THE BEEF CATTLE industry in Oregon enjoyed its days of glory before 1890, and its history during those days of the free range has already been written.1 This paper continues the account since 1890, examining the changes in the areas where cattle raising has been concentrated; competition problems with sheepman, wheatman, and homesteader; the appearance of new marketing methods; and, perhaps most important of all, the problem of the control and condition of the range. This last problem makes the present not an unreasonable time to look back and review the story of Oregon cattle. The enactment of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1934, and its amendment in 1936, have led to the disappearance in Oregon of the last large bodies of land on which cattle once enjoyed unrestricted grazing. In this as in other ways, it will be shown that the industry has undergone many changes since 1890.

The area under consideration is that portion of Oregon lying east of the Cascade Range. It is true that cattle first appeared in Oregon in the western portion of the state;2 but in the late 1850's and the 1860's, partly under the stimulus of a mining boom,3 cattle were moved into eastern Oregon from the Willamette Valley and Washington Territory. Since that time west-

1In a far more detailed work than this: James Orin Oliphant, The Range Cattle Industry in the Oregon Country to 1890, unpublished doctor's thesis, Harvard University, 1930, in Harvard University Library.


ern Oregon has concentrated on dairy cattle and left the raising of beef cattle largely to eastern Oregon.

Almost the whole area is semi-arid, having less than 20 inches of annual rainfall. The exceptions are a narrow strip along the eastern slopes of the Cascades Range and two or three small districts in the upper reaches of the Blue and Wallowa mountains, with yearly rainfall as high as 40 inches. Large parts of all other sections of eastern Oregon average less than 10 inches annually.

Eastern Oregon falls into three main divisions on the basis of the other physical conditions that affect agriculture.

The Columbia River section consists of the counties bordering and sloping towards the river and cut by a series of fertile valleys, such as the Dufur, John Day, and Umatilla valleys.

The Blue Mountain section is characterized by mountains with a general southwest-to-northeast direction, some as high as 9000 feet, in which lie many fertile districts, such as the Powder River and Grande Ronde valleys. A large portion is still covered with forests.

Finally, there is the rest of eastern Oregon, composed of the central, south central, and southeastern portions of the state, essentially similar to each other in character. This is a vast, rolling plateau ranging in elevation from 2000 to 5000 feet, except for Steens Mountain in Harney County which rises to 10,000 feet. Its surface is rough and broken and much of it is rocky. Except for the parts near the Cascade Range the area is not forested. Over large parts of the district the rainfall is less than 10 inches per year; and in no parts, except Steens Mountain, does it exceed 20 inches. The streams often run in deep canyons, but there is considerable surface water available. Most of this area, obviously, is suitable for little but grazing.

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5Scudder and Hurd, op. cit., p. 7.

II

The year 1890 found the Oregon range cattle industry suffering both from the general depression of cattle prices since the 1885 peak,7 and from certain local factors. It is significant that the final chapter of the history of Oregon range cattle to 1890 is entitled "An Industry in Retreat." Not only had the market in the Northwest been declining for five years, but the severe winter of 1889-90 caused heavy losses on the ranges where the cattle were allowed, as a rule, to run for the whole of the winter season.8 The coming of the transcontinental Northern Pacific Railroad in 1883 and the increase in wheat growing and sheep raising in the Columbia River and Blue Mountain sections, combined to force the old range cattle industry into the relatively undeveloped southeastern part of the state.9

It must be remembered, however, that these references are to the old industry that operated on the free and unfenced range, and it is not to be implied that the new beef cattle industry which was to rise in Oregon after 1890 was "an industry in retreat." The table that follows will indicate the general growth of the industry in the state as a whole as well as in certain districts in the census years 1890 to 1930.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Beef Cattle in Oregon and in Certain Counties of Oregon, 1890-1930</th>
<th>Oregon</th>
<th>Baker</th>
<th>Crook</th>
<th>Jefferson</th>
<th>Harney</th>
<th>Umatilla</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deschutes</td>
<td>(Central)</td>
<td>(South-eastern)</td>
<td>(Columbia River)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>403,348</td>
<td>15,909</td>
<td>19,888</td>
<td>34,462</td>
<td>16,379</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>577,856</td>
<td>29,610</td>
<td>29,411</td>
<td>69,531</td>
<td>14,903</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>522,705</td>
<td>31,153</td>
<td>42,483</td>
<td>97,971</td>
<td>12,408</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>570,697</td>
<td>48,528</td>
<td>55,809</td>
<td>67,474</td>
<td>24,156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>522,574</td>
<td>39,909</td>
<td>29,039</td>
<td>65,299</td>
<td>18,900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Approximate percentage of increase, 1890-1930: 30%*, 50%*, 90%*, 15%*.

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7Oliphant, op. cit., p. 217.
9Ibid., pp. 331, 332, 335, 338, 342.
10Compiled from the United States census from 1890 to 1930. Only in 1920 were beef cattle listed as a separate class. In other years, figures for beef cattle for this table were obtained by subtracting dairy cows, etc., from the total number of cattle.
11Parts of Crook County taken to form Jefferson County, 1915, and Deschutes County, 1916. Figures for 1910 and previous years represent the total area of the original Crook County, i.e., the total area is the same for the whole period.
12Parts of Union County annexed to Baker in 1902.
In the state as a whole the industry seems to have followed the general trend of the national industry. The prosperity of the 1890's continued in Oregon in the early years of the century and reached a peak in 1908. Then followed the decline, not arrested until the war years. This in Oregon from 1908 to 1914 has been attributed to causes familiar to cattlemen everywhere—principally the coming of the homesteader and the deterioration of the range, discussed more fully in the pages that follow. Notwithstanding this decline, which also affected the sheep industry, a booster's pamphlet of 1912 could still speak of Oregon as 'pre-eminently a livestock state.' This is something of a tribute to the size and importance of the cattle and sheep industries, but mostly the tone of the publicity pamphlets examined was one of apology because such large areas of the state were still occupied by cattlemen and sheepmen rather than by the farmer.

The demand for meat and the high prices of the war years brought an increase in Oregon's beef cattle. In spite of the liquidation of some herds during the high prices of 1918-19, and in spite of the fact that the drought in 1918, the hard winter that followed, and the price break in 1919-20 forced many cattlemen to the wall, the 1920 census figures show an appreciable gain over 1910 figures. There followed some years of depression in the 1920's. Some persons blamed this on Oregon cattlemen for doing nothing to cut down excessive costs of produc-

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12 Ibid., p. 81.
14 See, for example, Portland and the Pacific Northwest, published by Oregon State Immigration Board (Portland, 1890), p. 41; John Day Valley, Oregon, Commercial Club of Prairie City (Prairie City, 1910), passim.
15 O. S. A. C., Report of Conference, p. 46.
17 O. S. A. C., Report of Conference, p. 47.
tion. An analysis of prices and costs, however, indicates that this was not the whole story. The Oregon industry was suffering from generally low market prices rather than from excessive local cost of production.21

The result of the war boom, when the peak number of cattle probably passed 600,000,22 and the post-war depression, was that Oregon herds numbered almost exactly the same in 1930 as in 1910. The special problems of the 1930’s will be discussed under the problems of the range. Meanwhile, from the table, it may be noticed that the Oregon industry showed a net gain of about 30 percent from 1890 to 1930. This means that in the state as a whole the cattle industry did not grow in these years as did the lumbering, fruit, and other industries. By 1929, in fact, it was dairying, not the beef cattle industry that was the state’s biggest income producer.23 Oregon, meanwhile, had far outstripped Washington in beef cattle production, having, in 1920, twice as many as her neighbor.24

The analysis of the free range industry in 1890, already referred to, indicated that the range cattle industry had by that year been driven from northern Oregon but still persisted in the southeastern portion of the state.25 That the beef cattle industry as a whole did not withdraw to this corner is clearly shown by further examination of the preceding table. Baker County in the Blue Mountain section may be taken as an example. In 1890 the raising of cattle and sheep, along with mining, constituted its major industry; agriculture had made almost no inroads.26 By the turn of the century agriculture and mining were reported as the county’s most important industries, although the assessed value of the cattle at $270,000 considerably

22R. C. Clark, History of the Willamette Valley, Oregon, p. 730.
23Scudder and Hurd, op. cit., p. 32.
24Lewis and Miller, op. cit., p. 84.
26First Eastern Oregon Agricultural Society, Resources of Eastern Oregon (Salem: Farnk C. Barker, 1892), pp. 54, 57-80.
exceeded that of sheep at $97,000. Even after 1900 the county’s cattle continued to increase, but the increase may be slightly discounted because of a small territorial addition to the county in 1902. From 1890-1930 it shows an increase of 150 percent; and current reports show that Baker County, along with most of the southern part of the Blue Mountain section, must be included as part of the principal beef cattle section of the state.

Moving westward we may examine Umatilla County, one of the important counties of the Columbia River section. Here the story is very different. Starting with a number of beef cattle almost equal to the number in Baker County in 1890, Umatilla shows less than half as many as Baker in 1930, or a net gain of only 15 percent. During the decade of 1890-1900, the county shows a decrease that is contrary to the state trend for those years. A newspaper account of 1902, in discussing the industries of Oregon’s counties, does not even mention cattle raising in Umatilla; although five years later an evidently optimistic report of 30,000 cattle in Umatilla County indicates that the industry had not disappeared, in spite of the dominance of wheat. Reports from other counties in this section indicate that, although the free range had gone, the cattlemen were still operating in the rougher areas of the section; and that in some places, such as Morrow County, the cattleman still reckoned many of his holdings in sections. In general, however, the Columbia River section cannot be included in any part of the post-1890 period as an area in which cattle raising has been predominant.

Another section included in the table of census figures is that of central Oregon. This area, made up of Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson counties, was singled out for examination because while much of it has physical characteristics similar to south-central and southeastern Oregon, it has seen the wheat and sheep industries develop.
Beef Cattle Industry in Oregon

Typical of the region to the north of it, and also, in 1911, the railroad. As one might expect from these conditions, the area shows an increase in cattle greater than that of Umatilla County but not as great as that of either Baker or Harney counties. The period of its greatest increase in cattle, aside from the decade of wartime expansion, was the first 10 years of the century when the state as a whole, including Umatilla County, was showing a decrease in the number of beef cattle.

Finally, the table of census figures shows the development in the section where much of the range was still free, typified by Harney County, which, like Crook, continued to show an increase in the first decade of the century when the state as a whole showed a decrease, and for the whole period examined in the census reports showed a far greater total than any other county. One striking fact is the decline in Harney County during the decade from 1910-1920 when the industry in the rest of the state boomed. Professor R. G. Johnson, of the Oregon State Agricultural College, attributes this to the displacement of cattle by large numbers of sheep, and the "uncontrolled usage of public domain lands plus the drought period that began in 1917." The first of these reasons must have been the less important factor, for as reference to the following table will show, the number of sheep in Harney County decreased in the decade to an even greater degree than the number of cattle.

In conclusion, then, the trend of the industry away from the Columbia River, noted by Oliphant as having appeared in 1890, continued. It would be inaccurate to say that the entire beef cattle industry retired to the southeastern corner of the state, for this excludes the Blue Mountain section where the industry has thrived. The majority of the cattle, however, are at present

31 Scudder and Hurd, op. cit., pp. 22, 33.
33 In a letter from Professor Johnson to the author, dated Sept. 9, 1938.
found south and east of a line running from the northern edge of Baker County to the Crater Lake region and including Jackson County west of the Cascades.34

III

Brief mention should be made of other developments with a direct effect on the beef cattle industry. Something has already been said, for example, of the increasing importance of wheat growing during this period. One authority goes so far as to say that the advance of the grain business was the chief cause for the change from the open range cattle business to the fenced range industry.35 This cannot be the complete answer, however, for Baker County was nearly all under fence by 1925;36 and yet has never entertained the wheat or any other grain industry to any appreciable extent.37 But there is little doubt that wheat did help to move the cattle either out of the region or behind the fence. Wheat increased along the Columbia River section in the 1880's,38 and by 1930 was the dominant industry there except only in the extreme western end. Wheat was grown extensively also in the northern portion of central Oregon and in the northern portions of the Blue Mountain section.39

Sheep likewise gave the beef cattle much competition in Oregon as elsewhere. The table below shows in rough outline the course of the sheep industry in Oregon and in the particular sections under consideration from 1890 to 1930.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oregon</th>
<th>Baker (Blue Mts.)</th>
<th>Crook Jefferson Deschutes (Central)</th>
<th>Harney (South-eastern)</th>
<th>Umatilla (Columbia River)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>1,780,312</td>
<td>19,435</td>
<td>249,154</td>
<td>56,699</td>
<td>153,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>3,040,291</td>
<td>140,759</td>
<td>256,306</td>
<td>130,448</td>
<td>222,07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>2,699,135</td>
<td>149,833</td>
<td>142,608</td>
<td>195,321</td>
<td>212,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>2,002,378</td>
<td>104,255</td>
<td>86,221</td>
<td>115,468</td>
<td>163,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>3,319,271</td>
<td>177,084</td>
<td>171,083</td>
<td>204,011</td>
<td>237,727</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34 Scudder and Hurd, op. cit., p. 33.
35 Schafer, op. cit., p. 257.
36 Potter, op. cit., p. 6.
37 Scudder and Hurd, op. cit., pp. 18, 22.
38 Oliphant, op. cit., p. 335.
40 Cf. footnotes 10, 11, and 12.
Comparison of this table with the preceding one, and reference to other evidence, indicates several important points: First, the sheep industry started later than the cattle industry in Oregon but grew faster from 1890 on.41 Second, the sheep decreased during the decade of the war while cattle were increasing, but picked up in the post-war decade when cattle were slumping. In general, the number of sheep increased throughout all of the Oregon cattle country except in central Oregon where they showed a large decline while the cattle were showing as large an increase. There was typical range warfare as late as 1905 in northern Oregon and in Lake County in southern Oregon,42 but after the forest service took charge of grazing at about that time armed conflict ceased.43 Further questions of rivalry between sheepmen and cattlemen will be dealt with in connection with the problem of the range. We find a general distribution of sheep throughout the Oregon cattle country, but a heavier concentration of them in the Columbia River section, and in Wheeler County where the cattle are less numerous.44

The coming of the railroad meant that stock which could be driven to market on foot were no longer necessarily the only profitable products of any given region. A word should be said, therefore, of railroad construction in Oregon. Large areas of Oregon were still not reached by the railroad as late as 1931. It is perhaps more significant to point out that much of the eastern Oregon building has been in the latter part of the 1890-1938 period. For example, while the line up the Deschutes River reached Bend in central Oregon in 1911, and Klamath Falls was reached from the south by 1908, no direct railroad connection

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43Barnes, op. cit., p. 8.
44Scudder and Hurd, op. cit., p. 33.
existed between these points, or with Eugene in western Oregon, until the last 15 years. Nor did the Union Pacific enter Harney County until after 1915. This means that considerable areas of Oregon, although suitable for some form of agriculture, were left for some years to the stockman by default. Once the railroad came within reach, the cattleman, of course, sent his beeves to market on wheels instead of on foot.

Finally, something should be said of the homesteader, of the fencing of the public domain, and of other problems connected with control of the land. In general the cattle region of the state is very sparsely populated; in 1931 almost the entire area showed a population of less than two to the square mile. In fact, one recent writer on land problems has referred to the movement of cattlemen before the war into the interior basin, of which southeastern Oregon is a part, where the competition of the homesteader was not so marked as in the old cattle country.

The greatest checks on the homesteaders were the unsuitability of most of southeastern Oregon for agriculture and the fact that—notwithstanding attempts by the federal government, such as the Stockraising Homestead Law of 1916, to allow them to acquire sufficient land—they had neither room nor capital enough to go in for cattle raising on a big scale. Even in central Oregon and in the southern portion of the Columbia River section agriculture was possible only if the homesteader could get water for irrigation or was able to practice dry farming.

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46Cf. post, Part V, on marketing methods.


The cattleman felt the pressure of the homesteader, nevertheless. A survey made under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture in 1914 shows that settlement had been rapid in central, south-central, and southeastern Oregon in the previous four years, and that 20 percent of former range land had been homesteaded since 1910. It was felt, however, that homesteading had placed an even harder pressure on both cattle and sheep industries in counties that mark the fringe of the present cattle area. For example, it was estimated that homesteading had in the previous decade caused a decrease in cattle of 33 1/3 percent in Grant, 50 percent in Baker, and 60 percent in Crook and Wheeler counties.50 This settlement of stock land continued through the decade 1910-1920, resulting in the removal of much free range.51

The cattleman, of course, was not without methods of meeting the problem of the homesteader. He himself secured title to enormous tracts of land by all the familiar methods of dummy entrymen, of terrorizing the homesteaders into selling out, and of getting control of water holes and areas where winter feed grew naturally. There were in southern Oregon some 260,000 acres of swamp land that the United States had given to the state in 1860 to be sold at $1 per acre on condition that it be reclaimed. By 1916 almost all of this was in the hands of cattlemen and almost none of it reclaimed. More land was purchased from grantees of a large strip of land on which a trans-Oregon Military Wagon Road was supposed to have been built. And much of the land given to Oregon for school purposes was laxly administered and found its way into the hands of cattlemen.

This process of obtaining control of the land resulted in much fencing, even in parts of southeastern Oregon. In this process of enclosure some cattlemen failed to get enough land and a few grasped enormous tracts which, for the most part, passed into the hands of corporations. By 1918 Professor Joseph Schafer was able to report one cattle company with 1,127,180 acres of patented land; another with 229,000 acres in one Oregon coun-

50Barnes and Jardine, op. cit., p. 82.
51Lewis and Miller, op. cit., p. 85.
ty, as much in another, and five times that in various other Pacific and Rocky Mountain states. One company was able to boast that it could drive its beef from Grant County, Oregon, to Sacramento and camp off its own lands only twice on the trip.52

Homesteading pressure was felt most keenly on what has become the border of the cattle area, where nature, the cattleman, and the federal land laws have combined to combat the successful invasion of the homesteader. By 1914 there were 15,969,846 acres of unreserved and unappropriated land in Oregon;53 1926 still found 13,420,221 acres unreserved and unappropriated,54 and almost all of it lay within the cattle area, that is, in the southeastern quarter of the state.

IV

We now turn to feeding practices and the methods of handling cattle that center around these practices.

The old habit of running cattle on the range all winter was by 1890 getting attention from various angles. The cattleman was beginning to discover that, although eastern Oregon was likely to produce half a dozen comparatively mild winters in a row, it was just as likely to produce a really severe one about twice in 10 years. Yet the desirability of winter feeding impressed itself upon Oregon cattlemen very slowly;55 by 1890 the practice was just beginning among owners of small herds who could not afford to gamble, as big owners did, on large profits for four years and total loss the next.56 Humanitarian appeals on behalf of the animals were made in editorial columns57 at the same time that Oregon boosters were telling prospective

53Barnes and Jardine, op. cit., p. 81.
54Barnes, op. cit., p. 39.
57Ibid., pp. 107-8; and Oliphant, op. cit., cites others, p. 252.
settlers about "self-raising livestock" and boasting that "cattle and horses running on the range, uncared for, during the hardest winters have not only survived but done well."

Gradually, however, as the homesteader fenced off land that had been winter range, or as winter losses impressed themselves on cattlemen, winter feeding of cattle became general throughout the state. That the change was most gradual is supported by such appeals as that of James Withycombe, then of Oregon Agricultural College, who urged in 1902 that practical systems of yard and stall feeding be established, and regretted that cattlemen stuck so tenaciously to old methods. As late as 1898 the cattle of southeastern Oregon were being driven to the Little Shasta Valley in California for winter feeding on the range, the Big Klamath Basin in Oregon growing in favor after that year. Evidently this and the "desert" of Lake County were the two last great areas in the Northwest where cattle ran free in the winter.

An investigator for the Department of Agriculture, who made two trips through southeastern Oregon in 1901 and 1902 to report on forage conditions, spoke of the changes in methods of winter feeding. Whereas, just a few years before, cattle uncared for in winter had been taken straight from the range to the eastern market, they were now being fed from two to four months on hay and thus fattened for slaughter. The feeding season was usually from December 1 to the last of March, with two thirds of the cattle getting full hay after Christmas and the other third, including dry cows and some steers, being allowed to rustle in the lowlands. Even the latter were constantly worked over and the poorest brought in for a little special attention. Sheep, he noticed, were fed for only two weeks.

58 P. Donan, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho and Their Resources, pub. by Oregon R. R. & N. Co. (1898), p. 52; and The Pacific Northwest, Oregon State Board of Immigration (Portland, 1891), p. 44.
59 Morning Oregonian, (Portland), (Jan. 1, 1902), Sect. 1, p. 5.
60 Morning Oregonian (Portland, Jan. 1, 1902), Sect. 1, p. 23. Reference is made to winter cattle on the Lake County Desert, while all around stock had to be taken up and fed for at least two months.
This winter feed was largely native hay, wild wheat, blue bunch grass, and native clovers, growing in fenced areas belonging to private individuals. Most of the bottom lands in the area were, in fact, devoted to this purpose. Some of the best areas furnished both a crop of hay and pasturage, but evidence was also found of depletion of the native hay crop due to the drawing off of water to irrigate alfalfa fields on slightly higher levels. In some cases cattle had been allowed to trample the native hay to such an extent that it was badly damaged. Perhaps as a result of such pressure as this, outfits like the French-Glenn Livestock Company were reclaiming swamp lands for hay lands; stockmen were also using native meadows in the Malheur Lake bottoms.61 By 1905, Oregon cattlemen indicated that they were growing large quantities of hay, and that nearly all of it was being used for cattle feed.62

It was southeastern Oregon and the Blue Mountain section that first made a specialty of winter feeding.63 Not only was notice taken of this development by other parts of Oregon, but the fact that the cattle were successfully fed on hay drew comments from outside the state. The hay cattle were a very superior grade, and were ready for market before corn-fed cattle. Only in certain sections, of which eastern Oregon happened to be one, did favorable elements—high summer ranges, good hay meadows, and no other market for hay—happen to combine.64

63Redmond Now, Redmond Commercial Club (c. 1910), p. 8. Redmond notes with interest these developments in other parts of the state.
64Will C. Barnes, Western Grazing Grounds and Forest Ranges (Chicago: The Breeders' Gazette, 1913), p. 138. Cf. also Barnes and Jardine, op. cit., p. 22, where tables indicate that Oregon, Washington, and California as a group were growing two-year-olds averaging 990 lbs. in 1910-1914, a heavier animal than was being raised in any other group of states.
The geographical movement of cattle for winter feeding purposes had practically ceased by the 1920's, when each county was winter feeding its own cattle except Morrow, which wintered a good many in Umatilla, and Harney which sent a few into Malheur.\(^65\) This had not been true before the war. As late as 1910, thousands of head of cattle were driven from Oregon and other states to winter feed on Yakima Valley alfalfa,\(^66\) and in 1914, southern Oregon, especially Jackson County, was sending cattle into eastern Oregon to be winter-fed.\(^67\)

Otherwise, methods of winter feeding have not changed much from those at the turn of the century. In the mid-1920's southeastern Oregon had about 2,000,000 acres of fenced grazing land, hay land, and farm land. Efforts to grow alfalfa had met with only partial success, and the hay used was mostly wild and not so good as fodder. In other parts, however, alfalfa was the standard feed. Four months of winter feeding was still the rule both in southeastern Oregon and in the Blue Mountain section.\(^68\) Experiments and experience had shown that grain feeding was not economically justified; and that, notwithstanding an adequate supply of hay, it was impossible to make up for overstocking the range by a larger use of hay during the winter.\(^69\)

Two corollaries of the growth of winter feeding should be noted. In the first place, with better care and more attention to breeding, came better stock. The names of the Ladds, S. G. Reed, and W. O. Minor are the leading ones in the history of improving Oregon breeds, and there is abundant evidence pointing to the continuance of the movement in which they were

\(^65\)Potter, op. cit., p. 7. Scudder and Hurd, op. cit., p. 35, give a map showing the areas in which beef cattle are now concentrated during the winter.

\(^66\)Redmond Now, p. 8.

\(^67\)Jackson County, Oregon, Jackson County Court and S. P. R. R. (Medford, 1914), p. 7.

\(^68\)Potter, op. cit., pp. 6, 18; and E. L. Potter and Robert Withycombe, Wintering Stock Steers, O. A. C. Experiment Station, Bulletin No. 224, Sept., 1926 (Corvallis, Ore.), p. 12.

pioneers. Shorthorns and Herefords became the common beef stock in Oregon.\textsuperscript{70} In the second place, it has been suggested that hay production in natural meadows or in irrigated land in the range region, contributed more than any other cause to the depletion of the range. It may have been true that depletion of the old winter range was partly the cause of the institution of yard and stall feeding;\textsuperscript{71} but it was equally true that increased supplies of winter feed meant the ability to support more stock, which were then thrown in growing numbers onto the open range during the rest of the year.\textsuperscript{72}

**THE SUMMER RANGE**

We now turn to the Oregon range, which falls into two main categories—the mesa, sagebrush lands, and foothills on which stock graze in the spring and again in the fall; and the upland pastures in the forested mountain areas where the stock find summer forage. The former was often referred to by stockmen around 1900 as “winter range,” although, after winter hay feeding was instituted, the common practice had been to run the cattle on this range in April and May and again in October and November.\textsuperscript{73}

Because control by the federal government was first applied to the summer range as part of the national forest system in the 1890’s, this area will be dealt with first. Cattle were not herded in these mountain areas. Left to their own devices, they sought the open green parks and meadows not too far from water and shade. They were able to find forage in almost any section of the uplands except in the dense forest growth above

\textsuperscript{70}Schäfer, op. cit., p. 293; Morrow County, Oregon, Morrow County Booster Club (Heppner, Ore., 1911), p. 21; Lewis and Miller, op. cit., p. 94; North Pacific History Company (comp. and pub.), History of the Pacific Northwest, in 2 vols. (San Francisco: H. S. Crocker, 1889), p. 126.

\textsuperscript{71}Griffiths, Bureau of Plant Industry, Bulletin No. 15, pp. 20-21.

\textsuperscript{72}W. J. Spellman, in his introduction to Griffiths, Bureau of Plant Industry, Bulletin No. 38, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{73}Lewis and Miller, op. cit., p. 76. The general distribution of these types of land in Oregon in 1905 is shown on a map in U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Forest Service, Bulletin No. 62. “Grazing on the Public Lands” (Wash.: Government Printing Office, 1905). This article consists of extracts from the report of the U. S. Public Lands Commission of 1905.
the line of deciduous shrubs. They liked to follow the receding snow and eat the young plants; they also showed a tendency to injure seedlings in the wooded areas. Sheep were herded into the mountains at about the same time, seeking especially the high, open slopes, or old burns.74

Of the summer range areas in Oregon, only the comparatively small one in Steens Mountain in the heart of southeastern Oregon, seems to have been seriously over-grazed in the 1890's. Here the French-Glenn and Pacific Livestock Company, and about six smaller outfits, were running cattle; large bands of sheep were also seeking forage. The result was that by 1901 there was little good cattle feed to be seen; and the soil was already in very poor condition, due largely to methods used by sheepherders. Conditions in the Blue Mountains, however, were good.75 The extensive Cascade areas, moreover, were not in too serious a condition. In 1898, reports from this area said that overgrazing had only begun,76 and five years later it was only in southern portions of the area that spots of serious overgrazing, attributed to sheep, had appeared.77

Grazing problems had little, if anything, to do with the setting aside of forest reserves, but the new forest policy of the federal government had important results for the stockman. The Cascade Range Forest Reserve, comprising 4,490,800 acres, was established by executive proclamation on September 28, 1893. It ran from the Columbia down the Cascade Range almost to the California line. At first the grazing of all stock was prohibited within its boundaries; but this policy was soon changed when, under a General Land Office order of June 30, 1897, grazing was again allowed as long as it did not prove injurious. It is in-

77Langille, op. cit., p. 155.
teresting to notice that this general order which included all of the new national forests excluded sheep from these forests except in Oregon and Washington, where the rainfall was believed to be heavy enough to maintain the growth. This pleased not only the Oregon sheepmen, but also the Oregon cattlemen, who had found that the sheep did them less harm in the upper reaches of the mountains than if they were restricted to the lowlands where they destroyed forage in the canyons and the moist bottom lands.78 At one time, shortly after 1900, there was a regulation forbidding “herding on the reservation.” This would have prohibited sheep but not the unherded cattle.79 There is no evidence, however, to show that sheep were excluded from the Oregon national forests for any length of time, except in certain areas which were set aside for recreation purposes, such as that north of the old Barlow Road near Mount Hood.80

In 1900 permits for grazing became necessary;81 and a forest service order of December 12, 1905, announced that after January 1, 1906, a slight grazing fee would be charged for all classes of livestock.82 This fee was low at first but gradually increased. In 1911 it was 18 cents per animal per season in Oregon, the season varying from four to five and a half months.83 During the 1920’s there was considerable effort to get readjustment of the grazing fees, Oregon cattlemen urging 10-year permits; fees based on the relative value of ranges; postponement of fee increases which they knew were bound to come; and the use of 1909-1913 instead of 1918-1922 as the “fairest” years on which to base computation of fees,84 when the charges had been 12 cents per head per month, or 66 cents for a five and a half months season.85 The Secretary of Agriculture deferred an

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78Coville, op. cit., p. 155.
79Langille, op. cit., p. 39.
80Coville, ibid., p. 11.
83Morrow County, Oregon, Morrow County Booster Club (Heppner, Ore., 1911), p. 21.
84O. S. A. C., Report of Conference (1924), p. 46.
85Potter, op. cit., p. 10.
increase but early in 1928 announced a new set of fees, those for Oregon cattle were placed 16.6 cents per head per month. This was slightly higher than the national average.\textsuperscript{86}

In return for these fees the cattlemen got the use of a carefully controlled summer range, well guarded against depletion by overgrazing. As early as 1907 the Forest Service was experimenting with methods of deferred grazing in eastern Oregon and was beginning to apply scientific management to the range. For example, the placing of salt in proper places in Minam National Forest allowed an increase from 1774 cattle and horses in the Forest in 1914 to 2200 head in 1917 without hurting the forage.\textsuperscript{87} Moreover, by elaborate exchange regulations, the private lands within the national forests, generally owned by large corporations, were made available to stockmen under Forest Service supervision.\textsuperscript{88} In general the policy has been to grant permits first to ranchers within or near the forests, and to favor local associations of small ranchers rather than the large outfits.\textsuperscript{89}

The reaction of cattlemen to the control of the summer range has varied. In answer to a 1903 questionnaire, Oregon stockmen spoke overwhelmingly for reasonable government regulation of the range—81 for and only 4 against—\textsuperscript{90} but the reliability of these reports has been questioned. It has been noted, for example, that the questionnaire was sent out before fees were required for grazing on summer ranges.\textsuperscript{91} Certainly western stockmen in general were opposed to the forest reserve policy in the 1890's.\textsuperscript{92} By 1914, however, stockmen in Oregon admitted that the Forest Service was doing much to increase the carrying capacity of the range,\textsuperscript{93} and the general tone of an Oregon stockmen's conference in Corvallis in 1924 was one of commendation for Forest Service work.\textsuperscript{94}

\textsuperscript{88}Barnes, \textit{Story of the Range}, p. 41.
\textsuperscript{89}Ise, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 169, 263.
\textsuperscript{91}Ise, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 264.
\textsuperscript{92}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 121.
\textsuperscript{93}Barnes and Jardine, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 83.
\textsuperscript{94}O. S. A. C., \textit{Report of Conference}, 1924, p. 46.
From 1893, when the Cascade Forest Reserve was set aside, to 1915, the area of national forests in Oregon increased from 4,492,800 acres to over 13,000,000 acres—the increases coming principally in the Blue Mountain section and in additions to the Cascade Reserve. Since 1916 the area of national forests has been almost constant, approximating 13,500,000 acres. A notable exception is the Steens Mountain area in which former summer range was not included.

Having considered winter feeding and summer ranges lying within the national forests, we now turn to the great areas of land used in the spring and autumn and under some circumstances throughout the summer. This land falls into two main parts—that lying in the Blue Mountain section, and that lying in southeastern, southcentral, and central Oregon. Blue Mountain spring and fall range is almost entirely under fence and a part of home ranches. It consists of the sagebrush lands and foothills adjoining the valleys. The process of enclosing this land evidently went on gradually as the section developed after 1890. Now the territory included in one ranch sometimes varies so in altitude that an animal gets year-long feed at one place or another on the ranch and never leaves home until it goes to market. The cattle here are usually run in small bunches of 100 to 200 head; few outfits have more than 500, and none more than 2000.

Except for strips of land close to the eastern slope of the Cascades, where conditions are somewhat similar to those of the Blue Mountain area, the cattle country presents range of a very different nature. In Harney, Malheur, the eastern half of Lake, and southeastern Crook counties, conditions may be generally summarized as follows: In 1905 most of this area was considered “year-long range,” although parts of it depended on surface water or snow; the Steens Mountain was exclusively for summer use, and a portion in the western half could not be used in summer.

96Scudder and Hurd, op. cit., p. 15, show the national forests in Oregon in 1935. They also give a map, p. 36, showing the origin and movement of cattle grazing on national forests in Oregon in 1934.
Nearly all of this area remained public domain throughout the two decades after 1905. Of the total 16,000,000 acres, about 2,000,000 acres were fenced grazing, hay, or farm land in 1925. Of the remaining 14,000,000 acres, over 11,500,000 were public domain, 500,000 state lands, and the rest deserted homesteads, lying open and used in the same way as the public domain.  

No form of control being in operation, it has been grazed from year to year by the cattle or sheep that reached it first. Since the area is one great rolling plain, cattle turned onto it have been free to rang over almost all of it. It is in this district that the worst overgrazing in Oregon has taken place.

The region started with some natural advantages for forage. Its rough and broken surface, called “malpais” by cattlemen, could withstand more hard grazing without harming the forage plants trampled out than any other formation. Although the district never had grass in sod, it was covered with bunch grass. In some places lack of water kept stock off during much of the grazing season; and in other places, especially in the early days of the period under discussion, some of the shrubbery was of a type not relished by cattle when better feed was available elsewhere. The growing season is short; but the grass, if given a chance, cures down and can be used through a long season. Yet in spite of all these advantages the whole area was declared in 1924 by stockmen to be practically worthless.

At present . . . the competition is such that grass is consumed as soon as it appears, with the result that there is no adequate feed for the remainder of the year . . . Although the grazing that is obtained is of little value and the better stockmen are using it less and less.

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98 Potter, op. cit., p. 18.
101 O. S. A. C., Report of Conference, p. 47.
In summary we find here a specific instance of the overgrazing that has been reported as a problem over large areas of the range states.\(^{102}\)

Evidences of overgrazing in Oregon are not new. Oliphant indicates that ranges were wearing out in the Columbia River counties in the 1880's.\(^{103}\) By about 1900, as the cattle concentrated farther from the old areas in the north, serious depletion of the range in other parts of eastern Oregon was evidently taking place. Official reports of the Department of Agriculture in 1898, and again in 1902, speak of overgrazing in various parts of the plains east of the Cascades and estimate that the public ranges in southeastern Oregon, due to overstocking, were furnishing only one-third of the forage that they formerly had furnished.\(^{104}\) Oregon stockmen, at the time of the investigations leading to the report of the Public Lands Commission in 1905, gave the following reply to questions sent out by the investigators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How does the grass and other stock feed on your range at the present time compare with former years?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poorer—61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has the carrying capacity of the range increased or diminished?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diminished—68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If it has been diminished, to what extent has this been due to overstocking?
- Overstocking—53
- Excessive sheep grazing—17
- Methods of handling—16
- Drought—9
- Premature grazing—5
- Settlement—5\(^{105}\)

There is nothing to indicate from what section of Oregon these answers came.

In 1914 another expert investigation was made by the Department of Agriculture. For the range lands of Oregon the conclusion was that 22.7 acres were necessary to support a cow


\(^{103}\)Oliphant, op. cit., pp. 112, 340.

\(^{104}\)Coville, op. cit., p. 27; Griffiths, Bureau of Plant Industry, Bulletin No. 15, p. 55.

for a 7½ months season. Most stockmen were reporting the con-
tinued deterioration of the range due to overgrazing, to the
growth of timber and brush replacing forage, and to settlers.
The replacement of forage by growing timber or brush probably
referred to summer range in the national forests where the in-
creased control of the fire hazard occasionally meant poorer for-
age. The few stockmen who reported increases in the carrying
capacity of the range attributed it to national forest manage-
ment, better methods of handling stock, or to the placing of
privately owned range under fence. The report concludes that
from 1910 to 1914 the range for the state as a whole had de-
clined 5 per cent, the range under regulation had improved 25
per cent, and the range without protection had declined 30 per
cent. The area referred to in the last category was, of course,
the 13,000,000 acres of public domain in southeastern Oregon. As
has been said above the decreases of beef cattle in Harney
County during the decade from 1910 to 1920 can be largely at-
tributed to this deterioration of the range.

The pressure of the war years was no help to the range, and
in the early 1920's there is evidence of continued range depletion.
At that time C. W. Hickman, Professor of Animal Husbandry
at the University of Idaho, made the following estimates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of range</th>
<th>No. of acres per cow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest range</td>
<td>30-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter range, 15 in. or more of rain</td>
<td>10-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter range, less than 10 in. of rain</td>
<td>20-25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He explains that by “winter range” he means the range used
for two months in the spring and two months in the fall. These figures apply to the whole of Oregon, Washington, and
Idaho; but as the largest body of this “winter range” lay in
southeastern Oregon, and in similar and adjoining areas in south-
western Idaho, we may assume that the figures apply to the

106Barnes and Jardine, op. cit., pp. 88-84.
107U. S. Congress, Senate, The Western Range, Sen. Doc. 199, 74th
   Cong., 2nd Sess., 1936, p. 130.
108Lewis and Miller, op. cit., pp. 78-79.
109Lewis and Miller, op. cit., p. 76.
110Barnes, op. cit., p. 25.
Oregon range under consideration. In general, Hickman says that from 15 to 100 acres were needed to graze a steer for a season, and that the range was in a serious state of deterioration.\textsuperscript{111}

In 1924 the conference of stockmen at Corvallis made a statement that the southeastern Oregon range was practically worthless.\textsuperscript{112} Yet not all of the cattle country was as badly off. Reports in 1925 from the Blue Mountain country indicate a different situation. There all the spring, fall, and winter range was under fence. Of the foothill land, which maintained some stock through the season, from April 1 to the end of October, there were needed between 15 and 20 acres per head. For an animal sent to the national forest for four months in the summer, 8 acres of deeded land was considered sufficient for spring and fall grazing.\textsuperscript{113} This figure of 8 acres compares favorably with the 10 to 15 acres needed at the same time for spring and fall range in southeastern Oregon, where, in 1926, Will C. Barnes found ranges excessively overgrazed but said that they still did not show the wholesale deterioration seen elsewhere in the country.\textsuperscript{114}

The decade after 1925 did not show any improvement in the Oregon range. In a Department of Agriculture report in 1936 all of eastern Oregon is shown as suffering from moderate erosion. Malheur County, some of the districts along the Snake to the north of Malheur, and the borderland between the Blue Mountain and Columbia River sections, are shown to be experiencing erosion so severe as to be silting up reservoirs and irrigation ditches.\textsuperscript{115} Finally, in 1936, a Soil Conservation Service pamphlet makes the statement that because of overgrazing much

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{111}Lewis and Miller, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 79, 86.
\item \textsuperscript{112}Cf. \textit{ante}, footnote 101.
\item \textsuperscript{113}Potter, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 1, 6, 10-11.
\item \textsuperscript{114}Barnes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 27.
\end{itemize}
of the bunch grass of the Pacific Northwest has succumbed to cheat grass and other weeds; and that, as a result, the producing capacity of the range is one-fifth of what it once was.\footnote{In a quotation from R. G. Johnson, Professor of Animal Husbandry at O. S. C., reproduced in F. E. Mollin, \textit{If and When It Rains}, American National Livestock Ass'n (Denver, 1938), pp. 32-33.} This might serve as a rather general but indicative statement with which to conclude this survey, but one note of current optimism appears. Early in 1938 grass seemed to "spring from nothing" in what had been the "barren wastes" of southeastern and central Oregon in 1934 and 1935. The grass was reported better than at any time during the past four of five years.\footnote{Evidence on these points will be found, for example, in Griffiths, \textit{Bureau of Plant Industry, Bulletin No. 15}, pp. 29-30 and Bulletin No. 30 by the same author, p. 20; \textit{Commonwealth Review}, Vol. XVII, Nos. 1-2 (March-May, 1935), report of a discussion led by Wm. A. Schoenfeld, p. 57; Langille, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 155; Barnes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 27. Note also that the area northwest of the Blue Mountains, where serious erosion is noted, is predominantly sheep country.}

It is not to be concluded from the foregoing paragraphs on overgrazing and erosion that cattle and the cattlemen have been the only or even the leading cause of these conditions. The cattle, of course, played their part, but sheep were equally to blame, if not more so, because of the plants they ate, the restlessness of their hooves as they stood close together during the hot mid-day hours, and the unscientific ways in which they were herded—especially in the early days. Migratory bands of sheep from other districts have also caused trouble.\footnote{Arthur King, "Wind Erosions and Dust Storms in Oregon," \textit{Commonwealth Review}, Vol. XX, No. 1 (March, 1938), pp. 400-403.} One of the most spectacular of agricultural troubles, the dust storm, has appeared a few times in Oregon and has been attributed principally to the production of wheat in eastern Oregon under the summer fallow system; but it is said that sometimes overgrazing destroys natural cover to the point that the soil will blow.\footnote{\textit{Mollin}, \textit{op. cit.}, \textit{passim}.} At times the stockmen have resented the "overemphasis" on overgrazing. In 1938, for example, the secretary of the American National Livestock Association, wrote a pamphlet entitled \textit{If and When It Rains}, arguing that the drought, not the cattlemen, was responsible for the condition of the range.
Although the establishment of grazing districts on the public domain was recommended as early as 1878, and periodically thereafter, the years passed with range on the public domain still free. Indeed, the federal government, in a series of land laws up through 1916, tried to make possible the settlement of this land by the homesteader, but since much of the land that was left in 1900 was suitable only for grazing, this policy did not meet with unqualified success. The range was not entirely “free,” of course. Individual stockmen obtained working control of large areas of it by getting legal control of the land on which the water supply lay, or by parceling it out among themselves by agreement.

Nevertheless, Oregon cattlemen for a long time asked for some form of government control of the range, and in 1903 went on record as being 81-4 in favor of it under reasonable regulations. Most of those voting were cattlemen. Twenty years later they were more emphatic. A group of stockmen at Corvallis spoke of the control of the 13,000,000 acres of free range in southeastern Oregon as the most immediate need of the industry in the state. Still no federal control was established. Public opinion on the whole looked with disfavor on what seemed to be an attempt by stock interests to monopolize land that had traditionally been open to the individual settler. Even when public opinion in the Northwest swung towards some form of range control, as it seemed to be doing after the war, there was no agreement as to the method of control. There were suggestions for selling or leasing it to the stockmen, or for allowing them to use it only with permits. Others favored enlarging still further the area that could be taken up under homestead law, so that a prospective cattleman could put under fence an area large enough to allow profitable cattle raising. In 1921, Mr. Sinnott, of Oregon, introduced a bill into the House of Representatives to authorize and regulate the grazing of livestock on the public domain, but it came to nothing.

121 Gates, op. cit., pp. 70-74.
124 O. S. A. C., Report of Conference, p. 46.
125 Lewis and Miller, op. cit., pp. 79-80.
126 Barnes, op. cit., p. 55.
There was, however, continued agitation, and in 1934 the Taylor Grazing Act became law. This authorized the withdrawal of 80,000,000 acres of the public domain from entry, and its organization into grazing districts by the Department of the Interior. The Secretary of the Interior was designated to regulate and control the use of the range. He was authorized to issue grazing permits, carry on soil erosion experiments, develop the water resources of the range, and otherwise improve it. Two years later the 80,000,000 acre limit was extended to 142,000,000 acres, an amendment that allowed the inclusion of practically all the rest of the public lands of any value.127 On November 26, 1934, and February 5, 1936, two executive orders from Washington withdrew from entry almost all of the remaining lands.128

Under the Taylor Act the uncontrolled use of the 13,000,000 acres of Oregon public domain was eliminated. Individual or small groups of stockmen in various districts were put in charge of the range in their area, and the practice was begun of charging fees for the use of the domain for grazing purposes. Of these fees 25 percent went to Washington for administration purposes; the remainder returned to local Oregon communities for range improvements. At the same time, the United States Division of Grazing, of the Department of the Interior, took 16,-000 acres of land near Burns in Harney County and began to install fences, wells, reservoirs, laboratories, and all the equipment necessary for experiments in stock and range handling.129

But in Oregon the program under the Taylor Act on the public domain has been hardly more important than the work being done under the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act for private range owners. In 1936 the state had 1,179 co-operators who owned a total of 3,512,029 acres; in 1937 an estimated 1,718 co-operators, with a corresponding increase in

128Ibid., p. 83.
129Ray George Johnson, “Some Oregon Grazing Problems,” Common-wealth Review, Vol. XIX, No. 4. (Nov., 1937), p. 266. A map showing the boundaries of districts set up under the Taylor Act and giving other data on the Oregon range may be found in the Oregon State Planning Board’s Development of Watering Places on the Oregon Range (Salem, 1937).
acreage, were working on range improvement. The federal government shares in the expense of reseeding land, boxing springs, fighting rodents, and other operations that are of benefit to the state as a whole, and especially to stockmen; but that few stockmen feel able to finance entirely themselves.\footnote{130}{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 265.}

Other agencies are carrying on or extending their work. The Forest Service is continuing to push its own range improvement program. The Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station, which has been studying Oregon’s problems in this line for years, is now working on an even more extensive range and range-livestock research program. Meanwhile the Eastern Oregon Livestock Experiment Station at Union is working on the summer range in the Whitman National Forest, and the Federal Extension Service is carrying on reseeding studies in every range county in the state. The Rural Resettlement Administration has put grazing under control and has started a reseeding program on some abandoned grain lands in Jefferson County; the United States Biological Survey, the CCC, and the Soil Conservation Service are also working on the problem. Even the state range lands have been brought under control and are being leased for grazing purposes. \footnote{131}{\textit{Johnson, op. cit.}, pp. 265-7.} "In Oregon every agency having to do with the range forage, whether public or private, is united for the first time in a greatly accelerated, closely co-ordinated program . . ."\footnote{131}{\textit{Johnson, op. cit.}, pp. 265-7.} The Oregon range would seem finally to be under control!

It will not be out of order, perhaps, to close this account of the use of the Oregon range with the reproduction of a table from E. L. Potter’s study of the costs of producing eastern Oregon beef. Not only will these tables serve to recapitulate much that has been said about winter feeding and grazing, but also they may remind the reader of certain differences in methods that have been shown to exist between the Blue Mountain and southeastern sections. The study was made in 1925.
COST OF RUNNING MIXED HERD IN THE BLUE MOUNTAIN
COUNTRY, OCTOBER TO OCTOBER.

**Running Expenses**

- Hay for winter, 1 ton at $8: $8.00
- Cost of feeding hay at $1 per ton: $1.00
- Bull costs: $0.65
- Salt: $0.25
- Riding and putting out salt: $1.50
- Taxes on cattle at 86c per head: $0.86
- Taxes on 8 acres grazing land at 11c per acre: $0.88
- Forest grazing fees, 5 1/4 months at 12c: $0.60

**Total running expenses:** $13.80

**Investment Expenses**

- Interest on cattle, 8% of $60: $4.80
- Interest on 8 acres of land at $7 an acre at 5%: $2.80

**Total investment expenses:** $7.60

**Total all expenses:** $21.40

COST OF RUNNING A MIXED HERD ON FREE RANGE,
OCTOBER TO OCTOBER

**Running Expenses**

- Hay for winter, 1 ton at $6 per ton: $6.00
- Cost of feeding hay at $1 per ton: $1.00
- Bull costs: $0.65
- Salt: $0.25
- Riding and putting out salt: $1.50
- Taxes on cattle at 86c per head: $0.86
- Taxes on 4 acres grazing land at 11c per acre: $0.44

**Total running expenses:** $10.70

**Investment Expenses**

- Interest on cattle, 8% of $50: $4.00
- Interest on 4 acres land at $7 an acre at 5%: $1.40

**Total investment expenses:** $5.40

**Total all expenses:** $16.10

Potter points out that there is no evidence on the whole that the free range men in southeastern Oregon had any advantage. His reasoning on this point may be summarized as follows: With a calf crop averaging 65 percent, with annual losses averaging 5 percent, and with an annual turnover of 23.7 percent,

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132 Potter, op. cit., p. 7.
133 Potter, op. cit., p. 19.
the total cost of each animal sold in the Blue Mountain section would be $21.40 divided by .237 or $90.30. In southeastern Oregon the calf crop averaged 50 to 55 percent, and steers were not usually sold until they were three years old. The annual turnover here averaged 17.7 percent, which brought the total cost per animal sold to $90.96.  

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In the early days of the Oregon cattle industry the animals were sent to market on foot via Montana and other intermediate feeding grounds. These drives started in 1876 and reached their peak in 1880. But with the coming of the transcontinental railroad in the 1880’s, and with the subsequent rise of the consuming centers of Portland, Seattle, and Spokane, a great change took place in the marketing of Oregon cattle.

Part of the story is the rise of Portland as a marketing and meat packing center. There follows a table showing the total receipts for cattle and calves at the Portland market during the years for which figures are available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Calves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>15,600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>89,733</td>
<td>8,397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>88,139</td>
<td>6,818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>76,621</td>
<td>2,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>80,399</td>
<td>4,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>74,360</td>
<td>2,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>72,761</td>
<td>2,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>77,975</td>
<td>4,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>99,910</td>
<td>5,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>113,588</td>
<td>6,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>113,985</td>
<td>11,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>127,266</td>
<td>13,439</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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136 Figures for 1890 and 1896 from Morning Oregonian (Portland), Dec. 19, 1896, p. 9; 1910-1937 from Portland Union Stockyards Company, Annual Reports, Nos. 1-28, on file at the office of the Company in North Portland, Ore. O. M. Plummer, General Manager of the Pacific International Livestock Exposition, told the author in an interview in Sept., 1938, that records of livestock receipts at Portland before 1909 had been destroyed by a recent fire.
The Union Stockyards were established in Portland in September, 1909, but even at that time the entire state supported 11 small plants, mostly for leather manufacture, the total value of which did not exceed $100,000, and the total staff, 100 men. But in the following year the Swifts built a large packing plant in North Portland. The industry continued to grow until, in 1919, meat packing was the fourth most important industry in the state in the value of its products. On the basis of the number of cattle received in the years 1916-1920 Portland, although 30th in the list of the national markets, had become the largest market west of the Rockies. Incidentally, it had become the center of a group of cattle loan companies serving all the Pacific Northwest and parts of California, Nevada, Utah, and even areas as far east as parts of Nebraska and South Dakota.

By the early 1920's Portland, together with smaller markets in Seattle and Spokane, was absorbing almost all of the cattle from Oregon and Washington and was drawing also from Nevada, Idaho, Utah, and occasionally from states farther east.

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137 Portland Chamber of Commerce, Oregon the Land of Opportunity, p. 54.
139 Clark, op. cit., p. 732.
The fall surplus was sometimes sent east, and some of the cattle were sent to corn belt feeders or directly to Missouri River or Chicago markets. Except for these minor movements, and the fact that San Francisco and Los Angeles took some stock from the Northwest, this region had become a cattle area almost by itself, the cattle seldom entering general commercial movements. Prices paid, however, were fixed by the condition of eastern markets.\(^{141}\)

The times and methods employed to get Oregon cattle to these markets were studied by several livestock and price reporters and summarized in a Department of Agriculture Bulletin in 1916, along with reports from other states.\(^{142}\) Marketing of Oregon cattle was indicated to be more evenly distributed throughout the year than the marketing in the country as a whole. The 36.6 percent marketed in the fall was below the national average, while the 24.4 percent for spring and 29.3 percent for summer were both higher than the national average.\(^{143}\) The methods of shipping are indicated by the following figures:\(^{144}\)

- Shipped in carload lots by owners: 17.5
- Sold to regular local dealers for shipment to market: 23.5
- Sold for shipment to feeding points: 9.7
- Sold to local butchers for retail trade: 26.8
- Farm slaughtered and sold in carcass: 9.0

This report indicated that, on the whole, Oregon cattlemen were satisfied with marketing arrangements. The railroads, it was felt, were supplying cars promptly, giving good train service, and were settling claims in a satisfactory manner. Marketing service, too, was considered satisfactory. In all these respects Oregon stockmen seemed more nearly satisfied than stockmen in other parts of the country.\(^{145}\) In 1924 the suggestion was

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\(^{141}\) Ibid., pp. 556, 574; Lewis and Miller, _op. cit._, pp. 81, 94.


\(^{143}\) Ibid., p. 19.

\(^{144}\) Ibid., p. 9.

\(^{145}\) Ibid., p. 32.
made that more orderly marketing methods could probably be obtained by better co-operation and by following the advice of commission men so as not to glut the stockyards at any given time. But in general, marketing conditions in the 1920's were well adjusted. The variety of territory tributary to Portland meant that producers in each region could get their cattle to market at a convenient and profitable time and still dovetail their shipments with those from other regions so that there was not undue competition at any season of the year. At this time the Portland market was handling about 2500 cattle a week.

In conclusion a word should be said of co-operative marketing associations. The report of 1916 indicated that there were none in Oregon. Since that time three have been established. There is one in Baker County which has increased its sales from $14,731.66 in its first year, 1932, to $201,716.99 in 1937. Another, the Blue Mountain Livestock Association in Union County, had 395 members and sales totaling $226,465.20 in 1937. Finally, the Wallowa Livestock Marketing Association, with 1,025 shippers, had sales of hogs, cattle, and sheep amounting to $647,434.08 in 1937.

In 1885, Harvey W. Scott looked into the future of the eastern Oregon cattle industry and remarked:

"There will be no roving bands, no gigantic 'roundups,' no big animal drives; but there will be more and better cattle for market each fall, and they will yield a bigger aggregate profit than formerly. We lose greatly now by shipping or driving our cattle to other markets for slaughter... Stock and slaughter yards, at Portland, would be... a public benefit."

History has largely borne him out.

146 O. S. A. C., Report of Conference, p. 45.
148 Hall, Simpson and Doty, op. cit., Plate II, Fig. I.
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