

# Highlights in the Week's News

(By International News Service)

**Thursday, February 4**  
Portland—Complaints of "third degree" methods allegedly by police on 35 "goon" squad suspects rounded up in Portland's anti-vandalism drive were tossed out of circuit court today. Judge L. P. Hewitt told defense attorney Charles W. Hester, radio man, died aboard a hospital ship.

The death toll of the tragic crash of two big navy bombing planes in mid-air over the Pacific was raised to eleven today as Jesse Hanley Hester, radio man, died aboard a hospital ship.

Washington—Shutting off all debate, leaders of the conference of small business men today jammed through to approval more than 100 resolutions calling for assistance to small industry and condemning many of the new deal recovery measures.

Salem—Governor Charles H. Martin announced today he was after the scalps of Charles W. Hester, regional labor director for the national labor relations board, and Harry Bridges, head of the CIO longshoremen, whom he blames for much of Oregon's labor unrest.

Washington—A resolution asking Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins to appear before the commerce committee to report on the citizenship status of Harry Bridges, west coast maritime labor leader, affiliated with the CIO, was approved by the committee in executive session today.

Portland—Pitchforks and potato farmers today decided victory over unionists on market row here. A carload of unidentified men wearing union buttons went scurrying off in an automobile when L. E. Warfield, Hubbard farmer, re-inforced by his own "gangs" of farmhands went "over the top" of his potato truck, pitchforks in hand.

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**Monday, February 7**  
Miami, Fla.—Harvey Samuel Firestone, famed rubber magnate and close friend of Henry Ford and late Thomas A. Edison, was found dead in bed at his palatial winter home in Miami Beach.

Washington—Dr. Francis E. Townsend, originator of the Townsend old age pension fund movement, must serve a 30-day jail sentence and pay a \$100 fine for contempt of the house of representatives, the U. S. court of appeals rules.

Miami, Fla.—Killing all hope for immediate peace in organized labor today formally expelled three unions affiliated with the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America.

London—Causing Great Britain to consider plans for a naval blockade of Majorca and two Spanish insurgent planes bomb and sink the 1,387-ton British freighter Alcira off Barcelona.

Washington—The United States, Great Britain and France demand a showdown with Japan on the size of battleships world powers will build, and the caliber of guns they will carry. In the first ultimatum delivered to any government since World War days, backed by identical notes from the other two democratic powers, the American government gave Tokyo 15 days in which to declare itself once and for all on the size of its capital ships, either now building or projected.

Berlin—After decades of monarchial rule, 13 years as a democracy and five years of national socialism, Germany was transformed today into a totalitarian state—100 per cent brown-shirted Nazi from top to bottom. Reichsfuehrer Adolf Hitler attained this pinnacle of personal power by abolishing the prestige of the " Potsdam clique " composed of old-line Prussian army officers who hitherto exercised a check rein on Nazi party activity through their influence over the reichswehr.

San Francisco—Harry Bridges, east leader of the Committee for Industrial Organization, makes a blistering reply to members of the senate commerce committee, who are attempting to revive deportation proceedings against him.

Corvallis—Dr. J. A. Bexell, dean of the school of commerce for 23 years, dies.  
Portland—Raging blizzard climaxes gala opening on Mt. Hood of new Timberline lodge and wrecks havoc with motor traffic. Forest service rotary plows succeeds in opening road.  
Portland—Dr. Francis E. Townsend, father of pension, speaks here. Predicts new political party to foster plan.

Little Rock, Ark.—Six persons killed when Missouri-Pacific train partially derailed after striking a stalled automobile at highway crossing.  
Washington—Secretary of State Hull expresses willingness of government to limit and reduce armaments in conjunction with other governments.

**Wednesday, February 9**  
New York—A general cut in steel prices checked the stock market's recovery today, after sizeable gains had been added to yesterday's sharp rise to five points. Gains were wiped out in most instances, and many leaders slipped behind minus signs.

Washington—The house approves the conference report on "Ever Normal Granary" farm bill. Senate approval now needed to complete congressional action.  
New York—The current wage-and-hour contract between U. S. Steel corporation and its employees expires today.

Portland—First of a succession of labor-war terrorist protests will begin moving before the Multnomah county grand jury Thursday morning, District Attorney James R. Bain announces.  
Washington—Charging the merchant marine is dominated by "communists," Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's association, an A. F. of L. affiliate, recommends sweeping investigation of labor and crew personnel on all American ships.

Tokyo—Japan has turned thumbs down on the request by the United States, Britain and France for definite information whether Japan is building or plans to build battleships of more than 35,000 tons.  
Weather Forecast  
Oregon—Unsettled tonight and Thursday, with occasional rain in west portion; heavy snows or rains in east portion; snow over Cascade mountains; little change in temperature; fresh east to south-east wind off coast.  
Caution in approaching state highway equipment or snowplows in the road during bad weather is extremely important, according to Secretary of State Earl Snell. Collisions in which this equipment is involved are not infrequent, and such accidents often mean serious traffic delays until the equipment can be replaced or repaired.

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# Last County Execution 40 Years Ago; Judge's Message Recalled

Just 40 years ago to the day last Friday, Washington county witnessed its last official hanging.

On Friday, February 4, 1898, a young murderer paid the penalty for killing John T. Ledrick, an old farmer who lived four miles southeast of Cornelius, some time in April, 1894. The young man had been suspected of the crime at the time, but had left the county before he could be questioned. Three years afterward, late in 1897, he was discovered in Morrow county and arrested by the Sheriff at Heppner.

Early in the September he was brought to the Multnomah county jail by Sheriff Bradford of Washington county and kept there pending completion of the new Washington county building. By mid-November the jail was ready, he was brought here and the trial began.

On his first appearance in the courtroom, the prisoner pleaded not guilty to the charge of killing Ledrick. It developed that at the time of the murder a man named Robert Buck had been suspected and arrested, but later released when it was shown no trouble had existed between him and the victim. The young prisoner on trial had taken Ledrick's team and wagon to Portland and sold them, disappearing shortly thereafter, and stated in his defense that he had been ordered to do so by Buck.

On the trial, District Attorney T. J. Cleeton was assisted by J. N. Brown and George R. Bagley, later circuit judge, were defense attorneys. The pleading having been completed, the case went to the jury at 10 p. m. Friday, December 11, and at 4 o'clock the next morning the verdict of guilty was returned. The prisoner was brought into court at 4:30 a. m. to hear the verdict read.

On Saturday, December 18, Circuit Judge Newbrite overruled motion for a new trial and proceeded with the sentence, declaring "It is the duty of the court to see that justice is done." The body of the man was conveyed to the county jail and there kept prisoner until the time to be fixed by this court for your execution, no less than 30 nor more than 60 days from this date, at which time you will be taken to the jail of said county and at said place and in the presence of 12 bona fide electors of this county, you will be hanged by the neck until you are dead, and may God have mercy on your soul." The date of hanging was fixed by the court as February 4, 1898.

**Gallows Erected**  
In mid-January, the sheriff began preparations over the stockade and gallows adjoining the new jail. One week before the time set for execution, the prisoner issued a denials, in which he again denied having killed anyone. The gallows were erected on a hillside overlooking the jail. The gallows were erected on a hillside overlooking the jail. The gallows were erected on a hillside overlooking the jail.

The death warrant calling for hanging of the prisoner for murder of John T. Ledrick was officially followed by Sheriff Bradford and all that was mortal of the murderer now lay in a grave at the county poor farm. The fatal rope was fastened to the huge cross-arm about 9:50 by Captain Collins. Sheriff Bradford of this county and Sheriff J. F. Phyll of Union county witnessed the arrangement. Sheriff Phyll, who recently executed a Union county murderer, tied a knot as an experienced man. At 10:25 the trap and rope were tested by using two sacks filled with cement. Everything worked satisfactorily. At 11:45 Sheriff Bradford called the jury together and visited the jail to read the death warrant.

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# County Ranks Third in State's Traffic Safety

Washington county ranked third among Oregon's ten group I counties from the standpoint of excellence in traffic safety last year, according to 1937 statistics completed this week by Secretary of State Earl Snell.

Grouping and ranking of counties was done this year to enable every citizen of Oregon to learn just where his county stands in the state-wide campaign against accidents and to stimulate local efforts to improve traffic conditions.

"Accurate ranking of counties is naturally difficult, because of differences in highways, traffic and weather," Snell pointed out. "For this reason we based our ranking partly on the improvement each county made over its 1936 record for accidents and injuries. The other element we considered was each county's death rate per 10,000 population. We did not consider the improvement in the traffic death record, since variations in this field were too great to permit ready comparison."

**Group Deaths Listed**  
A population density of more than 20 persons per square mile. Top place in this group for 1937 was taken by the city of Portland, classified separately from Multnomah county for statistical purposes. Other counties in this group, in the order of ranking, were Columbia, Washington, Multnomah (excluding Portland), Marion, Yamhill, Clatsop, Benton, Clackamas and Polk. Winners in other groups were Lane county, group II; Wasco county, group III, and Jefferson county, group IV.

Most outstanding record in the state was made by Jefferson county, which was free from traffic deaths and which chalked up a composite reduction of 40 per cent in accidents and injuries.  
During 1937 there were 842 accidents reported from Washington county resulting in 268 injuries and 7 deaths. In 1936 there were 652 accidents reported, 233 injuries and 9 deaths.  
"Our efforts to reduce traffic accidents and deaths are going to continue unabated during 1938," Snell declared. "We are planning to issue at the end of each month a study similar to this annual survey, so that each county will know what progress it is making toward our common goal. I feel that the vast majority of our motorists will be sincerely desirous of improving their country's record, and in so doing they will improve the record of the entire state."

When gold was discovered in California in 1849, every able bodied man struck out for the mining regions of the South, among them John R. Porter, a lover of trees. Though he fared none too well in California and brought back little of the yellow metal, he did bring back to his home community a more enduring treasure in the form of two bushel sacks of cones from the California redwood forest of that district. Bright has reported an interesting bit of history concerning the Washington county living redwoods.

At present there are 91 of these stately redwood trees in Washington county, most of them about 100 feet tall, cone-shaped and symmetrical as a steeple. Three of the trees are on the college campus in Forest Grove, others are on the courthouse grounds in Hillsboro, while still others are located in various parts of Forest Grove.

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