

heavy walking plow, and a vee made out of plank. It was a very difficult job to get this road started, with what they had to do with. It took them all summer to get it wide enough for a hack or wagon to get up or down the grade. It was quite different from the road machinery we have today.

Another piece of road that was built by hand was from Antwyne Valley about one or two miles up Siwash Creek. There is a rock cut which was drilled by hand. The rock work was done by John Maage who had the contract. Dan Moffett and Earl Crist also worked on the project. The road was just wide enough for one vehicle. If you saw

our highways or today, 1983, we can make the same trip in two and a quarter hours and not break the speed limit of fifty-five miles per hour.

By Bill Rehmke

Editors note: The Rehmke family story can be found in the local history of Northeast Okanogan County, "Trails and Tales."

The early Siwash, Havillah, etc. road came into Tonasket at Third St., about where the Telephone office was located. There may have been an early wagon road that went up by Siwash Creek, north of town, past the old Grigware slaughter house and the Drew place.

County Road "Bits and Pieces"

From Interview, Jim Ramsey, 1983

When Jim Ramsey's father, George Ramsey, first went to work for the county in the Tonasket area, about all the equipment they had was a horse pulled grader, fresno, some slips, and a road plow. Much of the early day county road work was done by hiring local men, who used their own horses and equipment, to do the work. Floyd Hill of Loomis was one of these early road men. He used his four-horse team to pull a county grader. The county (probably late teens or early

1920's) hired a man locally, from each outlying area to oversee the work, and take care of problems, such as ditching water during heavy spring runoff. The pay was small and mostly on a "as needed" basis. George went to work for the county about 1921 or '22, as a foreman. Jim could remember his pay around 1929 was less than \$100.00 a month, and there was no overtime for the long hours put in. When the Tonasket area began to get their first motorized equipment, they got a

Model T Ford dump truck, which held a "whole" yard of gravel. To load it, the truck had to be driven under a gravel bunker and a team of horses would pull a fresno over a hole in the bunker to let the gravel fall in. The team had to be a pretty good team, and know what they were doing to be able to keep themselves out of the hole. Many a load of gravel was shoveled on by hand to fill mud holes. The foreman had to do everything in those days, even work alone a lot of the time. There weren't as many roads then to care for as there are now. One road the county had to take care of and plow before 1925 that they don't have to now, is the road from Tonasket to Republic. George was a widower, so sometimes when he couldn't "farm out" (find a baby sitter) his small son, Jim with some family along the road, such as old Anglin, or the Joe Hill place, George just took Jim with him in the truck. When Sam Farver was elected Commissioner about 1929, George transferred to Oroville as Foreman, and Harold Farver was hired on in the Tonasket area. At about this same time, the county began to get more motorized equipment. They got a "30" gasoline Caterpillar, which was now used to pull the grader instead of horses. One man drove the

cat, another the grader. Jim went to work for the county in Oroville in 1934, and he said he got to pick the rocks. In 1934, the county bought a couple of 1934 Ford dump trucks, one for Oroville, and one for Tonasket. Although they had a loader of "sorts", these trucks still had to be loaded by hand at least 90% of the time. The county bought a diesel RD6 Caterpillar in 1935. When Jim first went to work for the county, he had to work six days a week, and a good long month netted him \$57.00, which came to about 30¢ an hour, or \$2.40 a day. He drove a '29 Chev dump truck that held a yard and a half of gravel. Oroville's first Cat driver was Bill Carlquist.

During the Depression, the checks were interest bearing warrants and were hard to get cashed. Prince's store in Oroville would cash them, but it was in Canadian funds at a 10% discount. George was foreman in Oroville until he left in 1937. Jim also left the county in 1937, and went to work in various places around the country, until he returned to the county, Oroville area, from 1946 to 1952. Jim then went to work for contractors until he went into the Service Station business. In 1966, he went back to work for the county in Tonasket until he retired in 1982.

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