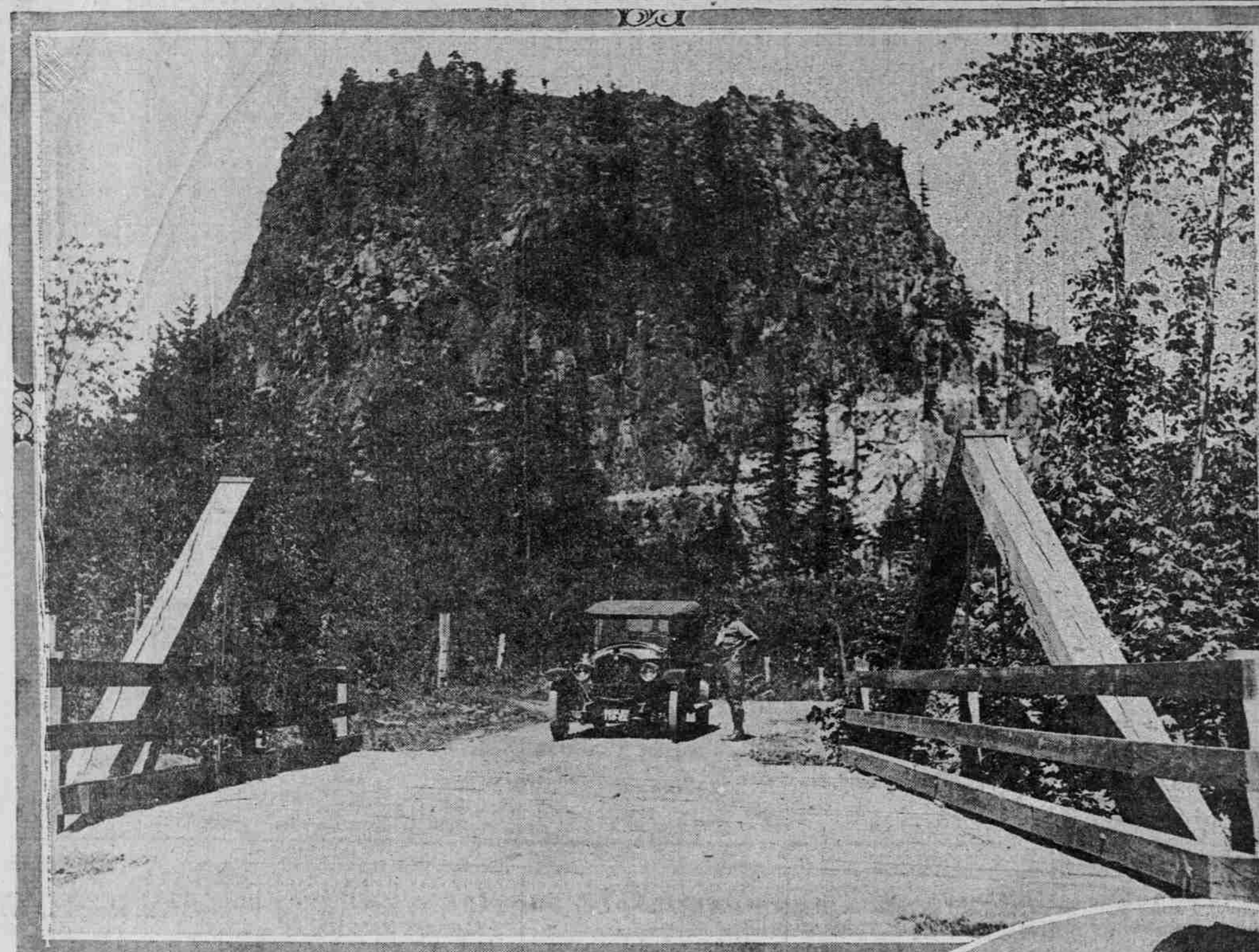
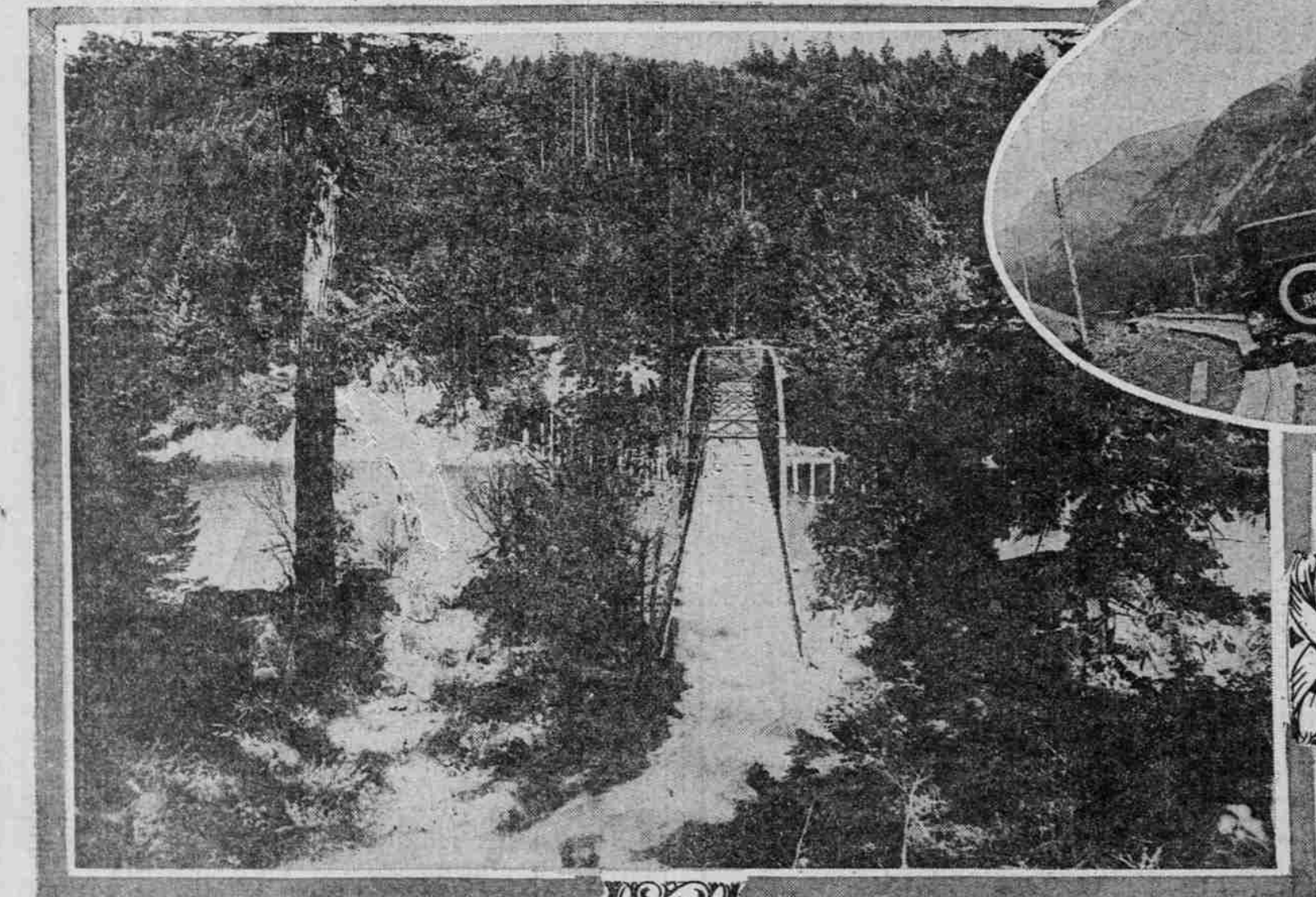


UP THE PICTURESQUE NORTH BANK HIGHWAY TO WHITE SALMON

Except for Rough Stretch Between Vancouver and Camas, Hupmobile Scout Car Finds This Road Across River From Our Own Columbia River, Highway in Fine Condition for Touring.



Beacon Rock A Landmark Of The North Bank Highway.



Looking Down To The Highway Bridge Across Wind River.

BY L. H. GREGORY.

ON THE north side of the Columbia river, paralleling on the Washington shore the Columbia river highway of Oregon, there came into being a year ago a new scenic highway, the fruit of many years of planning and toil against financial odds and the physical handicaps of road building through mountain country. This road, the North Bank highway, extending from Vancouver through Camas, Washougal, Skamania, Stevenson, Carson, Cook's and Underwood to White Salmon, Wash., is a link of the longer Evergreen highway.

It was built largely through the public spirit and sacrifice of the people of mountainous and sparsely settled Skamania county, as a sister loop road to the Columbia river highway, the purpose being that tourists might go up one highway and down the other and thereby gain the full realization of the scenic magnificence of the Columbia river gorge. This beautiful road, the North

Bank highway, is today still comparatively little known and little traveled, even by the people of Portland. On a trip the writer made over it last Saturday in a Hupmobile car with Fritz Dean, Hupmobile salesman for the Manley Auto company, we met scarcely a dozen cars on the highway proper in the course of the day. To some extent this year, that is due to gasoline shortage, but more to the fact that we are becoming a race of pavement drivers.

The rough and ready motorist of the old school who stopped at no road up which horse, mule or man on foot could go, who rejoiced more at the occasional feel of the gravel under the wheels than at pavement, seems to be giving way in this era of paved highways to a timorous creature who thinks himself out of luck if his wheels ever leave pavement.

But this North Bank highway deserves to be better known and more traveled. It is as truly a road of 35,000 wonders as the Columbia river highway. And not of the same 10,000

wonders either, for every vista, every spectacle, every mountain and river scene along it is different from those viewed from the other side.

Oregon Falls in View.

Indeed, if you would know the Columbia river highway, you must travel also the North Bank highway. From it you obtain a view of the Oregon side of the river not possible to get from the Oregon highway itself. In addition to the spectacles on its own rugged side of the stream, it presents a view of Wahkeena falls, of Multnomah falls, of Horsetail falls, even of Mitchell's point tunnel.

Where the Columbia river highway passes by the foot of Wahkeena, Multnomah and Horsetail falls, and the traveler looks up in awe at the descending torrents and wonders whence they come, from the Washington road across the river he sees not only the falls, but above them the draws and canyons down which they flow to the jump-off point; sees their very sources, almost, back in the timbered ridges; sees the high

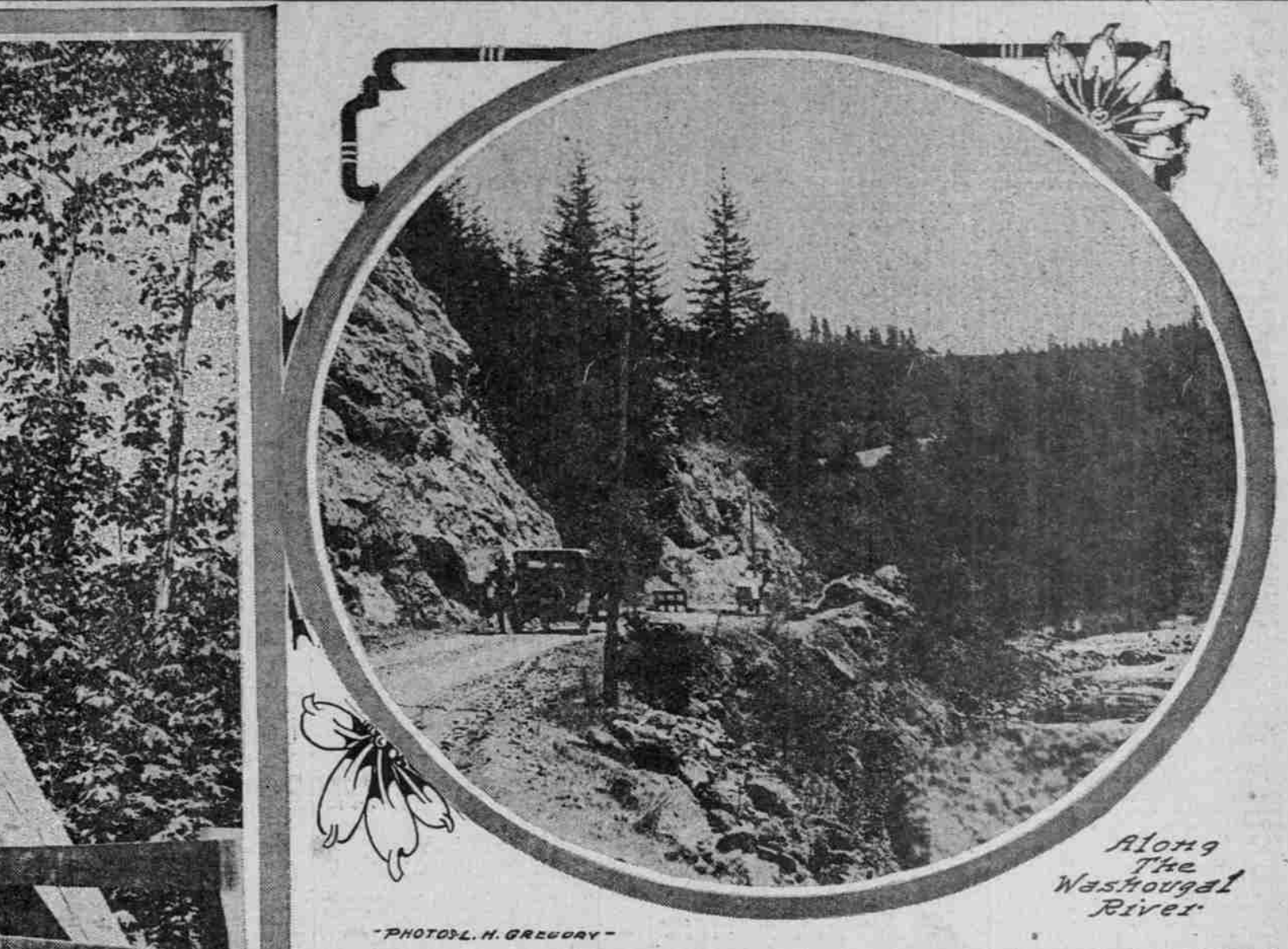
summits of the peaks lining the Oregon side, and the cliffs as they were chiseled off by glacier and stream action, leaving the present hanging valleys over which the many waterfalls now tumble.

Mitchell's point tunnel by this road he sees from an elevation where the North Bank highway has climbed to startling heights up the sides of its own mountains; so high that the rock windows in the tunnel look like tiny pin points while little skurrying toy cars run into it and out again. And this same vista includes a view as grand as that from Crown Point, and from even higher elevation, far up river and far down river, and across over the sloping bench of the Hood River valley and its orchards, to Mount Hood.

Shirts Beacon Rock.

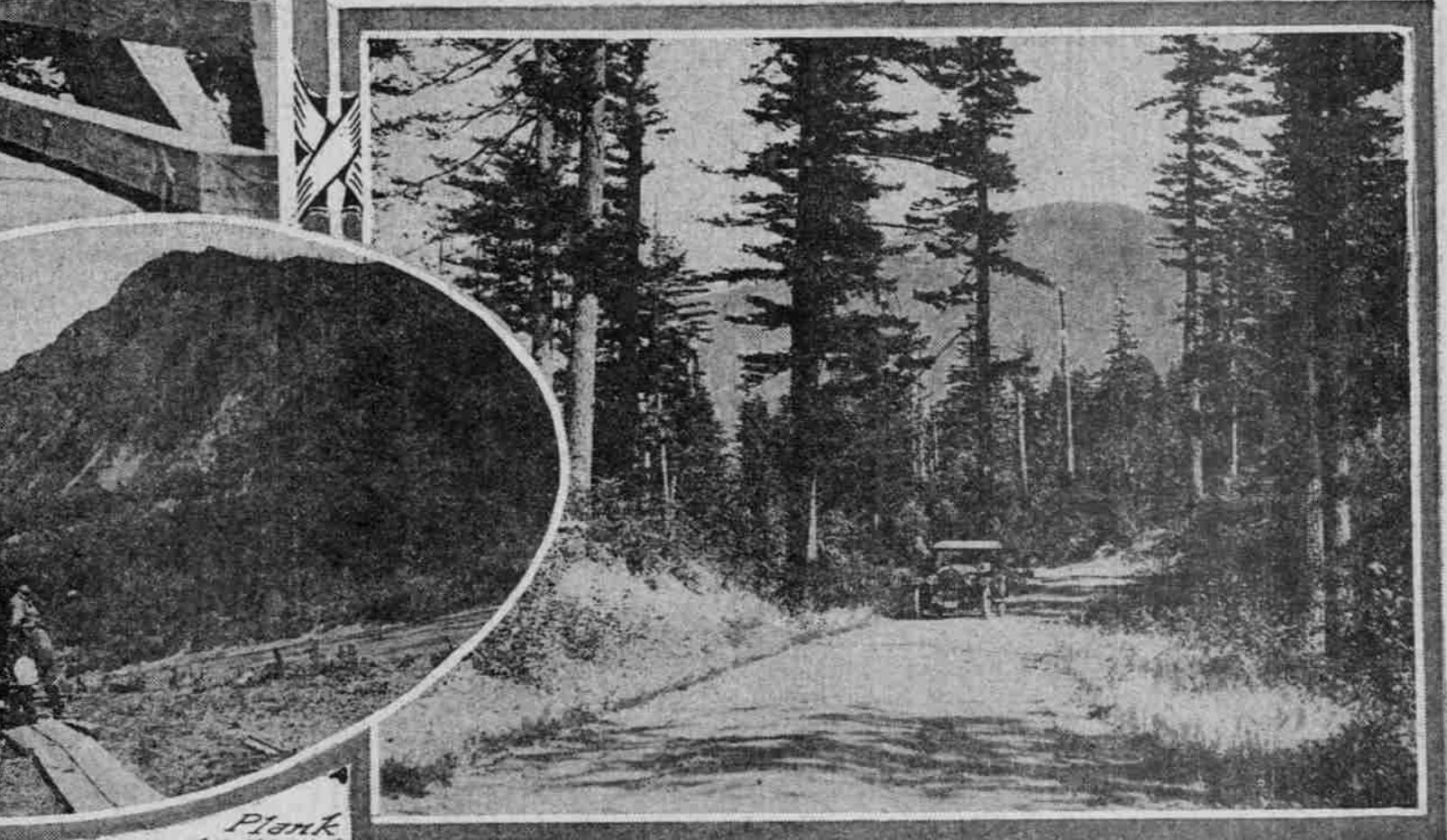
But this is only a part, a small part, of the highway story. It has its own attractions by the hundred, not visible, or only partly so, from the Oregon highway.

It half circles and passes at the



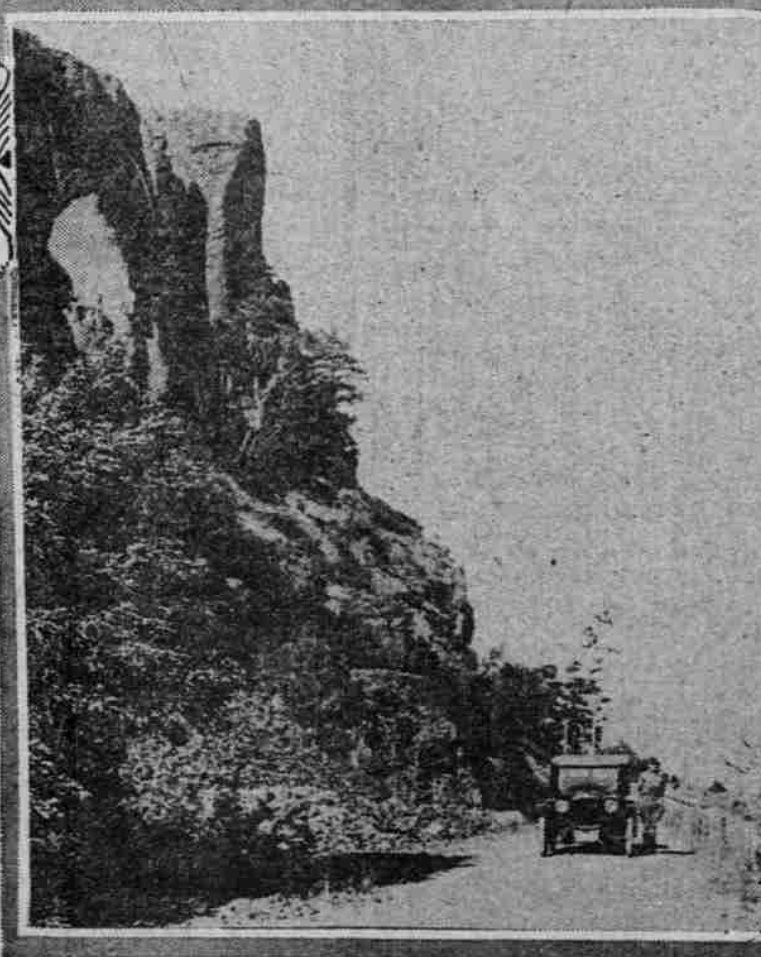
Along The Washougal River

"PHOTO BY L. H. GREGORY"



Plank Road A Short Distance Below Stevenson.

Near Beacon Rock.



High Bluffs Flank The Highway.

foot of Beacon Rock, the basalt hump that Lewis and Clark passed and named 115 years ago. Beacon Rock is to be seen from the Oregon side, to be sure, but not in close-up per-

spective. It towers past and tremendous from the road beside it, the more so as it rises right out of the ground like the walls of a building. And there is the spectacular climb

up the gorge of the Little White Salmon from Cook's which this highway makes. The climb starts from the station at Cook's and continues for three miles on a grade of 6 to 8 per cent. It is not a straight climb. The country doesn't run that way. There is a crook in the road, or two crooks, or even three crooks every hundred feet or so, and these crooks are built exactly along the lines of a shepherd's crook. They are hairpins and then some. The road swings around them so sharply that a car would seem to need hinges. But the curves are wider than they look and you get around without difficulty.

Up the Little White Salmon.

For three miles it climbs, coming out now and then on the edges of the gorge. Presently it turns into the side of the main gorge of the Little White Salmon, a wild stream here out of sight it is so far below, and screened besides by big trees growing on the side of the mountain. Now the road becomes less wild, levels down more, and before you know it, is on the upper bench of the Little White Salmon valley, two or three miles back from the Columbia.

This mention of hairpin turns and gorges so deep you don't see the stream needn't scare out timid drivers. Even the all-pavement type of driver could hardly get off the road unless he tried to. But he should remember to sound the horn sharply before rounding turns, and to take them cautiously. The road is vastly better than what is ordinarily called mountain road, built with no grade of more than 5 per cent, and the Hupmobile climbed it all the way with ease in high gear.

In wet weather the grade might be a little muddy; for this is one of the few sections of the North Bank highway that by now has not been surfaced with gravel or macadam. Some of this climb has rock bottom, but most of it seems to be dirt with just a first rock in it. The whole thing will be surfaced probably with gravel in another year.

To list the sights of this highway and describe them would be to write a book almost as thick as one descriptive of the Columbia river highway. They are, in fact, two works of the same material, with this difference at present—the Columbia river highway is the completed work, the

North Bank highway still in some respects in crude form. It is not yet paved, like the Columbia river highway, but it has miles of beautiful gravel or macadam road, it has wooden bridges where the Columbia river highway has concrete spans. All that in time will come.

As to road conditions. They are good, even fine, over most of it. So much better than a year ago that there is no comparison. The highway drive at present, in fact, is that between Vancouver and Camas, Wash., and this is really not the highway at all, but only approach to it. What might be termed the highway proper starts at Cape Horn and from there continues to White Salmon. With few short exceptions, all this is in not only good, but in first-class condition.

What makes the going disagreeable just now between Vancouver and Camas is that it is all over detour road, while the main river road is being paved. People of Camas for some time have been uttering loud cries as to the condition of the "back road" over which travel into that town from Vancouver must be routed, and they have some justification for their protests.

Bad Road in Clarke County.

So far as getting over it is concerned, it is passable enough. You reach this road by driving through the army post from Eighth street, in Vancouver. For six to eight miles it is fair enough, except that it is all broken macadam and jolty, but then comes a section so rough it jars you from the teeth down. From the looks of things no work has been done on this section since macadam was first invented, though this may be slightly overdrawn. From Camas, at mileage 33.7, to Washougal, mileage 26.5, broken macadam, but not bad going. From there on up the Washougal river the road is very fair to Cape Horn, thence in fine condition almost to Skamania, at mileage 47.5.

Part of this section was in poor condition last year, but now it is all macadam or gravel and good. There is about two and a half miles of dirt road with Skamania at a center, but it, too, is much better than a year ago. And from there to Cook's, where the climb begins, perfect gravel road. Incidentally, a drive over the North

(Continued on Page 2, Column 1.)