

## What Lay Behind a Brief News Item



Young Orchards at Walhachin

Something less than a week ago—on Friday morning last, to be strictly accurate—an item appeared in The Colonist's news columns, and also in the columns of sundry other leading newspapers of British Columbia, reading as follows:

"It has been decided by the Government to proceed as soon as low water permits with the erection of a first class steel bridge to span the Thompson at Pennys, giving access to the valuable properties of the British Columbia Horticultural Estates, Ltd., upon which large development has recently been carried out. The bridge will replace the ferry heretofore maintained, the extensive operations of the interested colonization and development companies rendering better facilities of communication imperative. Plans for the bridge are now in preparation by direction of the minister, and it is expected that its construction will involve an expenditure of approximately \$30,000. Access will be given to a large and very valuable irrigated area."

Now the Government of this Province does not build costly steel bridges across such noble waterways as the Thompson without very good and sufficient reason, and between the lines of the progress-denoting item that has been quoted above, one may read a story of success in colonization and development which illustrates in most effective manner how much well-directed private enterprise may in a comparatively short time accomplish in giving to this new country industrial population, and at the same time enabling scores of newcomers from more congested lands under the British flag to make for themselves new homes and dependable incomes under conditions decidedly congenial and attractive. What the bringing in of such recruits to swell the provincial population means in the working out of British Columbia's destinies may be left for the publicists and students of political economy to elaborate as the subject deserves.

The enterprise of the British Columbia Horticultural Estates, Limited, is one of the several large undertakings for which the activities of the British Columbia Development Association, Limited, with headquarters in the city of Victoria, is responsible. It is an enterprise of colonization by true-blooded Englishmen of the better class, worked out with excep-

conservative type, the construction of immense irrigation works to transform a semi-arid desert into a pleasant garden, the creation of an important industry which must be perpetually contributory to the trade revenues of the coun-

try, and the building of a new town with distinctive and attractive individuality. Such a commercial policy as here exemplified by the British Columbia Development Association, and its subsidiary, the British Columbia Horticultural Estates, Limited, is on the lines of solid Empire-building, devoid of bombast or chicanery. It is worthy of more than casual observation in its relationship to the ultimate future of this westernmost province as an integral portion of Greater Britain.

The Walhachin Estate is situated on the famous Thompson river, sixteen miles to the east of Ashcroft, the town made famous by its production of Murphies—both human and vegetable. Originally the estate was a well-known cattle ranch owned and directed by Charles Penny, and went quite naturally by the name of "Penny's Ranch," the railway at its advent conveniently christening the adjacent station "Pennys." In the spring of 1908 the British Columbia Development Association purchased the ranch from Mrs. Penny, who survived her husband, and also acquired approximately three thousand acres of bench land on the opposite side of the river, with a view to the conversion of the whole into improved fruit lands. A subsidiary company was organized, now known as the British Columbia Horticultural Estates, Ltd., and this secondary company ever since has been energetically employed in the installation of a first class irrigation system on both sides of the river, preparing the land for orchard planting, and placing upon the soil the best class of British-born settlers possessing some means, ambition, industry, and capacity for colonization work. Up to the present between four and five hundred acres have been planted to fruit trees, and this good work will be continu-



An Old Orchard

ilization. Freely interpreted, the word is said to mean "place-of-the-abundance-of-the-food-products-of-the-earth." The single word Walhachin is thus finely descriptive, incompar-

part divisible into the popular and practicable 10-acre plots.

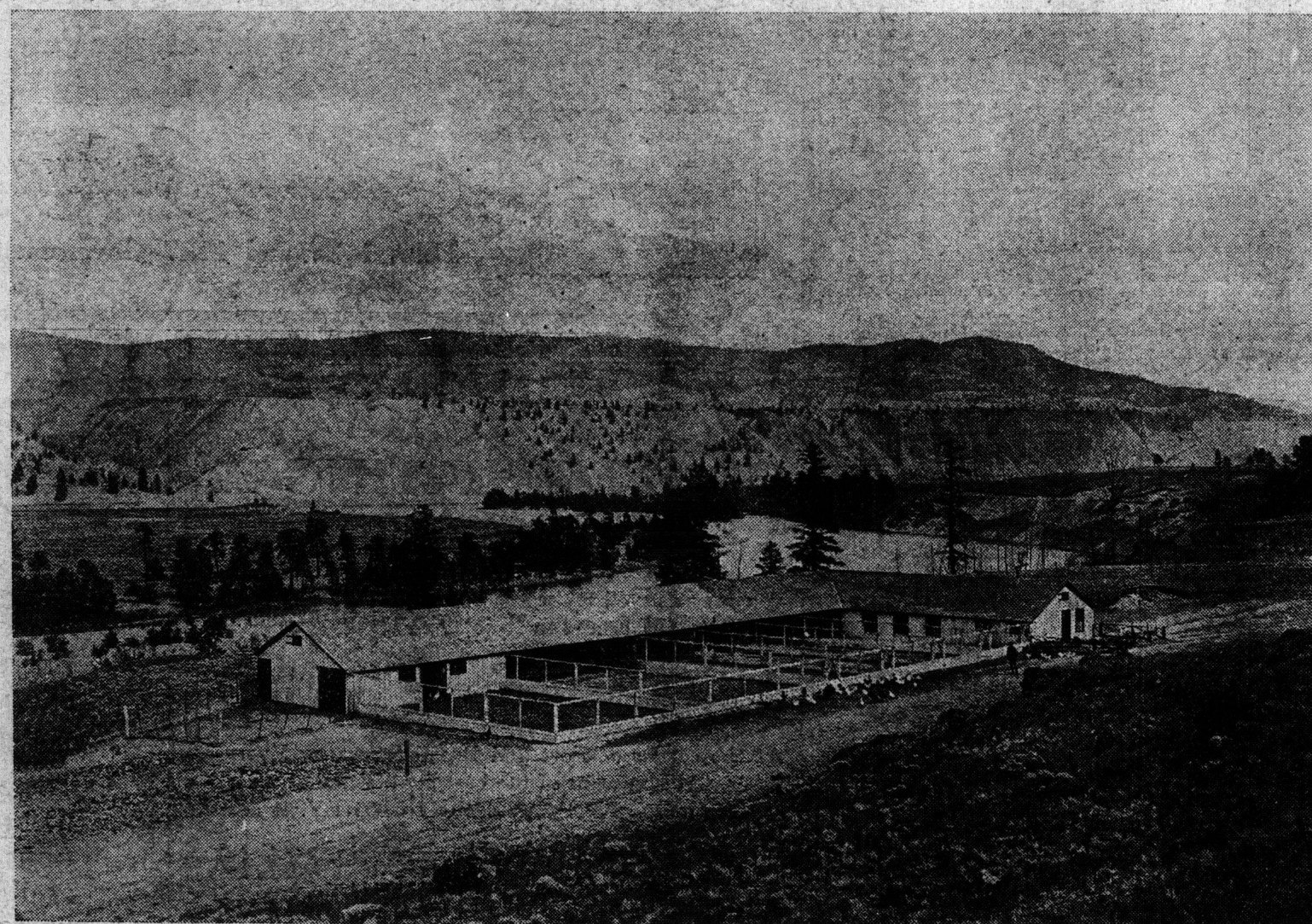
On the southerly side of the river, the land lies at an altitude of about 1,000 feet above sea level, rising on the northerly side to about 1,350 feet. Water for irrigation of this extensive area is had from Barnes creek, on the south side of the river, and Deadman's creek, on the north side, a storage dam being under construction at the headwaters of the latter for the purpose of conserving the abundant waters of Snohosh lake, from which the creek takes its course. Provision will thus be made for the storage of an abundant supply of water for the irrigation of the lands on both sides of the river at all seasons and under the most adverse "dry year" conditions.

The distribution system has involved construction of no less than ten miles of ditch and five-and-a-half miles of flume, the latter six feet in width by four in depth—from which some slight conception of the magnitude of the project in hand may fairly be formed.

The machinery employed in the bringing of the land under tribute to human needs and purposes is also of the most modern and effective order, including a battery of gasoline motor plows, one giant among them turning no fewer than a dozen furrows at a time.

The lands are not sold to colonists "in the raw," but plowed and ready for planting. Indeed, in the majority of cases, the properties are disposed of already planted to the selected varieties of shipping fruits that expert judgment, experience and experiment have found superlatively adapted to prevailing conditions of the soil and climate. Nor are the purchasers at any time—in England, where their interest in Walhachin is usually first attracted through the company's well organized publicity agencies, or upon arrival—pressed to invest their money in the properties offered, without a personal inspection and full investigation of all conditions of residence and the modernized business of fruit growing for profit, which is also a pleasant avocation. In very many cases (in fact all others are the exceptions) the interested would-be-colonist comes first to Walhachin and is given employment by the company, the while he looks about him, adapts himself to the alluring new conditions, and learns by both example and precepts the formula of success.

Apples will chiefly constitute the fruit crops of the spreading Walhachin orchards, there being already no less an area than 450 acres planted, whereon are found but six au-



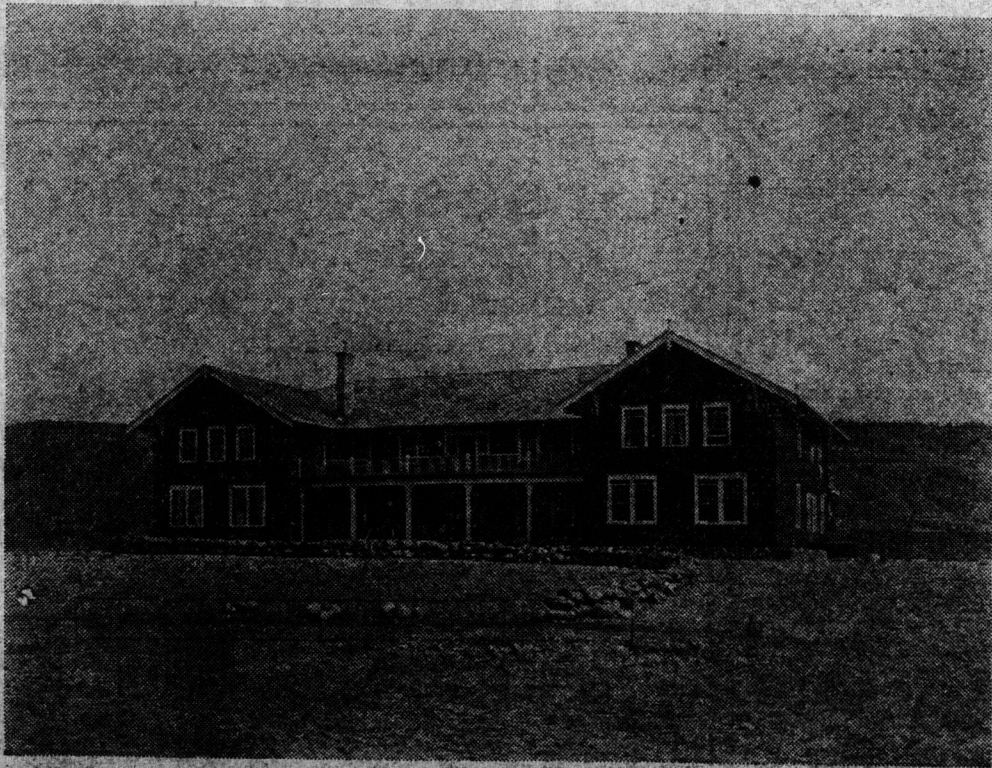
A Chicken Ranch at Walhachin

ously pursued until the entire estate is transformed into a gardenland.

The irrigation work and local management have been in the charge of Mr. C. E. Barnes, C.E., and the results obtained speak highly for that gentleman's specialized ability in his allotted field.

The company has also laid out a pretty townsite at Walhachin (once known as Penny's station), on the main line of the Canadian Pacific, and has established here a thoroughly first class hotel, at which the traveler and visitor may count upon receiving the fullest measure of comfort and unobtrusive attention. The townsite is situated virtually in the heart and centre of the orchard lands, so that the settlers have the unusual advantage of living in the town, with such facilities as the daily post, the telegraph, and the telephone, domestic water laid on, effective sanitation, etc., while being at the same time within easy access of their orchards and their work. The company is laying off the Estate chiefly in 10-acre orchard holdings, and settlers are coming in rapidly, the Estate having the advantage of a station on the C. P. R. main line, which is also very centrally situated in so far as the orchards are concerned—an important factor in its relationship to future shipping. An inspiring view of the estate is had from the railway, and it is in fact about the only point along the C. P. R. which the traveler has opportunity to see the famous fruit lands of this Western Province.

Walhachin, the new name adopted for the town and section, is, as might be surmised, a true type-word adopted from the language of the aborigines, the Shuswaps of martial history and highly advanced (for red Indian) civ-



The Walhachin Hotel



Dining-Room at the Walhachin Hotel