIONAL LINES ARE EXCELLENT.

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**The Pacific Coast Extension of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway passes through a promising country.**

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Lewis and Clark raced Simon Fraser for the Empire of the Northwest through the mountains a century ago. The Forty-niners went through, some of them, and starved or froze before they reached the "Chinook" country. Ranchmen loudly swore that the country was "good for nothin' but grazin'—you couldn't raise a peck of onions between the Mississippi River and Puget Sound," and to prove it imported supplies with elaborate ostentation, selecting condensed milk and canned meats and dried eggs and vegetables as if they were living in the Arctic Circle.

Then the big railroads began to head westward toward California and the Coast, and each new line swung farther north. The locating engineers came back from the "Great American Desert" and told "The Old Man" in confidence that they believed farmers could raise wheat and potatoes and apples in the valleys of these long-tabooed lands. It looked good to them.

So it happened that in the summer of 1907 John Doe—it would never do to be too personal in the matter of names with a man as important as John Doe—went out to see for himself. He did not travel in a private car and acknowledge reception committee ovations. He dropped casually into the offices of business men—bankers, real estate dealers, grocers, blacksmiths—and many of them were calling him "Johnny" before he left. He swapped stories with farmers in their fields; he got out of his buggy and poked into promising soils and outcropping coal-veins and five-foot wheat-shocks; he slept at farms and ranches and hotels called "The Palace"; he drove many hundred miles in all sorts of weather, and he gained a clearer knowledge of the country as a whole than anyone else had ever secured before.

The account of his trip follows. It is the plain business narrative of a plain business man who went into the Northwest with the questions in mind: "Is this country able to support agriculture? Will it raise wheat and potatoes and apples instead of sagebrush and mountains? Is it 'God's country'?"

It is not necessary to answer these questions here. As he says, "no one can controvert the visible fact of growing crops," and his account of what he saw in actual bushels and acres is the most convincing reply.

## OPPORTUNITY LAND

There is, in our northern tier of states, between Minnesota and Puget Sound, a wealth of resource in field and forest and mine of which the majority

of people in the United States know little or nothing. Even the most open-minded can gain from word of mouth or printed page only a slight realization of a thing so great. I am no broader than the generality of my fellow men and the tales I had heard of the development of that country, of the tremendous crops and the quick return for labor invested, had made but little impression. But when I got there myself—when I rode from early morning till the dark fell, past splendid farm land and splendid crops—when I saw the enterprising, bustling, booming towns, large and small—when I talked with the level-headed, energetic, prosperous people—then it was a different matter. Then I wondered at the misleading moderation of the accounts that I had heard.

It was no hurried, casual glance I gave to any part of that broad, splendid land. I *neighbored* there. I watched its crops grow. I investigated its mines. I compared its fruits. I examined its cattle. I drove behind its horses and broke down in its automobiles. I ate facts about everything, and I enjoyed them. For they were mighty good facts, well-rooted and palatable. I stayed until I was convinced that the time is very near when this last and perhaps richest portion of our country will take its fair proportion of the people and its proper place in the world's economy.

### RAILROADS NECESSARY

And now that I am returned from my long journey, the question comes: What is needed that this great empire may come into its own? The answer is as old as the hills. Pioneer railroad lines everywhere have demonstrated beyond doubt the richness and resourcefulness of the silent places with, and their utter worthlessness without, transportation. The wilds and wastes conquered, the business enterprises brought into being, the deserts drenched, the wilderness penetrated, and the mountains pierced—in short, the millions of homes made ready for the habitation of man by what may be called pioneer lines make up an overwhelming refutation of the new contention that the railroad is a non-producer. In the matter of opening up new territories, it is the first, the pioneer producer, which can claim credit, wholly or in part, for everything from the first cleared field and the saw mill spur, to the fine farm and the city—for the finished products, which are civilization.

As for the northwest states, the rich land is there. The people are going there. What is needed is more of them. When the new straight-tracked, strongly-built railroad makes its swift, short passage from the grain fields to the great grain markets; when its builders complete what is already begun—then will there be a new empire where millions shall find homes and whence wealth shall flow out to the whole world.

### IN THE DAKOTAS

It was on the evening of July 12th that I left St. Paul and I arrived the next night at Dickinson, North Dakota, having spent the day in studying pamphlets and getting what information I could from the western men I met on the train. There was no doubt in any of their minds about the West being "the best country on earth." The following morning I started on a four days' drive through Hettinger, Adams and Bowman counties, North Dakota, and Butte County, South Dakota. It had been raining energetically, but we

didn't stop for that: We made an early start and did some sixty-five miles the first day.

Hettinger I found to be typical of a certain class of western towns; ahead of the railway, the residences mostly tents, the population about one hundred. It had three general merchandise stores, two banks, a lumber yard, a cigar and candy store, a two-story hotel, a livery barn, two barber shops, one newspaper, one doctor, several lawyers and real estate agents—a good town—and when the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway goes through there, it will be a big town. Much of the land about there has been homesteaded and next year it will be producing big crops.

### GOOD SOIL—GOOD CROPS

I met a locator who had just returned from thirty-six miles south of Lemmon and asked him about the agricultural possibilities of the land.

"It will raise as good crops as any on earth," he said. "All the land for ten or fifteen miles each side of the Milwaukee has been taken up; homesteaders on every section. It's mighty good soil." His verdict was the general one.

The same is true of the country about Lemmon, S. D. All the land for several miles on either side of the railway has been taken up. Mr. Aldrich, a banker at Lemmon, which is a larger town than Hettinger, told me that excellent varieties of corn could be grown, quoting from his own experience.

"I figured that a better article could be raised on this soil," he said, "and so I did a little experimenting out of office hours. I tried two or three varieties with great success, but the Dent seemed to do the best, so I confined myself to that. Anyone can acclimate a good corn."

I talked with all kinds of people, ranchmen, locators, homesteaders, settlers, business men, real estate men, etc.; and examined the grass and fields of a section of land covering roughly some 4,600,000 acres of good soil. I examined the land with the principal questions in mind: Is this an agricultural country? Can crops be grown regularly with the average amount of rainfall?

One conversation I had with a rancher at Haley, south of the line, was characteristic. "Look here," he said, in response to my invariable query, and led me out behind the barn where he had a thrifty field of oats and squaw corn: "Just look at that. That's my best answer to the question. I've raised as good as that, or better, for the last twenty-three years, ever since I've been in this territory, and if I can do it others can. Others will, too. That's the trouble. They've crowded us ranchers out of the middle west, and out of Wyoming, and out of a lot of Texas, and they'll crowd us off into the Pacific Ocean pretty soon to feed our beef creatures on seaweed."

Another rancher showed me a field of oats he had put in. "That field, sir," he affirmed, "will go sixty bushels to the acre if it will go a peck. There isn't a finer field in the two Dakotas."

I said nothing, but I was amused, since both of these men had been telling me that the land was made for grazing country and ought to be left for that. Naturally the ranchers have resented the necessity of giving up the free range and have tried for years to discourage immigration. Their disparaging statements I took thereafter with a large grain of salt.

## ADAMS AND HETTINGER COUNTIES, NORTH DAKOTA

From Lemmon I drove north to Mott, N. D., traversing about forty miles of country in Adams and Hettinger counties. The country I found similar to that over which I had driven for four days except that it lies, if anything, still better for farming. Throughout the entire country the houses of homesteaders dotted the prairies. I saw fine fields of wheat and barley just south of Mott, N. D., proving, as other fields in other parts of the country had done, the productiveness of the soil. One man north of Mott last year raised 5,000 bushels of wheat. A number had each over 400 acres in crop this year. This grain will naturally tend south to the Milwaukee, as the wagon roads are better to the south.

Mott is a well built town tributary to the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway. The one general store does a thriving business, as the farmers have made money raising grain. It is astonishing the amount of business those little one and two store towns do. At New England, thirty-five miles south of Dickinson, I was in a general store that buys two thousand dollars' worth of groceries every month. This information was given me by two different commercial men at Dickinson. The business is equally large in other lines. At Haley there is a little bank less than a year old with a capital of ten thousand dollars which has thirty-six thousand dollars in deposits and twenty-four thousand out at interest.

## DIVERSIFIED FARMING COUNTRY

I returned to Dickinson on July 18th, driving from Mott, a distance of fifty miles, and traversing a country containing more farms than any I had previously seen. I talked with farmers in this section and they scoffed at any doubt that the region was good farming country. There had been plenty of rain: Indeed, personally, I could have dispensed with a little of the precipitation, for it rained more than half the time that I was on the road.

Young Phelan, who is very familiar with the country, took me out to see the State Experimental Farm where, under the most improved dry-farming methods, they raise all kinds of grain, shrubbery, fruit trees and vegetables. They have succeeded in doing some things hitherto considered impossible.

I felt that I now had the Dakota situation well in hand. I had driven two hundred and fifty miles in five days, covered about two hundred townships and talked to heaven only knows how many different kinds of people.

The country, all in all, is of the same general aspect, valleys several miles broad and well suited to farming lying all along the water courses. Between the streams the land for miles is a succession of hills, rolling prairie, and buttes, the larger per cent being plough land. The natural grass that covers this is so nutritious that cattle fatten on it without being fed any grain or given protection against the weather.

In every place I visited I saw splendid growing crops. I saw beside wheat (blue stem and durum), flax, and potatoes, which were the principal crops, barley, oats, speltz, corn, and all kinds of garden vegetables and clover and alfalfa.

There can be no possible question as to the productiveness of the soil. No one can controvert the visible fact of growing crops.

The water in the district is good and is easily secured at from twenty to sixty feet.



## COAL—FREE FOR DIGGING

That whole section seems underlaid with lignite coal, a great deal of it outcropping. The fuel question is often a serious one on the prairie and I asked the wife of a farmer what they burned.

"Why, there's a coal hole about three miles from here," she answered. "John goes over and gets a few loads when he isn't busy. We don't have to worry about keeping warm."

I examined this coal at several places. It seems to be about half way between wood and bituminous coal. When first taken from the ground it shows the veins and knots of the wood of which it was formed. It slacks on exposure to the air. Two tons of it are said to equal one ton of bituminous coal. The veins vary from three to twenty feet below the surface.

## IN EASTERN MONTANA

Miles City was my first experience of Montana, and a pleasant one. They told me there that the land had produced crops for three years and was selling at about ten dollars an acre. I drove out to the irrigated lands south of the town, where a ditch from the Tongue River irrigates an extensive tract about fourteen miles long on which fine crops were growing.

The next day I went to Terry, which is a busy town well located in a big flat. Mr. Burt, president of the bank, took me out to his ranch in his automobile; at least, we covered about sixty miles of the distance in the automobile before it broke down. After that we did ten miles on horseback and five on foot. I had an excellent view of the country along the new St. Paul Railway and also of the country back in the hills. The soil is all right and I saw field after field of flourishing crops produced without any irrigation.

Forsyth was my next stop and there I was much interested in the project of the Rosebud Land and Improvement Company, which has constructed an irrigation ditch that waters 11,000 acres of land across the Yellowstone River from Forsyth and extending east.

The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway has a townsite in the center of this irrigated tract, which will be placed on the market, divided into small holdings, when the trains are running through. A beet sugar factory is to be located there.

## IN THE JUDITH BASIN, MONTANA

I spent several days in and about Lewistown, as the Judith Basin in which the town is situated is considered the greatest country in Montana for dry-farming.

It was wonderful! Simply wonderful! The first day I drove with Mr. G. W. Cook for fifteen miles through the farming country and I never before saw such wheat fields.

Mr. Cook pointed with his whip to right and left and left and right with the succinct remark:

"Forty bushels. . . Forty bushels. . . Forty bushels."

I did not doubt it in the least. The grain was as thick as it could grow and the heads were extraordinarily big and heavy. Fifty bushels to the acre is not uncommon. The grade was No. 1 Hard, a fine milling wheat

that sold last year at \$1.25 per cwt. That land sold for from ten to twenty-five dollars an acre, averaging about fifteen dollars. I was told that there were areas of land as good as that that were still raw prairie or "bench land," as they call it.

The Judith Basin is a tract of about 2,000 square miles. I drove for hundreds of miles over it. The basin is well watered by numerous streams and springs which never fail in summer nor freeze in winter. It raises magnificent crops. Hay (timothy, alfalfa, broom grass and blue joint) and oats are invariably great producers. On the "bench lands," or prairies, between the creeks, the great wheat crops are raised, thirty, forty, and fifty bushels being harvested to the acre without irrigation. The basin seems a natural wheat country. The climate, long days and cool nights, the altitude and the soil are perfectly adapted to this grain. Turkey Red and Scotch Fife are the varieties commonly grown. The prices have been largely governed by local conditions. The yield in the basin is estimated at 350,000 bushels. About 80 per cent of the land can be ploughed. About 10 per cent is under cultivation. South and east of the railroad the country has been settled up for several years, north and west most of the land has been homesteaded for one or two years and is developing rapidly. Last year 74,000 acres in Fergus County were homesteaded. But there is still good land open. Fergus County has a population of 12,000 and could easily support 500,000. It is a great opportunity for the eastern farmer. The ranchmen who have held the country so long have bought condensed milk, canned meat, stale eggs, and desiccated vegetables without ever thinking to raise such things for themselves. And yet nearly all vegetables and small fruits do well; apples can be raised, and potatoes make a big crop of excellent quality.

The sheep industry is another profitable one, bringing last summer a million and a quarter dollars into Fergus County in sales of wool and sheep.

The more I saw of the region the more I was impressed with it. It is certain to be a great country.

### ABOUT LEWISTOWN, MONTANA

Lewistown, with a population of about 3,500, presented a fine appearance. Everybody seemed to be making money. Wool, sheep, cattle and horses were high, and the gold mines to the north that get their supplies here are big producers. The largest bank there carries over \$1,300,000 deposits.

The next day I drove north to the mining town of Kendall, passing through a country that is being extensively farmed without irrigation and producing the same class of crops that I have described. The production of this land is almost unbelievable.

Kendall is a lively little town. The Kendall and Barnes-King mines produce something over \$1,000,000 in gold every year. Fergus County is developing its coal mines also, which will furnish employment for many men. Government geologists were camped near one of the mines that I visited and they said there was coal all over the basin. It is a fair quality of bituminous, and sold in Lewistown for \$5.00 a ton, delivered.

As each successive range of the Rocky Mountains is passed, the climate grows continually milder. The fertile valleys of western Montana are becoming famed for their fruit.

Missoula, Mont., has a climate that is considered perfection. There I saw hundreds of small fruit farms of from 10 to 20 acres, the owners of which had grown independent.

The mining towns, Butte and Anaconda, and the Coeur d'Alene mining country to the west, make perhaps the best market for fruit in the West.

## IN IDAHO AND WASHINGTON

St. Joe City, Idaho, is a good lumbering and manufacturing point. I went from there to St. Marie's, fifteen miles down the river, which is already a prosperous place and will grow rapidly with the advent of The St. Paul Road. I saw flats containing from ten to one hundred acres of fine meadow, growing magnificent crops of timothy hay. Those lands are all settled and are valuable. Hay sells for from \$16.00 to \$20.00 a ton, and the land is held at from \$100.00 to \$150.00 per acre. Besides these flats, which are nearly level with the river, there are small valleys which raise nearly all kinds of fruit to perfection. The soil and climate are ideal for peaches, plums, apricots, apples and all kinds of small fruits. When the railroad furnishes transportation it will be a great fruit growing section.

I reached Tekoa, Washington, the 13th of August. The harvest was in full swing and looked fine. It is a beautiful country.

Tekoa itself is a thriving town of about a thousand people, with paved streets, electric lights, city water, etc. Toward Rock Lake the country is as fine as any in the state. It is a succession of hills on which enormous crops of small grains are grown. As high as fifty bushels to the acre is not uncommon, and hundreds of acres will average forty bushels. The land is nearly all under cultivation, but is held in large tracts, thousand-acre farms being frequent. The soil is a dark loam of wonderful fertility, and the rainfall is sufficient. Wheat, oats and barley are the main crops. Potatoes often make 600 bushels to the acre. Good wells are easily found, water being from fifteen to forty feet below the surface.

From Tekoa I drove fifteen miles to Rosalia, a progressive town with good schools and all the conveniences of an eastern city. It contains men worth from forty thousand to one hundred thousand dollars who came here ten or twelve years ago with practically nothing.

"The crying need of this country," a business man told me, "is that the big holdings on which we old-timers made our money be cut up into little farms of forty or fifty acres. An excellent living can be made off a forty-acre farm. We need more people in the country to raise vegetables and fruit and poultry and dairy produce. The mining country to the east, and Spokane, as well as our local markets, would eat up all they would raise."

## A GREAT FRUIT COUNTRY

Around Ellensburg, which I made on August 21st, the whole country is irrigated land in a high state of cultivation. There are 50,000 acres of irrigated and sub-irrigated land that will be tributary to the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway, as well as 80,000 acres more that can easily be irrigated. I rode some eighty miles in an automobile through beautiful meadow land that has already demonstrated that it can raise fruit of a size, color and quality similar to that grown at Wenatchee and North Yakima,

and of superior keeping qualities. Another great advantage is that wormy apples are unknown, the nights being too cold for the codling-moth. Over 1,000 acres of apple trees were planted this year at Ellensburg and twice this number of trees have been ordered for next year. Pears, plums, cherries and apricots do well and all small fruits. The strawberries rival those raised at Hood River, Oregon, considered the finest in the world.

A day or two I spent at North Yakima in order to see a fully developed fruit country. I talked with a number of fruit buyers who were buying for the eastern markets. They were paying big prices and there was not fruit enough to go around, although this valley has a record crop. Some of the best orchards here have sold for \$1,500 per acre. The crop I saw on many of them would sell for five or six hundred dollars. The Kittitas Valley about Ellensburg will become this same kind of a country when it is developed. It is a wonderful fruit country.

My journey ended at Seattle. With the first glimpse of the blue water of the Inlet and the scent of the Pacific beaches and the warm sunshine of the Coast warming my shoulders, it was completed. From the Mississippi to the lazy Pacific I had seen the Northwest, the empire of Lewis and Clark's discovery a hundred years ago. It is indeed an empire, only half developed as yet, but merely waiting for the men to run the irrigating ditch and the plow through its sod and for transportation to carry its products to the eastern markets. The men are coming: the steel rails are constantly heading westward across the prairies, and the long awaited future of the Empire of the Northwest is—today.

All this country described will be developed and settled by the building of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway now under construction from the Missouri River west of Aberdeen, crossing the river at Moberg due west of St. Paul and Minneapolis about four hundred miles, through South Dakota, the southwest corner of North Dakota, through Montana for nearly 500 miles, through Idaho and Washington to Seattle and Tacoma.

**Fuller information than it is possible to give here will be most cheerfully given on application, and additional maps and pamphlets sent.**

**F. A. Miller,**  
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