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CHRISTMAS BUYING

By CHARLES V. STANTON

Roseburg merchants report that Christmas buying, in dollar volume, will approach, if not surpass, last year's record-breaking total. Some business firms exceeded last year's mark, while others fell only a few percentage points behind. Counting sales for the entire year, however, 1948 is expected to surpass 1947 by a considerable margin.

Merchants unanimously report a definite trend toward more careful spending. Christmas buying this year was featured by larger volume in durable goods and lowered sales of gewgaws and gimcracks.

Christmas buyers also did more shopping around. Instead of buying the first article they saw, they traveled from store to store examining both quality and price. Merchants agree that shoppers also did more advance planning and had in mind what they wanted, rather than seeking inspiration as in some former years.

The trend toward more careful spending, it was interesting to observe, was not confined to adult buyers. Teen-agers also were in the more particular class, which, as one merchant said, indicates that the younger people are becoming more conscious of dollar values.

Another interesting angle was the demand for nationally-advertised products. Careful spending goes hand-in-hand with advertising. When shoppers are in the mood to use their money wisely they seek products having established reputations—reputations built through judicious use of truthful advertising. Such advertising paid off during the Christmas shopping season.

Merchants are quite optimistic about the future as a result of their observations.

People did not hesitate to spend money. Many gift items were large single purchases—household furniture, expensive radios, electrical appliances, good watches, fine jewelry, the best grades of clothing, etc. Careful spending did not mean that people were buying less expensive merchandise. They were, on the other hand, investing their gift dollars in the best merchandise obtainable for the money. This differed somewhat from the last few preceding years when shoppers would buy almost anything offered them, a condition which possibly resulted from habits formed during the scarcities of war years. With the market now more liberally supplied with standard brands of merchandise, people were shopping for the best available, at the same time showing commendable caution against waste.

Merchants believe that the trend by shoppers to watch their expenditures more closely, to buy the best products available, will have a stabilizing effect and will serve to retard inflationary spirals. A shift from a seller's to a buyer's market is obvious.

We Agree With This Writer

We have a communication from a writer, who, although he did not request that his name be withheld, did not expect us to use his letter in this manner, so we will not reveal his identity. He requested that we put his thoughts in our own words, but he expresses the idea so well that we prefer to use his statement as written, with our 100 percent agreement. Our writer says:

Recently I attended the Benehwarmers' rally in the high school auditorium where the various coaches and teams were applauded for sports efforts.

A particularly fine tribute to the senior high team and Coach Sherwood came from "Hod" Turner, who gave a brief report also of his junior high school football squad.

As the father of one of "Hod's" boys, I attended every game and had the privilege of watching and listening to Mr. Turner in action. Given an opportunity, I certainly would commend him for his excellent leadership, care and ability with the boys in his charge.

As an instance, Roseburg was on the long end of the score during a game with Myrtle Creek. In the last quarter "Hod" put his second and third string men into the game and allowed them to be pushed back for Myrtle Creek's only score. After the game he told me it was the first time our goal line had been crossed in two years, but it was the boys who mattered, not the score. Myrtle Creek would feel much better going home with at least one touchdown.

How many coaches would feel that way?

I have repeatedly heard Mr. Turner saying to his boys: "I don't care what the score is as long as you are in there fighting!" and he meant it; win lose or draw. What better thought could a boy take with him?

At the rally I saw a man greet "Hod" and afterward learned he was captain of Mr. Turner's first team in Roseburg 23 years ago.

I believe that a man who can spend 23 years in one town, taking boys away from "mother" and teaching them to keep fighting regardless of the score, deserves the highest commendation.

To our correspondent's words we can add no improvement other than a hearty "Amen!"

Slav Official Accused Of Trying To Embezzle Funds

BELGRADE, Dec. 27.—(AP)—The arrest of Assistant Finance Minister Blagojevic on a charge of attempting to escape from the country with Yugoslav government funds was revealed yesterday.

Dr. Blagojevic returned recently from the United States where he headed the delegation to negotiate turning over of impounded Yugoslav gold to this government. He was Yugoslav governor for the international monetary fund.

The president of parliament announced yesterday that the Assistant Finance Minister had admitted he intended to flee.

country and had embezzled from the state 1,200,000 dinars (\$24,000) and more than \$5,000 in cash on his person when he was caught.

OLDEST DUCK HUNTER
WARE, Mass. — (AP) — Game Warden Franklin Graves claims he's found the oldest duck hunter in the United States.

Graves made his discovery while on duty on Cape Cod. Coming upon a 76-year-old man crouched in a blind, Graves asked the old fellow how he was doing.

"Poorly," was the reply, "but my father's doing right well."

A short distance away with a rapidly filling bag of ducks was the father, William Swan of Reading—age 100.

OUT OUR WAY



BORN THIRTY YEARS TOO SOON

By J. R. Williams



By Vianett S. Martin

Serenely looking out from an oval frame is the lovely face of Josephine Crowley, for whom Josephine County, Oregon, was named. Not far from this portrait hanging in the main room of Wolf Creek Tavern, a stage-coach stop built a hundred years ago, is Grave Creek; so named because there in 1846 the young daughter of Leland Crowley journeyed on in another way, leaving mourning parents to inter a body beside a trail through the wilderness. Here, too, only four years later, the Battle of Hungry Hill occurred, sometimes called the Battle of Bloody Springs, which ended with six Oregon volunteers and three regulars slain.

In the old Tap Room of the Inn the present host, John C. Porter, has a most interesting collection of firearms. His explanations were mostly "Greek" to me, but not to EJ, who was more interested in the guns than in the other antique objects on display. Mr. Porter opened a box and put a queer little pocket pistol of large caliber in my hand. "That's a gambler's pet," said he, "the one he didn't check at the door!" There were two much alike: one was a derring, the other a four-barrel "pepper box" — at last I could visualize the weapons used so effectively by heroes and villains in Zane Grey's tales, and Luke Short's, and any other stor-

ies of the Old West which, according to market guides for writers, and also statistics on magazine sales etc., are becoming more and more popular. The reading public likes to dwell again in imagination in the Old West!

On the wall hung a weathered old "Zula," the first shotgun using shells after the musket type common until then. The gun lay up on the mountain side near Wolf Creek Inn for years, near an old gold mine, and was found by a friend of Mr. Porter. Judging by the way mine host handled the gun it is his "pet" of the collection. I was interested in holding a Sharp's buffalo gun because that was often mentioned by Mrs. Finney, the 92-year young friend whose life among the Osage Indians, with her trade-interpreter husband, I have spent much time upon.

But my delight centered in an old pewter powder flask dating back to the Revolutionary War; who knows, my paternal grandparent may have carried its duplicate!

I wonder if there was a larger key ever made, to use practically, than the enormous key used to lock a warehouse 15 miles west of Stockton in the old days? It is at least a foot long! The lock is in proportion, hammered out in a blacksmith shop.

Wolf Creek Inn (closed now until March) is a fascinating place!

for it, around the corner to the black market and sell it for 4,000 yuan per ounce.

MORE of the scarlet thread:

A million-dollar shipment of HEROIN is nabbed by customs agents on an incoming ship in San Francisco bay. The drug had been ingeniously hidden in a shipment of lumber. Its total weight is 104 ounces—about 6½ pounds avoirdupois.

The stuff is precious.

WHY is it precious?

The answer is disturbing. HEROIN (a form of opium) IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD AND JEWELS BECAUSE SO MANY PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO PAY ANY PRICE FOR IT IN ORDER TO ESCAPE FROM THEMSELVES.

IN Paris, a "citizen of the world" is facing trouble because he lacks a passport. Passports are issued by NATIONS. They give permission to citizens or subjects to travel from one nation to another.

What is a citizen of the world? Well, putting it bluntly, he's another form of escapist who is trying to shrug off the responsibilities of citizenship.

COULD go on and on with this. The news is full of it. It's LIFE AS IT IS LIVED, part good, part bad, some of it tragic, some of it unbelievably hopeful. The clock says my time is up, so I'll quit here.

DOG SUFFOCATES BABY
VANNE, France, Dec. 27.—(AP)—The family dog climbed into the cradle of eleven-month-old Marcel Raoul here today and went to sleep on the baby's chest. The child died of suffocation.

Feeding hogs on a clean floor saves about 16 out of every 100 ears of corn.

Editorial Comment

From The Oregon Press

TRAFFIC ENGINEER FOR SMALL CITIES

Eugene Register-Guard
From a representative of the National Safety Council comes a suggestion that small cities in Oregon should pool their resources to hire a trained traffic engineer to help them with their traffic management problems. Even in large cities, this important function is often detailed to a police official who may know little outside of the problems of enforcement.

This is a valuable suggestion and one which we believe the League of Oregon Cities will consider. It should appeal to Deane Seeger when he is relieved as city manager of Eugene and takes up his new work as consultant to the cities of the state.

Oregon's State Highway Department already is offering such a service to the cities. F. B. Crandall, their traffic engineer, has given Eugene a great deal of help, and is making a continuing study of the new one-way grid development. But Crandall's department has more calls for help than they can handle. However, this question occurs:

"Would it be economy to ask the State Highway Department to expand Crandall's department by putting in a bureau to specialize on the problems of the cities—rather than to create a parallel setup?"

But it isn't only in traffic engineering that little cities are handicapped. Many small cities do not have any engineers of their own, and most of those which do have engineering departments are unable to staff or equip them properly. That is why recently we suggested that cities and counties get together BY CONTRACT, a permitted by Oregon law, to set up adequate engineering departments.

In these days of mounting taxes and overwhelming NEEDS, the people are going to be fairly generous in voting funds, but they have a right to DEMAND that every possible economy be made, and that a rational combination should be made wherever possible.

In the report of the legislature's Interim Committee on highways, this lack of adequate engineering for cities and counties is also stressed. Money can be saved by providing advice to engineers, whether in the design for a road or a bridge or in the planning of a traffic setup.

LET'S TEACH CONSERVATION

Astorian Budget
The proposal by the Oregon Coast Sportsmen's council for conservation instruction in the schools makes sense. Probably a separate course on conservation is too much, but natural science courses in the schools could well devote considerable attention to Oregon's natural resources, and to the ways they are worn down by various factors of modern civilization.

Oregon history, Oregon resources, Oregon government—all these are subjects of practical value to pupils who will grow up to become citizens of Oregon and to will be citizens with and vote intelligently upon the state's future problems.

Under our system of initiative and referendum the people vote on much major legislation. All too often they do so without adequate understanding—as witness the balloting last November 2 on the pension bill and some other issues.

The way to train future citizens of Oregon is to get them young in the schools and impress upon them a knowledge of the state's problems and how its government functions.

RAILROAD SOLUTION

Medford Mail Tribune
Editor Charles Stanton of the Roseburg News-Review, a long-time battler for more adequate train service for his region, has come up with a suggestion which he states, "may seem wild and hare-brained at first glance."

But might at least merit investigation.

Charlie would have southern Oregon towns organize a municipal transit service, buy diesel-powered railroad coaches, apply

Husband, 72, Beats Wife, 68, to Death With Hammer

CLEVELAND, Dec. 28.—(AP)—A 72-year-old man beat his wife to death with a hammer during an argument early yesterday, Parma Police Chief Lester Roep reported.

He said the man, Paul Dienes, had admitted the killing and would be charged with first degree murder. The victim, Mrs. Mary Dienes, was 68. Their home was in suburban Parma.

Dienes remained in the house with his wife's body for 10 hours and then went to a neighborhood bakery and told what he had done, Chief Roep said.

The couple had been married 51 years and had seven children and 16 grandchildren.

Chief Roep said Dienes told this story:

The couple had had three serious quarrels since last summer. Last night Dienes went to bed after an argument but his wife continued to argue and he was unable to go to sleep.

So he got up, beat her to death with a hammer and went back to bed.

The argument was over Dienes' suspicions that his wife was having sexual relations with a neighbor, Roep said. In fact, he went on, Dienes was arrested recently on a charge of assaulting the man with a hammer.

However, the charge was dismissed.

The death rate from tuberculosis in Massachusetts less than a century ago was nearly 450 per 100,000 population.

SHERIFFS MOVE AGAINST FIREWORKS NUISANCE

(Oregon City Enterprise)
At the recent meeting in Portland and the Oregon State Sheriff's association proposed in a resolution to get uniform state regulations under which dealers would be licensed for the sale of fireworks and the amount of powder in fireworks would be limited.

Public policy over a period of years has been that uncontrolled use of fireworks was more dangerous to the public than the patriotic exuberance it connoted was good. The effect of enforcing that policy has been that cities could regulate against sale and promiscuous public use of fireworks, but in so doing the sale was set up outside the city limits.

This has put a heavy burden on the county sheriffs. County governments seem not so constituted as to prohibit wanton and vicious use of fireworks at the Fourth of July or of Chinese New Year's, but we have never been clear why. Cities have, in the main, done something about it. Now the sheriffs seem to be by-passing the county bodies where the controlling power seems to lie, and are seeking a state-wide regulation. It's a good move.

The long casualty history from the Fourth of July use of fireworks by boys and girls is a tragic one, but much lessened in recent years by city regulations. Adults under the influence of "fire water" are not very apt in the use of giant crackers and sky rockets. The regulations the sheriffs seek should be brought about quickly. There are a thousand safe ways for patriotic effusions. The unsafe ones have little patriotic appeals today.

Freezing Frozen Funds (Portland Oregonian)

Attorney General George Neuner, who once held that the legislature could transfer the income tax surplus to the general fund for appropriation by the legislature, has been constrained by a reversal in the State Supreme Court to advise legislators otherwise.

The assembly must submit a state levy on real property to the voters in order to use this idle money to improve and expand state institutions and colleges. The levy would not be collected from property owners, but would be cancelled by application of the accumulated income tax funds.

The legislature could, and should, amend the state income tax law so that all or part of future income tax collections could be used for general fund purposes. Such a bill, however, would be subject to referendum.

This idle surplus, now \$45,000,000, should be put to use, and Oregon is far behind in its institutional facilities. But it must be explained to the voters with clarity that such a levy will not actually be collected from property, but is merely a device to free income tax money already collected and of no use where it is. The voters did not understand a similar device in the November 2 election, to correct a deficit by transfer of income tax funds, and voted it down. The ballot time was almost incomprehensible to the average voter.

The reason the assembly must go to the voters with a real property tax proposal is that such a tax would exceed the 6 percent limitation. No court yet has ruled on whether the same 6 percent limitation is applicable to income tax collections.

Parolee Awaits His Bride-to-Be

LEBANON, Ore., Dec. 27.—(AP)—Clarence Boggie, freed from Washington State Prison for Christmas, and assured that he does not face arrest in Oregon, waited today for arrival of his bride-to-be.

Mrs. Beatrice Nichols, whose romance with Boggie began after he was sentenced for a crime he claims he never committed, is en route from Denver to meet the 35-year-old former lumberjack.

The Oregon man spent Christmas with his aging parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Boggie, at their home here. He joined them Christmas Eve after a pardon that ended 13 years behind the walls of prison at Walla Walla, Wash.

Oregon Governor John H. Hall assured Boggie yesterday that he does not face re-arrest here. The governor said a former Oregon sentence expired in 1934.

Boggie's bride-to-be is a part-time school teacher who left Sterling, Colo., yesterday for Oregon. A widow, she lives on a farm near Cumberland, Wis. They became acquainted when she read of Boggie's case and wrote to him at Walla Walla.

Mrs. Nichols explained, "we found that we had many things in common."

More farm machinery rusts out than wears out.

Deputy Sheriff Job Accepted by Ira Byrd

Ira Byrd, formerly with the State Police, has accepted an appointment as a deputy sheriff. It was announced Monday by Sheriff O. T. Carter.

Byrd's first duty with the sheriff's office was to take two persons to the penitentiary. He took Robert V. Keller, who is to serve seven months as a parole violator, and William L. Fitzgerald, to serve 10 months on a charge of larceny of personal property of more than \$35 in value.

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