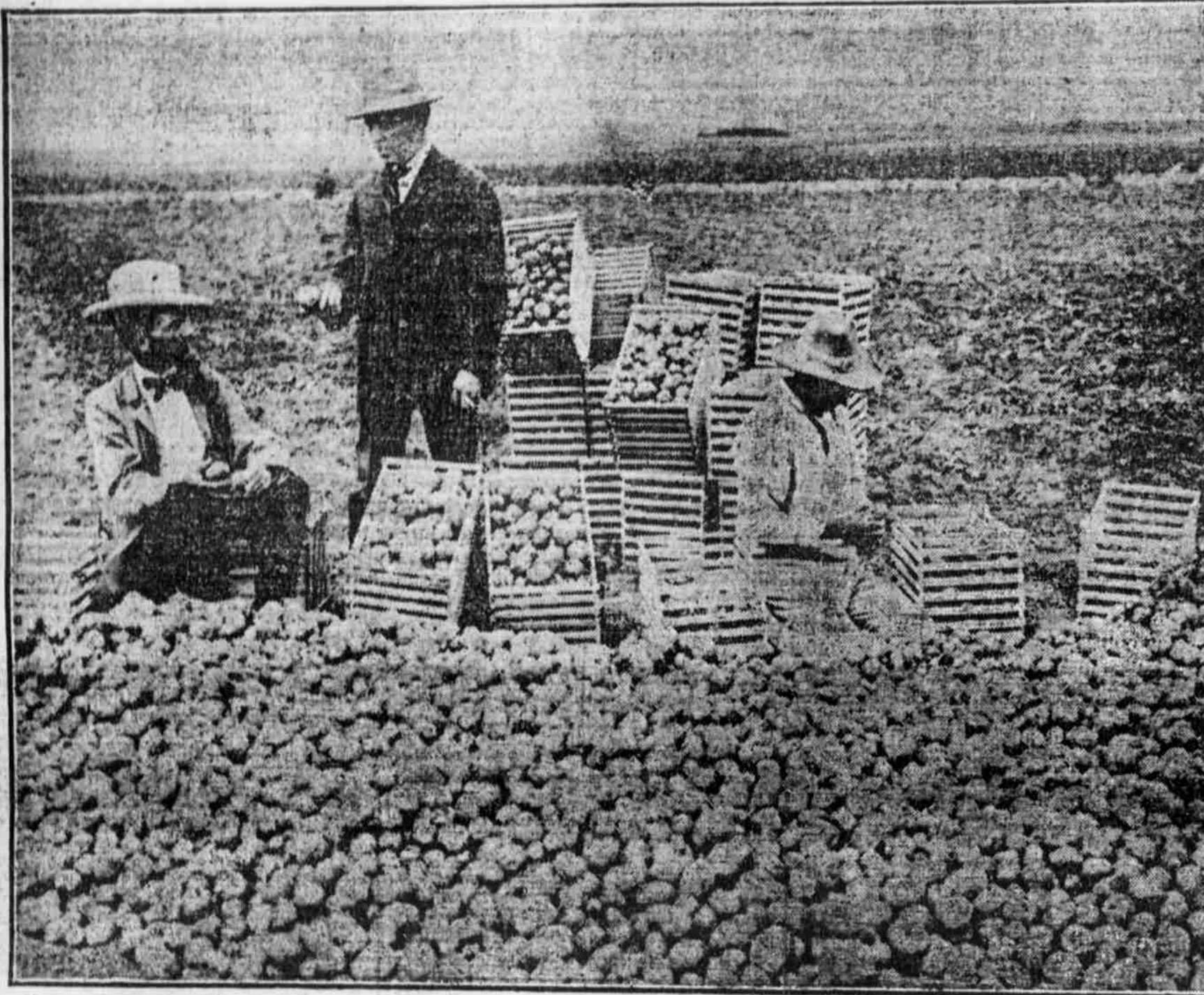


# MISSION HIDALGO COUNTY, TEXAS

# LA LOMITA RANCH LANDS

*Selected by the Oblate Fathers half a century ago from all the lands in the Rio Grande Valley because of the natural beauty of the landscape and exceptional richness of the soil*



New potatoes just taken from the ground. These potatoes were raised on land out of the La Lomita tract, owned by A. J. Devers, of Sioux Falls, S. D. Begun clearing the land November 3, 1908, and cultivated by his tenant, Mr. Wm. Volz. Seven acres planted to potatoes January 20, 1909, shipped April 20. Yield something over 700 bushels; sold at \$2.00 per crate f. o. b. Mission, Cotton is now planted on this land.

**T**HE attention of many conservative investors have been attracted to La Lomita Ranch irrigation enterprise, situated at Mission, Hidalgo County, in the lower valley of the Rio Grande. This tract of land which is undergoing marvelous development is most advantageously situated as to railroad transportation and the marketing of its crops may be done at minimum cost to the grower. The tract of land embraces 27,000 acres, which fronts upon the Rio Grande, thus securing for it perpetual riparian rights and an abundant supply of water for all irrigation and other purposes.

The fame of the richness of the soil of the Rio Grande valley has spread far and wide and need not be dwelt upon here. The equableness of the climate and the general healthfulness of the favored region are well established. It is a notable fact that the early pioneers—those good and devout fathers who consecrated their lives to bringing enlightenment to the people of the border region in the early days sought out the choice spots which nature had so generously provided in the region to relieve the unbroken waste of territory which spreads back from the river on either side. It was upon the tract which afterwards became known as La Lomita that the pious Oblate fathers established a mission and for forty years they have administered to the spiritual welfare of the Mexican population of this locality. Incidentally in connection with their religious work these good men demonstrated the wonderful productiveness of the soil by raising abundant crops of various kinds. It was the green fields of these Oblate fathers which made a veritable oasis in the wilderness of chaparral that first attracted the attention of enterprising investors to the great agricultural possibilities of the lower Rio

Grande valley region. They devoted their energies to growing products for their own necessities, as no market was available in the early days.

The Mission Land Improvement Company, owners of La Lomita tract and its large system of irrigation, were extremely fortunate in obtaining possession of a large part of the land which formerly comprised the holdings of the Oblate fathers, and of other tracts adjoining, making a total of 27,000 acres, for their proposed enterprise, is conceded by all persons who have investigated the proposition.

The natural lay of the land embraced in this tract could not well be improved upon for the purposes to which it is rapidly being put. It slopes gently back from the Rio Grande for a distance of more than fifteen miles, affording a splendid opportunity for constructing the system of canals and ditches for distributing the water over the land. The pumping plant is operated by steam and is situated upon the bank of the river, its site being ideal. It is located above any of the other plants now operating in the lower valley and thus receives its volume of water first. The plant consists of one 12-inch and one 36-inch centrifugal pump. When running only one-fifth of their capacity these pumps are capable of furnishing water to supply twenty-two miles of main canals and laterals for the irrigation of 7,000 acres. There has been sold up to this time over 8,000 acres of the tract, and of this amount about 3,000 acres are now in cultivation. Several thousand additional acres have been cleared and will be planted in crops during the coming season.

The canal system of La Lomita tract is one of the best constructed and devised in the valley. The main canal is sixty feet wide and the laterals are of sufficient width

and depth to freely and easily water all lands adjacent to the main canal.

The development work which has been accomplished upon La Lomita tract within a short period of time attests the activity and energy of the men who are interested in the enterprise. The first dirt in the main canal was turned on August 5, 1907, and the men who had already made purchases of land out of the tract began to clear their land and prepare for the use of the water that was soon to be ready for distribution upon it. During all of 1908 good crops were raised, and on August 22, 1908, the water was turned into the reservoir at the townsite of Mission. Since then the land reclamation work has made rapid and steady progress until now the vista from the new town of Mission, situated upon the railroad, at an elevation of about fifty feet, above the river, is one of beauty, almost beyond comparison. The wide intervening scope of country lying between the railroad and the river is almost under cultivation, and the green colors which the fields of truck and grain present to view are attractive to the eye and a rest to the brain of any man who is seeking pastoral scenes. It is a view that is especially appealing to

a man who is acquainted with the dreary aspect of the chaparral region of the lower Rio Grande before the work and ingenuity of enterprising investors who have faith in the vast store of wealth of the soil began to be manifested. The landscape of green fields is dotted with comfortable homes of farmers, practically all of which have been erected during the last year.

There is nothing visionary about La Lomita and its development. What has already been accomplished here in the agricultural line is only the forerunner of what will be done in the days that are still to come. The men who are so fortunate as to purchase a body of this land, even if it be only a few acres, will have provided himself with the basis for an assured competency for the remainder of his life. It is not a theoretical agricultural proposition. The results speak for themselves.

The growing of citrus fruits in the lower valley of the Rio Grande has been done in a small way by the native residents for many years and it is expected that this industry will become of commercial importance in the years to come.

It is in raising winter truck, however, that most remarkable success is had upon La Lomita land. Such products as Irish potatoes, Bermuda onions, snap beans, cauliflower, celery, lettuce, beets and practically all other kinds of garden stuff that finds a ready market all over the country during the winter and early spring months are grown abundantly and with big profits at La Lomita. New potatoes were harvested here this season which sold for \$2 per crate f. o. b. at the town of Mission, netting \$1,400 from seven acres. These potatoes were planted January 20 and were shipped April 20. This is only an illustration of what may be done in growing this as well as other products.

La Lomita land is also admirably adapted to grape growing. J. N. Kilgore planted a vineyard of forty acres upon La Lomita land and the vines are doing splendidly, their growth in six months being equal to 2-year-old vines in Southern California, according to Mr. Kilgore, who is a large grape grower in Lodi, Cal.

The practical success of growing grapes has been established for many years in La Lomita territory of the lower valley. The vineyard of the Oblate fathers at their mission is more than 20 years old and its productiveness has been constant and large during that period. The vines thrive to a wonderful degree and the harvest is abundant each season. The grapes of this vineyard begin to ripen the last of May.

The town of Mission is one of the most thriving of the several new towns upon the line of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railroad, in the lower Rio Grande valley. It was laid out about 12 months ago and the first train stopped at the new station of Mission on October 12, 1908. A handsome new depot has been erected at the place and a number of new stores established there. As a place of residence it possesses many advantages and its future growth is assured.

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