



In Freak Explosion—A fireman pours chemicals into burning automobile in which Mrs. Ursula Adams, of Alameda, Calif., was killed near Martinez, Calif. The driver, John Esta was seriously burned, as was Pvt. Burnett Hale of Fairfield Suisun airbase, who rescued Esta from flames. Highway patrolmen Gordon Campbell and Neil McClintock said the car was driven through a low-hanging cloud of gas that apparently came from a leaking overhead pipe which carried waste from an oil refinery to a nearby dump. (AP Wire-photo)

GLIMPSES AT HIGHWAY HISTORY—IV

Oregon's Road System Grew Like Topsy at Many Points

By RALPH WATSON

Just at what point Oregon's highway system first started well might be the subject of debate.

Like little Topsy in Uncle Tom's Cabin, it seems to have "just grewed" at widely separated points in the state and at relatively the same time.

Samuel Lancaster recalls in the first annual report of the commission that road viewers had been appointed in Multnomah county, May 25, 1910, at the insistence of E. Henry Wemme and other original highway enthusiasts, to map out the Columbia highway through Multnomah county to the Hood River county line.

The survey was made, the road formally declared a public highway on April 29, 1911, and a county work force built 1.8 miles of steep and crooked roadway. The county ran afoul of the Union Pacific right of way and work stopped.

In the fall of 1912, Simon Benson advanced \$10,000 to Governor Oswald West with which to finance his "Honor Camp" where convicts were employed to build the roadway around the base of Shell Rock Mountain in Hood River, which had been assumed to be an impassable barrier.

In 1913 construction was undertaken all along the line.

The influence of Samuel Hill, railroad builder and highway enthusiast, in the mapping of the first highway routes ought not to be lightly considered.

Prior to 1913 he had been actively fostering the construction of an "international highway" to reach from Canada south through Washington, Oregon, California, to the Mexican border.

He built a road from Golden-dale to his "castle" at Maryhill, established a ferry across the Columbia from there to Biggs, toward which he contributed largely of his own funds, and was voted money by the Washington legislature to build along the north bank of the Columbia.

When his construction there ran into reaches of \$30,000 a mile, the Washingtonians developed cold feet, failed to vote more money, and Sam Hill came across into Oregon, bringing Major L. Bowlby, Samuel Lancaster and Charles H. Purcell with him.

The 1913 legislature established the first highway department under the command of the state board, Governor Oswald West, Secretary Ben W. Olcott and Treasurer T. B. Kay, and they took over the job by hiring Bowlby as the first state highway engineer, who in turn made Lancaster his assistant and put Purcell at the head of the bridge engineering division.

Lancaster was assigned the task of laying out the Columbia highway through Multnomah to Hood River county aided by \$75,000 appropriated by Mult-

Polk Council Meets Friday

The spring meeting of the Polk county agricultural planning council has been scheduled for Friday at 10:30 a.m. in the county courthouse, according to county extension agent N. John Hansen.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the committee reports made by the various subcommittees during the winter months and then select those recommendations that should be followed by the extension service during the remainder of the year.

John Scheel, assistant to the director of extension service at Oregon State college, will attend the meeting.

Members of the agricultural planning council are Claude Larkin, Rickreall, chairman; Marvin May, Dallas, chairman of poultry committee; Kenneth Elliott, Dallas, chairman of horticulture committee; Dean Walker, Independence, chairman of specialty crops committee; Ray Hobson, Amity, chairman of dairy committee; Wiley Gardner, Dallas, chairman of livestock committee; Joe Harland, Rickreall, chairman of land use committee; Robert Farmer, Salem, chairman of farm crops committee; Mrs. Robert Hamilton, Rickreall, chairman farm home and rural life committee; Mrs. H. A. Flux, Monmouth, chairman of home economics county committee; Clarence Schukar, Willamina, president of 4-H Local Leaders association.

Bowlby assumed office June 3, 1913, and went out March 31, 1915.

State engineer John H. Lewis was given the dual role of that and state engineer by the 1915 legislature. He delegated the job to his assistant, E. I. Cantine, who served until January 19, 1916, when the supreme court dumped the job back into Lewis's lap where it rested until the reorganization of the department by the 1917 legislature when Herbert Nunn became the first state highway engineer, as the commission now is set up.

Rapid strides were made in construction in the period between June, 1913, and the close of 1916.

Major Bowlby, in summing up results to October 1, 1914, shows that from 1903 to October 1, 1914, a total of \$2,087,868 had been spent in bridge construction while \$19,883,259 had gone into highway construction, a large part of this having come

from county bonds and county road levies.

The state really took over the highway construction program commencing with the administration of the first appointed highway commission, consisting of Simon Benson, Portland, chairman; W. L. Thompson, of Pendleton, E. J. Adams, Eugene, appointed March 6, 1917, by Governor James Withycombe.

Savings Bonds Topic of Talk

That United States savings bonds, widely held throughout the country, is a great factor in providing stability for the country, was the assertion of Robert Alton, vice president and trust officer for the United States National bank when he addressed the Salem Kiwanis club Tuesday noon on the subject of "A New Economic Stabilizer."

Alton spoke of the \$15,000,000 in government bonds held by the people of Salem and of the 24 1/2 million throughout Marion county as constituting a backlog which could be spent in times of economic distress.

While the speaker admitted urging people to be thrifty and saving while the government continually spends more than it receives might make for red faces in some quarter, Alton said, those higher up might take the hint if the "little people" saved their money.

Three new members became affiliated with the Kiwanis club Tuesday noon: Ethan Grant, Bruce Pickett and Robert Bolanos.

Jefferson Theater Involved in Sale

Jefferson — The Jefferson Mint theater and also theaters at Monroe and Alsea have been sold to Mr. and Mrs. Howard Broxoms of Estacada by Bob Halliday. The Broxoms have taken possession and have purchased the Lester Stephenson house in south Jefferson and they and son Lewis will move here.

The theater will be closed until March 31 while undergoing improvements. A ramp will be put in the floor, and lobby and aisles will be carpeted and also will add new seats. He also plans to put in a new sound equipment and projectors to improve the sound and clearness of the movies. Bob Halliday will be employed by a theater company in Washington.

Garden Group Meets

Willamina — The garden department of the Civic club met at the home of Berniece Soules. Two members, Mary Christy and Annette Crambelt were admitted. The next meeting will be at the home of Ellen Brandt in McMinnville.

Grauman Bequest to Child Sweetheart May Be Forged

Hollywood, March 15 (AP)—County Counsel Harold W. Kennedy started work today to learn whether a crudely-printed supposed bequest of showman Sid Grauman is a forgery.

The note, purportedly written by Grauman, left part of his estate to an alleged childhood sweetheart.

Kennedy said his inquiry would pursue the possibility the note was forged by an unknown person. He added that he had learned that the famed showman had a habit of hand-printing letters and documents.

Two other sets of claimants were eyeing Grauman's estimated \$500,000 estate. Grauman died March 5 without leaving a will and with no close relatives.

The note received four days after his death read: "My childhood sweetheart shall receive 32,000 in cash of my life savings. Her name is Carrie J. Adair of 243 South Olive street, Los Angeles. Sid Grauman."

Mrs. Adair was located at the address but denied sending the note to probate court. She said she had known Grauman when she was in her teens. She had not filed for legal recognition as an heir.

Irving Ackerman, prominent theater owner and friend of Grauman, said in San Francisco that he did not know Mrs. Adair.

"I never heard of her and never heard the name Carrie Adair during my lifetime," he said.

One petition for legal recognition as heir was filed by Grauman's secretary, Gertrude Skall; the California Trust Co.; Essie-mae Cohen, and Edwin Speyer. It said Miss Cohen and Speyer were first cousins of Grauman and that there were 23 other heirs.

A second petition was filed by S. Ernest Ach on behalf of himself and four other members of the Ach family who live in Cincinnati. They also said they were the showman's first cousins.

They were not mentioned in the first petition. Hearing on both petitions was set for March 30.

Porter Would Aid Working People

Silverton — "I feel that the plain working people of Marion county deserve a seat in the senate," announced Frank M. Porter when he told that he had filed as a democrat for the race.

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Porter, accompanied by Mrs. Porter, were two of the 150 members of the Marion county democratic group attending the 1 o'clock dinner at the Mayflower on Sunday, presided over by the county chairman, Luis Martine-Lally.

Although Porter has been a prominent executive in the grange and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, this is his first venture into real politics.

Mrs. Porter is a member of a well known pioneer family, the former Bessie Benton. They have a daughter of high school age, Miss Lois Porter. Porter is a native of the Silverton community.

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