-:-JACKSONVILLE POST-:-

Official Paper of the City of Jacksonville, Oregon

A weekly newspaper published every Saturday at the county seat of Jackson County, Oregon. D. W. BAGSHAW, Editor and Publisher

Entered as second-class matter June 22, 1907, at the post office at Jacksonville, Oregon, under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1915

SUBSCRIPTION: One year by mail $1.50. Advertising rates furnished on application.

Community Needs of Oregon

(Extract from Twenty-ninth article of a series dealing with community problems in Oregon.)

(By A. H. Harris)

Jacksonville, Or., Dec. 10—Jacksonville could easily develop an exclusive residential atmosphere in which well-to-do fruit growers could find rest and ideal conditions for semi-retirement. Beautiful hillsides offer wonderful opportunities for the building of homes and the climate of the country roundabout leaves nothing to be desired. A hard surface road to Medford, the commercial center of the valley, together with the electric railway which is practically a reality, would give ample outlet for hundreds of families, who sooner or later will come to Jacksonville to live—really live.

Jacksonville is one of the most ancient of all Oregon towns. She was a bustling mining camp, with hurdy gurdy and pack train, when Portland first blinked an eye and yawned. In her youth Jacksonville was wild and wooly and everybody had money and spent it. As she neared the three score mark, Jacksonville became the victim of old age and hardening of the arteries. That's why the old town, full of traditions and rich in citizenship, has been marking time for a number of years, while Medford and Ashland waxed strong and overshadowing right in Jacksonville's backyard.

Jackson County, of which Jacksonville is county seat, has more pavement than any county in Oregon, except Multnomah,—35 miles, yet Jacksonville is free from the plague. Not ever has the road to Medford been paved although the distance is only 5½ miles and travel has been heavy on the highway for two score years. Now people want a modern road, even after half a million has been spent in hard surfacing the Pacific Highway. And, they will soon get it.

Jacksonville was the first real mining camp in Oregon, chopped out of the woods by '49ers who crowded north from California when the diggings on Sutter creek failed to deliver nuggets of standard size. Prospectors hastened to the nearby hills, discovered gold, dug it out and brought it in bags and in bottles to Jacksonville where it was traded for whiskey, tobacco, bacon and overalls. Millions of dollars worth of gold was brought down from the hills and carloads of whiskey was toted back by the struggling miners who lived and died chasing the phantom—fortune.

All about modern Jacksonville are evidences of the good old days. On a corner is the familiar sign, "saloon," put there when whiskey was "two-bits" a drink and everybody drank. On another corner stands the Beekman bank building, for 59 years used for banking purposes, and through which the millions of gold dust passed during the years when C. C. Beekman—peace to his ashes—became known in every financial center of the globe as a dealer in gold dust. The old tumble down stage stable, the old hotel, remain to remind one of departed greatness.

If it has not been the dream of Jacksonville folks to have an exclusive residential district on the hills in the edge of town, it should have been all these years. A wonderful view is that offered by the higher levels. Land is cheap and large plots could be developed into private parks or gardens. And all in a rich fruit-growing section, where well to do people are sure to congregate. The altitude is 1600 feet. The annual rainfall is 27 inches.

Medford, the material commercial center of the Rogue River Valley, lies low and flat, with mountains surrounding on all sides. Opportunity for building on scenic spots is lacking, giving Jacksonville a monopoly in the line of heights residential tracts. With motors and good roads the development will not be long postponed.

Marketing problems have been before the people of Jacksonville ever since the gold dust supply ran low. The town is nearly half way between Portland and San Francisco and freight rates are high. Formerly the land was sown in wheat, and farmers made money from grain growing and stock raising. In later years orchards took the grain fields and new beautiful plats of trees are to be seen on all sides. The fruits selected are apple and pears largely.

In a few years thousands of acres of young orchards will come into bearing and growers and growers are anxious about markets for the prospective fruit. Unless market conditions improve and producers receive profit on their crops, conditions in the Jacksonville country will not improve as they should. Fruit growing means more to the Rogue River Valley than any other industry.

The area of Jackson county is 1,825,040 acres of which less than 100,000 acres is under cultivation. The assessor's records do not show the area tilled. Assessment values of orchard land run as high as $400 per acre, the highest values in the state except in Hood River country, where the maximum figure for assessment purposes is $400 per acre. In 1914 Jackson county held orchard lands as high as $600 per acre. The cultivated land for the county averages $80 per acre and the non-tillable land $9.50 per acre. With the exception of forest reserves the land in Jackson county is almost entirely in private ownership. Under intensive methods of culture more than half of the area of the county is said to be available as farm land.

Jacksonville is in the center of a rich mineral belt, practically untouched except for gold quartz and placer. Bodies of limestone, granite, and marble await development. Coal, copper and fireclay are to be found in abundance. While the hills have been prospected for 50 years or more development has been slow or lacking altogether, because capital has not been available with which to carry on the heavy work. With railroad development, which seems to be near at hand, markets for ores are sure to be opened. Outside capital will be needed to carry on the mining of minerals in the Siskiyous.

Jacksonville has the funniest little railroad in the state, and I have seen five or six unique bits of road too. As an attraction on zone at San Francisco one of the jimcrow trains could not be beaten. But this precious little road is to be lost, with all its traditions and memories. For, it is understood The Hill interests have bought the track, engine and passenger equipment—bag and baggage. Anyway a force of men is busy installing electrical equipment, and soon the road to Medford will be something like a standard street railway, with a real street car operating between Jacksonville the ancient, and Medford, the modern.

Jacksonville may be on the main line of a real railroad some of these days, since the electrification of the jerk-water line became a fact in the minds of the people, dreams of an east and west road between Central Oregon and the Pacific Ocean have been discussed much, and with some reason. The Hill interests have been trying to get hold of property in Jackson county and a railroad 35 miles in length is operated out of Medford to the northeast mountain country. The little road to Jacksonville is supposed to be another link in the road to Coos Bay. People will rejoice when they hear the official announcement that at last Jacksonville is to have adequate transportation facilities. Nobody knows how many nails have been driven in Jacksonville's coffin by that dinky "train" which wandered across the valley when the cattle were not grazing on the track.

Many of the pioneers of Oregon lie at rest in the Jacksonville cemetery and the second crop of pioneers—nasons and daughters—are growing gray in the old home town. Traditions are not as binding as they were half a century ago, and gradually modern ideas are becoming popular where old-fashioned methods alone were followed. With the coming of renewed activity in Oregon, Jacksonville is bound to awaken and the last of the real pioneer Oregon will disappear forever.

TRUAX ELECTED MAYOR OF GRANTS PASS

Considerable Money Wagered on Result of Contest For Head Of City Ticket.

Grants Pass, Or., Dec. 7—Dr J. P. Truax was elected mayor of Grants Pass yesterday by the largest vote given a candidate in years, his majority being 202. His opponent was G. M. Caldwell, who has served in the council two terms, and was a mayoralty candidate a year ago. Considerable money was wagered on the head of the ticket. Councilmen were elected as follows: First ward, W. A. Paddock; second ward, C. H. Demary; third ward, William Bunch; fourth ward, O. J. Knips. J. P. Jester was elected treasurer without opposition.

The vote on the question of purchase by the city of the water system now owned by Morris Bros., of Portland, for $120,000, was 61 for and 1127 against.

A Romeo and Juliet Affair

By DONALD CHAMBERLIN

I lived in a block of houses the rear of which formed a junction with the rear of another similar block at a right angle. My room was on the third floor back. There was a succession of fire escapes by which one who was ambitious to break his neck might get from one house to another.

In a window in rear of the other block a pretty girl was used to sit, sometimes sewing, sometimes reading, sometimes watching what was going on in the limited yard spaces below. When at home I used to sit in my window watching the pretty girl.

I have told quite enough to indicate that trouble was brewing for the pretty girl and myself.

It began by my looking admiringly at the pretty girl and, being a bold young man, following up my glances by throwing a kiss. Of course the young lady disappeared from the window. The next time I saw her there I poised a flower and, taking careful aim, threw it so correctly that it fell in her lap. She tried hard to look offended, but gave way to a bit of a smile, which was followed by an expression of great severity.

To make a long story short, in the course of a couple of weeks I and the pretty girl were holding up messages written in large letters for each other to read. This was followed by my taking advantage of darkness one evening when I would not likely be observed by others to swing myself from one fire escape to another to a platform directly beneath the pretty girl's abode. She was in her room at the time and, hearing a tap on the windowpane, saw me without.

Self preservation is the first law of nature, and the girl, to prevent any one seeing what was going on, turned off the light. Then she came to the window, put the sash up a few inches and her mouth to the aperture, saying excitedly:

"For heaven's sake, go away from here!"

Instead of obeying her I endeavored to kiss her.

"Police! Burglars!" came a cry.

"Oh, heavens!" cried the pretty girl. "I hear some one coming up the fire escape. What shall we do?"

For reply I threw up the sash as far as it would go and climbed through the window. The pretty girl, hearing some one hurrying upstairs, locked the door.

Well, there we were!

"This is dreadful!" cried the girl, wringing her hands.

I crawled under a lounge and told her to unlock the door. She did so just in time to prevent discovery of its having been locked. A woman came into the room exclaiming:

"There's a burglar trying to get in somewhere."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the pretty girl, going to the window, pulling down the sash and locking it.

There was a confusion of sounds. Some one knocked at the window and called out, "All right here?" The woman who had entered replied, "Yes," but declined to open the window. Doubtless she did not trust any one.

"Sure a man didn't go through this room?" called the voice.

"Certainly not," said the pretty girl.

"Then it was the next window," I heard the voice say. "I saw him."

For some time I heard evidences that a burglar was being hunted; then gradually the commotion quieted down. Some one—I concluded that it was the woman who had entered—left the room. Then the pretty girl said to me:

"You can't stay here, and you can't get out without almost surely being discovered."

"If worse comes to worst, say I am your husband."

Although this dialogue was spoken in a low tone, it was overheard. A woman—the same who had come in before—entered.

"To whom were you speaking?" she asked.

The pretty girl stammered a denial that she had spoken to any one. It did not satisfy the other. She began a hunt. Rather than be dragged out I came from my hiding place voluntarily.

"Be quiet," I said to the elderly woman who stood before me. "I'm no burglar, and we don't wish our marriage to be known as yet."

The woman looked thunderstruck. Turning to the girl, she said:

"You don't mean to tell me that you have been secretly married?"

"I do," I interrupted, "and if you'll let this unfortunate affair blow over you shall have one of the most affecting love stories you ever dreamed of."

"I should think so," she said very severely.

I was permitted to consult with the pretty girl privately. She was a lodger with the woman who had discovered me and alone in the world. We were not obliged to satisfy the landlady further, but it was arranged that I should see my supposed wife in the parlor occasionally, and there I did the rest of my courting in a far more respectable manner than on the Romeo principle. After we were really married we told the landlady the whole story. She said she was glad at having been instrumental in making the match.

"Didn't I tell you you would hear an affecting love story?" I remarked.

"It might have been more affecting if you had been caught by the police," [illegible]

"Or broken your neck, as you deserved," my wife put in.

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JACKSONVILLE POST.

Government Wins Suit for Lands

Portland, Dec 10 — The government wins. Practically intact, the decree in the Oregon & California land grant case, presented yesterday by Constantine J. Smyth, special assistant to the attorney general, was signed by Charles E. Wolverton, of the United States district court this afternoon.

By the terms of the decree the Southern Pacific will be stripped of every right in the lands in the grant except that it will receive $2.50 an acre. This equity is assured to the road when congress arranges the disposition of the grant. The road loses the right to sell the timber or mineral rights apart from the actual land, for which it fought so strenuously in the argument yesterday.

When congress disposes of the lands the Southern Pacific will get $2.50 an acre. This does not mean that the lands will be sold for that amount. If the lands bring more than $2.50 an acre the excess will be left in the hands of congress for disposal.

Electric Sparks

After buying the Christmas presents [illegible]

Answering questions about the sinking Ancona promises to provide Austria with a steady job for a while.

It would help a little if this country would provide a regular wailing place, somewhere in regions remote, for the convenience of Mr Bryan.

Col. Roosevelt says that a new diplomacy will follow the war, which is not at all a wild prediction as the old variety is damaged beyond repair.

Until there is a world police, capable of enforcing peace, preparedness for armed defense, will be necessary among nations.

Japan's little jubilation over its coronation makes good and pleasant reading especially in comparison with Europe's big butchery.

What this wasteful country does not know about food values has filled some books and good many poorhouses, jails and insane asylums.

Bank President Critically Ill

Klamath Falls, Or. Dec. 9—Alexander Martin, Sr. president of the First National Bank here one of Klamath's oldest pioneers, is in a critical condition from a paralytic stroke at his home in Oakland, Cal., according to word received today. He is 80 years old and is familiarly known here as "Uncle Jerry."

(Mr. Martin will be remembered [illegible] resident of this city who amassed considerable wealth in old Jacksonville.—Editor)

O. A. C.

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Spice of Life

"Of course," said Farmer Corntossel, "Josh's superior knowledge is a great thing." "Don't you think it has practical value?" "Yes. I suppose it [illegible] by his real scientific name didn't make the critter a bit more sociable or forbearin'."—Washington Star.