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**PUBLISHED**  
*On the 15th of each month in  
 the interest of*  
**Northern Arizona**  
 and the  
**Yavapai County**  
**Chamber of Commerce**

# YAVAPAI

*A Record of Progress  
 in the*  
**Mines of Arizona**  
*on the*  
**Ranges and Ranches**  
*Subscription, \$1.00 Per Year*  
**AARON H. POWERS**  
*Publisher*

**A MONTHLY MAGAZINE**

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER APRIL 26, 1914, AT THE POSTOFFICE AT PRESCOTT, ARIZONA, UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879

Volume VI

PRESCOTT, ARIZONA, OCTOBER, 1918

Number 10

# HISTORY OF THE VERDE

With its big towns, with banks at Clarkdale and Camp Verde, with its hundreds of automobiles chugging in every direction, it is very hard to realize that only fifty years ago, the only inhabitants of the Verde Valley were a handful of settlers at Camp Verde who were kept busy fighting off Apaches.

When the first settlers went down into the Verde Valley, they knew they faced an ever-present menace in the hands of Apache Indians who, though not using the fertile acres of the valley themselves, resented the presence of the whites.

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## Difficulties Faced By Early Settlers and Conditions That Developed

By GRACE M. COUSINS

which was not abandoned until 1880. With the pacification of the Indians, the nature of farming operations changed. The plentiful grass of the free government ranges made raising cattle cheap, while the supply of water was inexhaustible. The ease with which cattle could be tended and the rapidity with which they increased, turned the attention of many to this business, so soon as cattle could be turned on the range without danger of an Indian raid.

As the years passed, the more careful of the cattle men realized the enormous advantage to be secured by raising alfalfa and grain hay for feeding their stock, when the grass was low. These men secured large holdings along the Verde, and today most of them are wealthy.

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The post at Fort Whipple had been established about a year when a party was organized to go down into the Verde. This was in January of 1865. The impelling influence was that wheat and barley sold for 30 cents a pound and corn for seed at 22 cents at the fort and that fresh vegetables were not to be procured at any price since all Prescott's supplies had to be teamed in over the desert from California.

### Verde's First Settlers

The party who went in over the Black Hills to scout out the best location for a settlement consisted of J. M. Swetnam, William L. Osborn, Henry D. L. Morse, Thomas Ruff, Clayton M. Raiston, Ed A. Boblett, Jake Ramstein, James Parrish.

The stones of a ruin built by the Indians whom the Apaches had destroyed hundreds of years before, was used in building a corral 60 feet long, 40 feet wide and about eight feet high. The wall was four feet thick on the bottom and two feet thick at the top. A well was dug to insure water and four cabins were built, one in each corner. This was on Deaver Creek just above the present site of the town of Camp Verde and was known as Camp Lincoln.

A party of five was sent to Prescott for supplies at the end of two months. The Indians threatened them but did not attack. When they returned, they brought with them Mrs. Boblett, her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Whitcomb, Charles Yates and John A. Culbertson. They also brought 33 head of cattle belonging to John P. Osborn and 12 head belonging to Whitcomb.

Water was brought from the river in a big ditch and by May 20th, over 100 acres had been planted in barley, wheat, corn, potatoes, beans, melons and garden stuff. Then troubles began with the Indians. The Apaches tried to run off their cattle and it was not until General Crook had thoroughly whipped the Indians, ten years later, that the valley was safe.

### A Remarkable Valley

The Verde Valley extends nearly 40 miles. From the upper reaches of Oak Creek to the Fox Canyon beyond Camp Verde, it presents a field of lush vegetation, that yields such enormous returns with so light an ex-

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HOSPITAL BUILDING OF OLD CAMP VERDE MILITARY POST

penditure of labor as to be really remarkable.

There are now 67 irrigating ditches and systems in the Verde Valley and a number of artesian wells. Nevertheless, only a small part of this enormous garden patch is being cultivated. The books of Assessor C. E. Gentry show that of 20,000 acres assessed against various small and large holdings, only about 10,000 are under cultivation.

In the past two years, the big spender of the United Verde Extension company and its railroad has resulted in the springing up of Verde and Cottonwood, two twin cities. It has also resulted in a splendid and permanent growth for Camp Verde and Clarkdale and all the neighboring farming land. The Verde was prosperous before with its enormously rich cattle ranges behind it and its never failing water. It is booming today since a market has been built at its very door, and the railroad has been brought down to Clarkdale.

The Verde Squaw and Squaw Peak Mines are just about six miles from Camp Verde. Both have very promising outlooks.

In the foothills to the south Beatty Bros. of Philadelphia have a salt mine. In the old days salt was taken from this mine for the ranges. Nothing has been done in late years except the taking out of samples by the caretakers.

which was not abundant. With the pacification of the nature of farming changed. The plentiful free government ranging cattle cheap, while water was inexhaustible with which cattle could and the rapidly with water ceased, turned the attention to this business as it could be turned on the danger of an Indian raid.

As the years passed, the full of the cattle men, enormous advantage to raising alfalfa and feeding their stock, which was low. These men's holdings along the Verde, most of them are small.

### Another Change

The men with small holdings a ready market. They were willing to put an increase of their own upon the amount of work willing to do. The men also near the Verde faster than the supply.

The Verde Valley is American community of few foreigners among them of the district. Most Italian and French, and some.

### Market of the

Fruit buyers from Verde are laying in the Verde at good prices. Those they market all try, selling some in some in the Verde Valley part of the peach crop the same way. The Santa Fe that comes connects the farmer of the outside world.

The people about Clarkdale and in the Verde generally, find a ready market at Jerome.

Those along Oak Creek crops to Flagstaff, Will Park.

The Lower Verde are ready sale for what Camp Verde itself and Mayer and Dewey, product reaches Prescott.

A few years ago W. opened up the Clear Company to take care of fruit in the Verde. The company has markets throughout.

The cannery closed on account of the high price of cans and Mr. Wingfield is plant an evaporator to take year's fruit. This will materially

### Increasing Population

As the population of the cities on the plateau through which the Verde of the Verde is carved has increased, the cultivation of the lands of the Verde Valley has become more intensive. Already quite a number of flowing artesian wells have been developed, which have enabled the settlers to put under water, with very little expense, lands on the second bench.

The time is not far distant when thousands of acres of land lying along the upper benches of the Verde, which are now neglected because water cannot be made to run over them without exertion, will be under irrigation. This will follow since the value of the land will be such that the owners will find it unprofitable to let it lay idle, or let it be used only for grazing.

Even now the older settlers are increasing the amount of land they have under irrigation. Before ten years have passed, the extent of land under irrigation will be easily doubled, and the values of the older places will be greatly increased.

### Cattle Business Started

In the beginning, the first settlers turned their attention to the production of hay, grain and vegetables, for which they had a ready market at Prescott, and later at the four company post, which the government established at Camp Verde, and