

Payette, The Progressive Oil City of the Gem State.

EVENTS of the past few months in connection with the development of oil and gas deposits in the wonderful Payette valley have attracted the attention of the entire United States, but above all, justified the faith of those who for years have asserted in the vicinity of Payette would some day be discovered oil and gas in a field second to none in extent and richness in the known world. Those who had faith have opened up within Payette resources of incalculable wealth which will make that city the center of a great industry and in all probability, the metropolis of the entire Snake river valley.

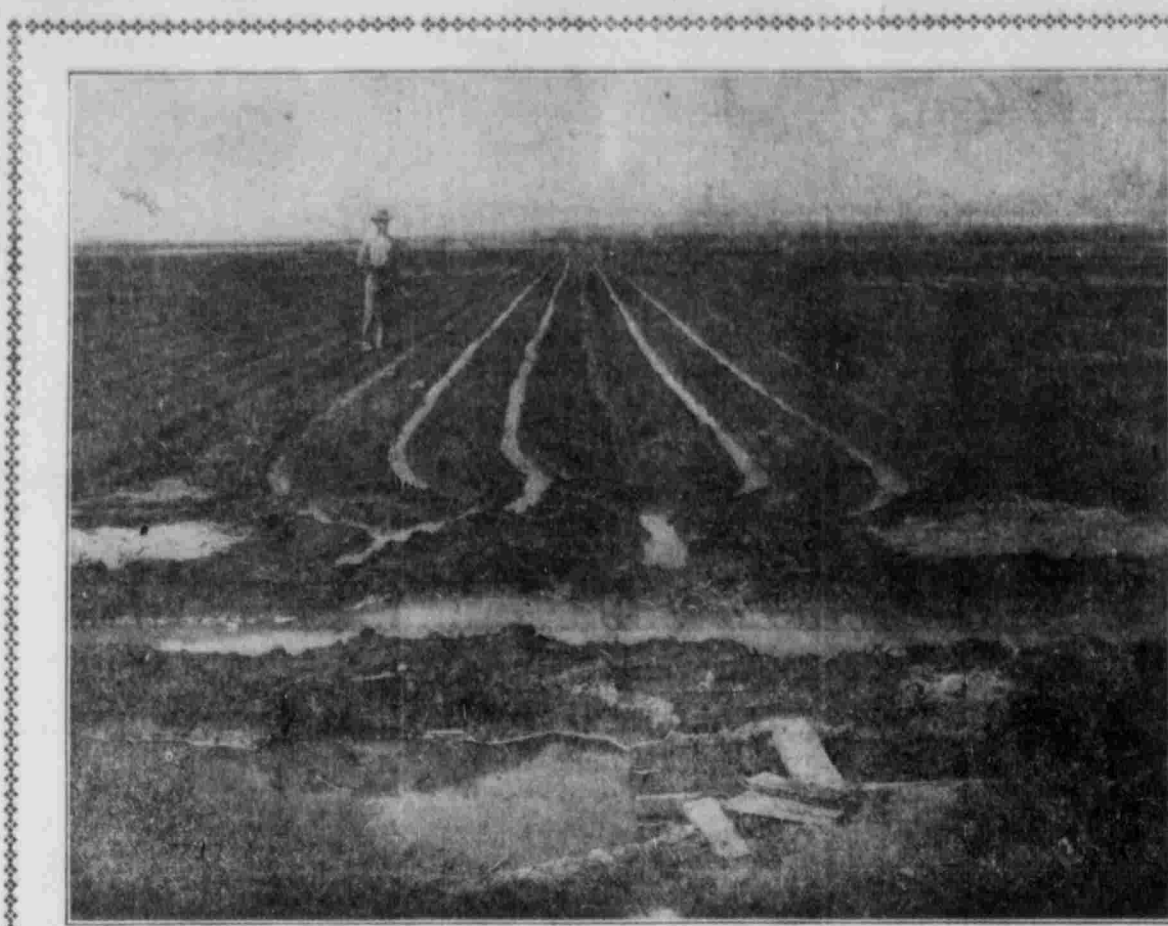
EVIDENCE APPARENT.
For years geologists—state and national—have repeatedly called attention in official reports—and likewise in unofficial statements—to the fact that geological history and conditions pointed strongly to the existence of oil and gas in large quantities in the valley of the Snake river in the vicinity of Payette. Apart from this there were many indications apparent to the eye and understanding of laymen. Oil seepages were numerous in low places and at points where the action of running water had laid bare the occasional outcroppings of oil sand or rock. Vegetation indigenous to oil bearing formation was abundant. Natural gas had been frequently encountered, and in fact several wells drilled for the purpose of procuring water for domestic use gave off a sufficient quantity of gas to light and heat dwelling houses; while the water in many wells smelled and tasted so strongly of petroleum as to be unfit for domestic or farm use.

It was not however until early in the present year that a thorough and systematic investigation and development

of oil. The first positive proof of the existence of a large gas body was spectacular and dramatic in the extreme. Early on the morning of October 18, the drill struck a very hard formation seemingly unlike anything which had been previously encountered. Those who were watching the progress of the work remarked that a dull, hollow sound accompanied each blow of the drill as though it was striking an immense drum. Suddenly the drill pushed its way through the hard formation and with a mighty roar, which could be heard all over Payette, the pyrotechnics began. The drillers in charge made a hasty escape, and the tools weighing over two tons, were left in the well, as there was no time to draw them. In spite of the great weight of the tools for nearly an hour water, sand, shale, etc., mixed with oil, was hurled through the derrick to a distance of over 150 feet in the air, by this immense gas pressure. The well was blown free from water and gas continued to pour out until rock and sand were forced into the hole from below, choking up the well. After the well became choked up the work of getting the tools out began and it was with much difficulty that this was accomplished.

FROM LOOSE AGAIN.

A few days later the well broke loose again while work was going on to clean it out, and the demonstration was even more spectacular than before. The picture published in connection with this article was taken during this second blowout. The well is now plugged as a matter of safety and precaution. Another derrick has been erected nearby and the sinking of another well will be under way very soon. The company has ordered many thousands dollars worth of additional machinery and ex-



A SAMPLE OF PAYETTE VALLEY'S FERTILE LAND.

that it has a great future. Already three or four of the largest operators from Texas and Indian Territory have made arrangements to carry on operations and several drilling outfits are now on the way, contingent to Payette. There are already four derricks up in the field and more will follow soon and an era of great activity is at hand.

CHEAP FUEL CERTAIN.

Already manufacturing interests attracted by the assurance of cheap fuel, are looking toward Payette. Experts representing manufacturers of glass have been upon the ground and found in the hills nearby the finest quality of sand for the making of glass, and as the glass industry is invariably developed in connection with cheap fuel, it is practically certain that in the near future glass factories will be established in Payette as well as many other manufacturing plants. It needs no argument to prove that cheap and abundant fuel will make a great city, and this Payette now has. And in addition to all this the hundreds of thousands of dollars that will be expended in this vicinity in the operations incident to the work and development in the field, all carried on from Payette, as the common center insure a period of growth and prosperity for this already metropolitan city. The one individual responsible more than any other for the actual discovery of oil and gas in Payette is Mr. C. W. Taylor, manager of the successful well which twice blew out.

But even aside from the recent discoveries of gas and oil in this great land of milk and honey, the general growth and prosperity of Payette since the last census in 1900 is phenomenal. When one considers that its population was only 650 in 1900 and that today very close to 4,000 is a conservative estimate, this indeed shows that the attractions must be many and varied and the resources plenty in the wonderful Payette valley.

Payette owns its own water works system and electric light is furnished by a company controlled entirely by local capital. Aside from this fact local ditch propositions for supplying water to the immediate vicinity has maintained, thus affording splendid opportunity at nominal cost to the small fruit raiser to prosecute the higher artistic cultivation of apples and caneberries for the ever eager eastern market.

Here in Payette are maintained extensive lumber mills and large flour mills operated by the wonderful supply of water from the majestic Payette river. Canneries in the interest of fruit raising are plentiful and one of the largest in the state is maintained by Payette capital pure and simple. Besides fruits this establishment cans tomatoes and beans for shipment.

One of the very important enterprises of Payette is a cannery. This undertaking is controlled almost exclusively by farmers of the surrounding country. Its record is one to be proud of.

One enterprise of which Payette is justly proud is its "radio" manufacturing industry. This is one of the leading industries of the state. This polished and cleaning powder is manufactured from the raw material taken from a volcanic ash bed a few miles from the city proper. Its sale is universal.

One thing which shows the true spirit of progressiveness of Payette citizens is the liberality with which over \$20,000 was subscribed in record-breaking time for a commodious Y. M. C. A. building, which is being erected with all the latest modern improvements. This splendid structure when completed will contain rest rooms for women and a public lobby for men. In brief it will be especially adapted to the needs of the community.

SUGAR FACTORY CERTAIN.

But perhaps of greatest importance to Payette after all is the fact that in the not far distant future a million-dollar sugar factory will be built there. In fact, excavation work would already be under way except for the fact that Payette was unable to supply the necessary labor. The proposed factory will occupy a tract 100 acres in extent owned by the Utah-Idaho Sugar company, very close to the city limits of Payette. A sugar factory will be built at Payette because the acreage is steadily increasing in sugar beet culture.

The fertile Payette valley has three-fold more water for irrigation than can ever be used. One-half of all the fruit shipped out of the state of Idaho is produced in this valley. Seeding is believed. One has but to get off the Oregon Short Line railroad at the wonderful city and make a trip up this great valley. This can be accomplished by taking a train on the Payette valley railroad.

In Payette they have an expression, "If it from Payette it's perfect," and in every sense of the well chosen words the phrase is absolutely true.

NO FICTION IN THIS.

When the story is told of the growth, the wealth and the possibilities of the famous Payette valley it sounds unreal in the ears of strangers. The land facts sound like the stories of the richness of the promised land. But all that is needed is a single visit to the valley and the truth speaks for itself. From five to 40 acres of land will enable any industrious man to make money. Crops never fail, water shortage is impossible; apples, prunes, peaches, pears, cherries, sweet corn and all kinds of vegetables grow there to perfection.

It is in this great valley that the Payette cantaloupe is grown—the famous sweet cantaloupe that has gained a national reputation for its deliciousness. Most of this delicious fruit goes to Chicago and New York markets. The fruits grown in the Payette valley are rapidly making Idaho famous. On every side are great orchards of beautiful red ap-

ples, whose flavor and perfection was favor wherever shown. Payette, Fruitland and New Plymouth have packing houses located on the line of the railroad where hundreds of cars of fruit are received from the farmers and fruit grower and shipped in carloads direct to the great eastern and foreign cities. Winter apples do well and pay large profits. The trees come into bearing at five or six years, and from that time the crop is assured for every succeeding year.

The climate in the Payette valley must not be forgotten in considering its virtues. It is an important factor because of its deliciousness. The land that is broadened into the fertile valley of the Payette is warmed in the summer by a sun that does not fatigue one by its intense heat, but which imparts to the growing fruits and grains the life producing substance that makes them thrive beyond all expectation. Little or no thunder occurs during the summer season. Cyclones, tornadoes and sun-

for 30-foot frontage lots in the business section from \$500 to \$2,000. Residence district property ranges in price from \$100 to \$500 per lot, according to location.

The Payette valley in a nutshell has an abundance of good water for man and stock, and for watering crops; good markets and excellent shipping facilities for all commodities produced. She has been awarded for her fruits enviable prize winnings—Chicago fair in '95—the Omaha exposition in '98—the Buffalo exposition in 1901, and at the Irrigation congress in Ogden, as before mentioned, in 1900.

Her lakes and rivers are densely populated with trout and other gamey fish.

The altitude of the valley is about 2,300 feet. The average mean temperature is 55 degrees, and it is in the same latitude as France, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, and Italy. Its annual precipitation is about 12 inches, the



MAJESTIC PAYETTE RIVER.

stroke are unknown. Plowing commences Feb. 1. Sheep men turn their sheep out on the ranges between Feb. 20 and March 1. The fall season is delightful and little or no wind blows at any season of the year.

Payette proper is 65 miles from Boise, the state capital, 460 miles from Salt Lake City, 435 miles from Portland, Or., and 415 miles from Boise, Idaho. Its site was chosen on the banks of the Payette river. One mile west of the city the river empties into the mighty Snake.

HANDSOME BUILDINGS.

The city's business thoroughfares are flanked with solid and ornate brick structures, for the most part, and are bordered with board concrete sidewalks. The streets of the residential portion of Payette are fringed with matured hard wood trees, and are embellished with handsome homes, of the sort, indeed, in which lives and loves unfold. And not a few of its residences are of the pretentious type that would adorn the avenues of any city.

Payette's educational facilities are conceded to be the very best in the great state of Idaho. Two magnificent school buildings cater to the needs of nearly 1,000 pupils and one of the finest modern public schools in Idaho.

It is likewise the proud boast of Payette that every section of the city is in the shadow of a church spire. In this same connection, every leading fraternal organization is represented.

Three hotels cater to the needs of the traveling public, the principal one being the Commercial, which is ably managed by Mr. W. B. Gilmore.

The city supports two newspapers—the Payette Valley Enterprise and the Payette Independent. Both are splendidly conducted efforts of the printer's art.

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CO-OPERATIVE DITCHES.

Most of the irrigating ditches are farmers co-operative ditches, and on cost of maintenance is the bare expense of keeping them in repair, which averages 50 cents per acre annually. The source of the irrigation water supply is absolutely unlimited, as the Payette river is fed by the Payette lakes and hence is greatly in excess of any possible demands that could be made upon it.

Under the system of irrigation farming, as much can be grown on one acre here as can be grown on four acres in humid districts.

It is not uncommon to gather from six year old trees 250 pounds of apples; from 10 year trees, 1,200 pounds. Pears and prunes are an equally profitable crop. As regards berries, as high as \$100 to \$500 per acre is not uncommonly realized.

Right here it is but proper to state that this year in and about Payette the farmers and stock raisers realized something in the neighborhood of \$1,000,000. All this money is being circulated in Payette, and most of it is passing through the two important banking institutions of the city.

VEGETABLES AND VINES.

Every kind of vegetable and vine grows to perfection. Wheat goes from 25 to 50 bushels, 40 to 60 being a very common crop. Millet, flax and all kinds of grain seeds flourish. Barley and rye also do remarkably well. Alfalfa,

three cuttings per season, yields 5 to 7 tons per acre.

Stock is pastured on the free range from 5 to 10 months of each year. Feeding and bee culture is successfully pursued.

The people of Payette valley, in five live near to nature's heart, and the industry of its farmers makes all the country side throb with their intelligent clean, growing and cultivation of the ground. And not only fruit, vegetables, grain and stock, but money grows there in abundance. It is heartening, indeed, to see these things where but a few years since there was but an inhospitable, sagebrush desert, but where new great enterprises are now born almost daily and unfold rapidly until they flower into splendid success.

FAMOUS PAYETTE APPLES.

No story of Payette and vicinity would be in any sense complete without relating that this year the apples from this section found the largest known sale in the history of fruit in the Chicago and New York market. During the apple buying season every importer importing concern east of the Rocky mountains had its buyers in Payette.

Payette being the natural reception room of the wonderful Payette valley, it is of interest to note briefly here the Payette-Raise project. This, as is generally well known throughout the intermountain country, is a stupendous governmental irrigation scheme for bringing 370,000 acres under cultivation.

OFFICIALS OF RAILROAD.

It would be unfair to write any history of Payette at this great Payette valley without saying a few words in praise of the officials of the Payette Valley railroad. Perhaps the most credit is due to the officials of the project, H. E. Dunn, who occupies the position of vice president and general manager. In reality this outstanding manager, actually now in the construction of the road and personally supervising every mile of its actual construction, all



LAND UNDER CULTIVATION NEAR PAYETTE.

All this means more untold wealth for Payette.

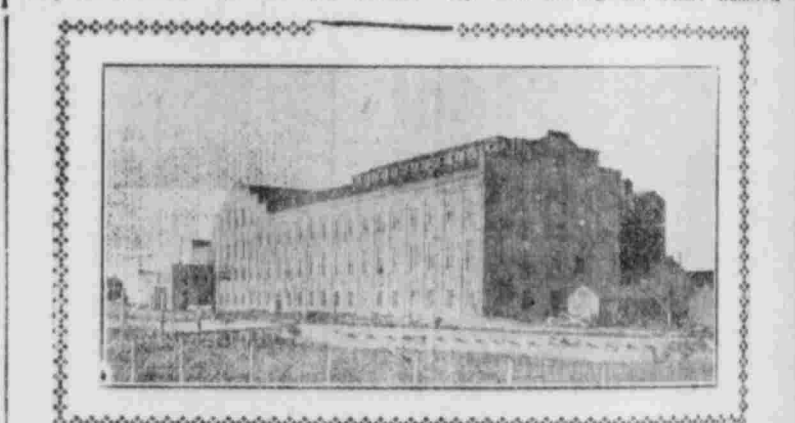
GREATEST BOOSTER.

For a long time Payette and its great valley made a wonderful growth under a strong handicap. This handicap did not affect the richness of the soil, the abundance of the water nor the superabundance of the products, but it did affect their marketing. This handicap was the lack of proper transportation facilities. The builders of the Payette Valley railroad saw the need of the valley and supplied its wants. This connecting link with the Oregon Short Line railroad, known as the Payette Valley railroad, or more familiarly called the "Punk-in-Vine," by Payetteites, extends a distance into the valley 13 miles, tapping the rich in fruit towns of Fruitland and New Plymouth. This road operates a triple daily service carrying passengers and hauling large quantities of fruit and general merchandise. During the sugar beet season one train daily handled from 15 to 25 cars for shipment to the factory at Nampa. In the not distant

his life Mr. Dunn has been a railroad man and his years' service with the Oregon Short Line railroad stand him in good standing when he assumed the difficult task of actual railroad construction on his own hook.

Another individual who was largely responsible for the construction of this railroad is Mr. A. B. Moss, the vice president of the entire Payette valley. Mr. Moss, besides his duties as president of the First National bank of Payette and head of the Mercantile company, finds time to act as treasurer of this railroad.

Mr. J. M. Bennett, superintendent of bridges in connection with the railroad, is another old railroad man who helped to build the Oregon Short Line through Idaho. Likewise Mr. Bennett is president of the Payette Commercial club, an institution which is known throughout Idaho as one of the finest institutions of its class in the entire intermountain country. Mr. E. Brannan, general manager of the road is one of the best known real estate agents in the valley and among his other numerous



PROPOSED SUGAR FACTORY AT PAYETTE.

future the haul will only have to be made to Payette, as a factory will be built there.

TOWN OF FRUITLAND.

Fruitland is a comparatively new townsite situated in the very heart of the famous valley. It has a very bright future. Packing houses have been erected and many store buildings are occupied. This site is ideal for a city and the Western Idaho Sugar company has a splendid automatic beet dump at this point. On every side of Fruitland the eye is greeted by slightly orchards and fields and long stretches of sugar beet acreage.

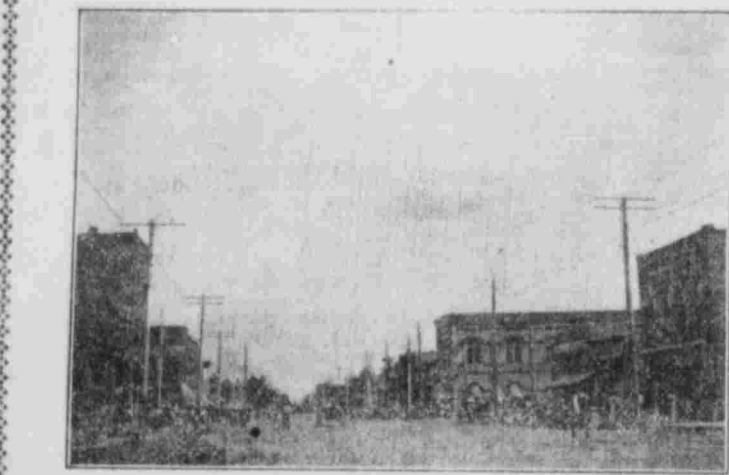
The present terminus of the Payette Valley railroad is New Plymouth, a lively place which has taken on new life since the building of the railroad. New Plymouth is a town of great promise; its future is bright. It is a town laid out and built after the ideals of a band of pilgrims who came to the Payette valley a number of years ago from Chicago. There were people who had grown tired of the turmoil and rush of the big city, and who came west in search of an ideal spot on which to build an ideal city. They came to the Payette

connections he is also secretary of the Fruitland Township company, land. The president and secretary of the road are respectively C. W. Soper and P. E. Murphy of Salt Lake City.

SPLENDID BANKS.

No Idaho city is provided with superior or larger banking institutions for its size. The important institutions of this nature are the First National bank, whose destinies are watched over by Mr. M. P. Allen, the able cashier, and the Payette National bank, of which A. P. Critchfield is cashier. Both gentlemen are experienced bankers and business men. Mr. A. B. Moss is president of the First National bank and Dr. Avey is at the head of the Payette National bank. The latter is likewise recognized as one of the best physicians and surgeons in the great Payette valley.

Perhaps no single institution in the great valley deserves more credit for upbuilding Payette than the Payette Land & Improvement company, limited. This company controls the original townsite property—or rather such of it as is still un sold—and there is no more enterprising business man in the great Payette valley than Mr. P. H. Brown, the able secretary of this leading company.



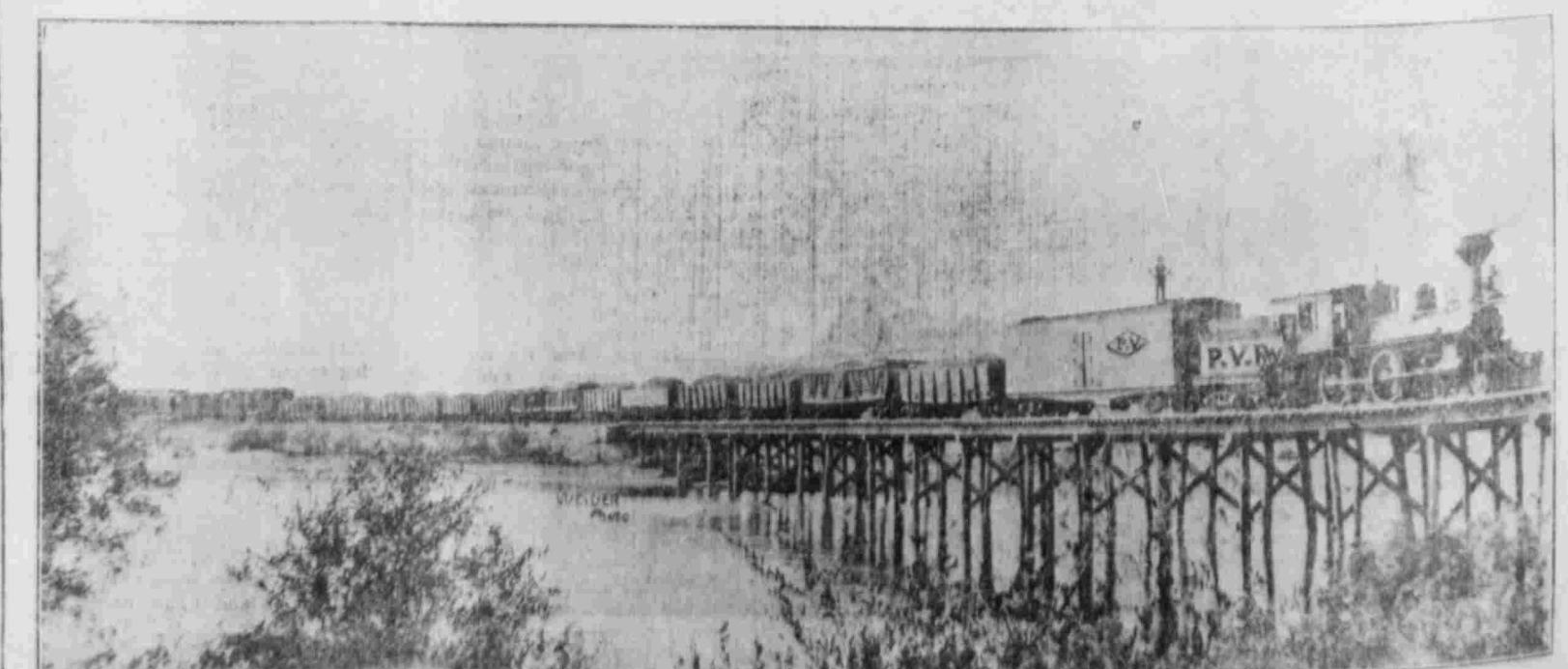
STREET SCENE IN BUSY PAYETTE.

was undertaken. The pioneer company to take up this work was the Oregon Oil and Gas company with headquarters at Payette. For many months before actual drilling was begun this company had competent and experienced oil and gas men upon the ground making careful and exhaustive examination into geological conditions as well as surface indications, and the result of these investigations tended so strongly to indicate the presence of a rich and extensive oil and gas field that the company at once placed in the field the best machinery obtainable and entered upon actual work of development. The point selected for the first well as possessing the best and most conclusive evidence of oil and gas was at Payette, Idaho, and it was there the development work has been carried on.

For several hundred feet the drilling progressed without encountering anything of substantial importance. The drill had penetrated several strata of sand carrying gas indications and traces



SECOND BLOWOUT OF PAYETTE OIL WELL NO. 1 AT PAYETTE, IDAHO.



TRAIN LOAD OF SUGAR BEETS RAISED IN PAYETTE VALLEY ON THE WAY TO THE FACTORY TO BE CONVERTED INTO SUGAR.