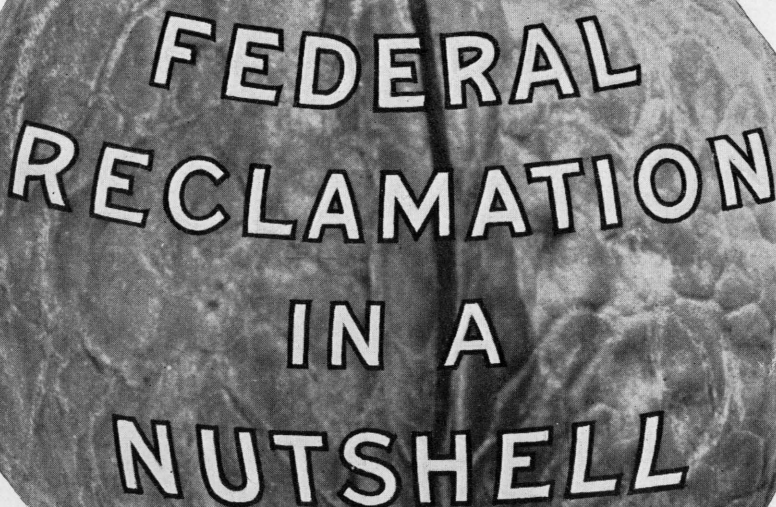


UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION



FEDERAL
RECLAMATION
IN A
NUTSHELL



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Secretary

ELWOOD MEAD
Commissioner

FEDERAL RECLAMATION



IRRIGATION as applied to agriculture antedates recorded history. There are evidences of ancient irrigation works of unknown antiquity on all continents of the earth. Laws are known to have been made even before 2000 B.C. to overcome the troubles and controversies in the use and distribution of water that were similar to those encountered today.

Early history.—The establishment of the Mormon colony in the Salt Lake Valley of Utah in 1847 marked the first organized effort in the United States by men of English ancestry to reclaim arid land through irrigation. These pioneers found that irrigation was necessary for their existence in the home that they had chosen, and that the irrigation canal must therefore be the basis of their industrial organization, which was largely cooperative. The Union colony at Greeley, Colo., was the second historic instance of the beginning of the present system. Similar development in California followed 20 years after the Utah settlement, with Anaheim as the mother colony. The utilization of the latent fertility of the desert for agricultural purposes through the construction of relatively inexpensive irrigation works spread rapidly thereafter throughout the arid region. Individuals or small groups of pioneers, even with the limited means at their disposal, were still able to divert the smaller streams and irrigate the bordering lands.

Soon, however, it became necessary to invest more capital, and companies were organized to carry on the work. The participation of the States in the work of irrigation was marked by the passage in 1894 of the Carey Act, under which large areas of desert land were patented to several States on condition that the land would be reclaimed by irrigation and sold to actual settlers.

The general economic situation led to the enactment on June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388), of the Reclamation Act, which gave to the Secretary of the Interior authority to make examinations and surveys for and to locate and construct irrigation works for the storage, diversion, and development of streams whose waters were running to waste and awaiting only the guiding hand of the engineer to bring them to the thirsty land.

Under authority of this act the Federal Government has constructed 27 irrigation projects. To insure an adequate supply of water, 55 storage dams have been constructed, with a combined reservoir capacity of 44,858,800 acre-feet. This represents water sufficient to cover the New England States to a depth of more than 1 foot. The constructed canals have a combined length of 17,600 miles, which, if placed in a continuous line, would extend seven tenths of the distance around the earth.

Quarter century's progress.—From 1906, when water was first available, to and including 1931, the cumulative value of crops grown on land irrigated from Government works amounted to \$1,835,889,877. Where comparative figures are obtainable, these are of considerable interest, hence the following table:

Area irrigated, private and Government projects, 1929	acres..	19,547,544
Area, State of Maine	do....	21,145,600
Area cropped, 1929, Federal projects	do....	1,512,250
Area, State of Delaware	do....	1,716,800
Value all crops in United States, 1929		\$8,088,494,000
Value all crops from Federal reclamation projects, 1929		\$88,459,390
Relation of crop values Federal reclamation projects to entire United States	percent..	1.1

Those familiar with the Federal reclamation policy realize that this is about the only Federal activity that by law is placed on a repayment basis, because of the requirement that the construction cost of the projects shall be returned to the Federal Treasury through the annual repayments of the water users. *No part of the expense of this Federal activity is paid by general taxation.*

The expenditure of the reclamation revolving fund and its reexpenditure as the money is returned by the water users has transformed a little more than 2,000,000 acres of desert land into valuable farms. The coyote and jack rabbit have given way to homemakers, who have built up and supported the cities of the arid West and created valuable markets for the goods of eastern factories. It has, by conserving the wasted water and idle land, added immensely to the wealth and resources of the Nation.

Irrigated farming where crops are certain has many advantages over farming where moisture depends upon clouds. It gives greater opportunities and rewards for intensive culture and the growing of high-priced crops.

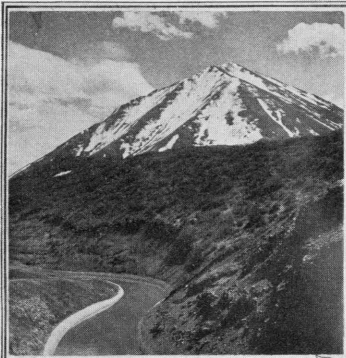
There are 42,000 farm homes on the projects supporting a population of 177,000. This development has created and aided markedly in the development of 227 cities and towns with an additional population of 515,000. The projects are served by 723 schools and 778 churches, which have been created as the needs have developed.

The benefits that have resulted to the United States as a whole may be thus summarized: Through Federal irrigation development the landless man and the manless land are brought together; the great remaining resource—water—is being utilized in the upbuilding of the West; new and ever-increasing markets for eastern manufacturers are being opened; taxable values amounting probably to at least \$1,000,000,000 are being created; and a sound investment with an assured financial return on the amount advanced by the Federal Government for this beneficial work has been established.

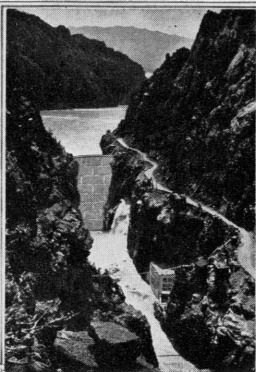
East benefits by western reclamation.—A recent investigation showed that 95,000 carloads of manufactured merchandise, valued at \$120,000,000, were shipped to stations on 17 of the projects, and that 113,400 carloads of produce, valued at \$159,000,000, were shipped from these projects. By far the greater portion of the shipments to the projects came from that section of the country located east of the Mississippi River.

In the year 1932 there were received on one of the Federal reclamation projects 1,317 carloads of merchandise. This figure does not include shipments by truck. In these carload shipments were listed such items as automobiles, farm implements, fuel, clothing, etc. One of the Federal projects received a carload of insulating board that was shipped from Maine. Thus Federal reclamation substantially aids directly or indirectly each and every State in the Union.

Continuance of reclamation vital.—No activity of the Government has brought greater private and public benefits to the Nation than have come from the money spent on these Government reservoirs. Many more are needed. Unless they are built scores of impoverished communities will give up and thousands of farms will be abandoned. This would be a national loss as well as a local disaster. It ought to be averted. An unhappy ending to the courage, sacrifice, and industry of thousands of worthy people who blazed the trails and began the development of irrigated agriculture would be a national calamity. The future of cities, railroads, mines, and factories, as well as farms of the arid region, rests on the measures taken for the conservation of the waters of western rivers. Water is the dominating factor in all its development. Federal reclamation is meeting a national economic need and averting a crisis in the business and industrial life of the arid region.

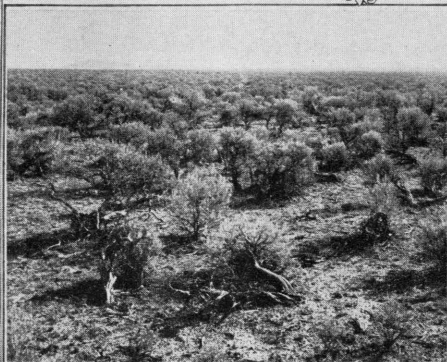


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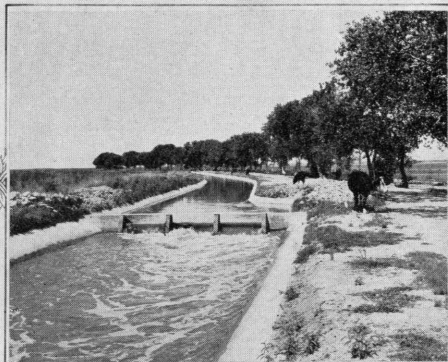


The Water Conserved

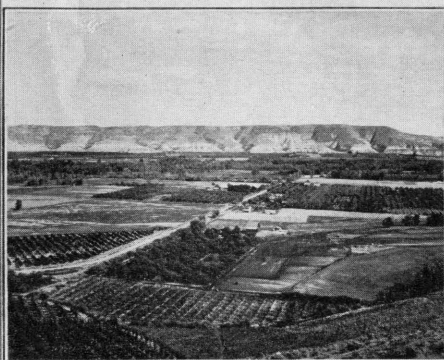
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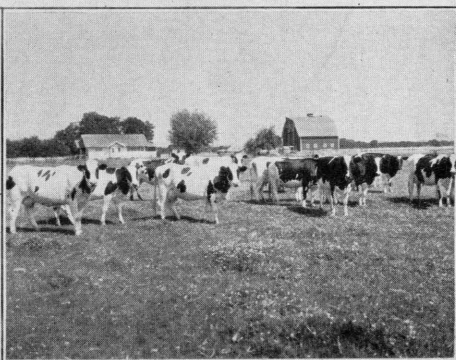
The Desert



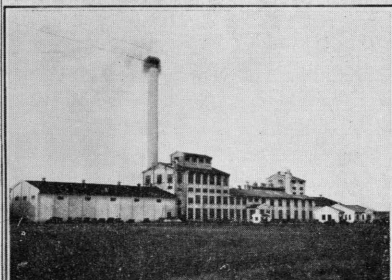
The Carrier



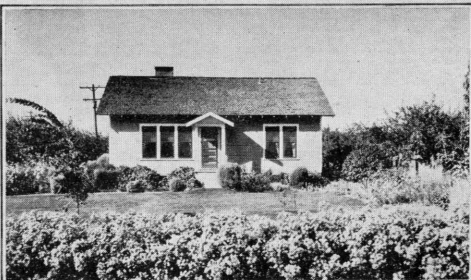
Crops



Livestock



Factories



Homes