

Canadian Writes From England

From a letter recently received by W. H. Fortier from "Somewhere in England," the Sentinel is permitted to reprint extracts which will make interesting reading. It was written by a brother-in-law of Mr. Fortier's, Graham Whidden, who lived in Coquille some 14 to 15 years ago. He was one of the men who helped in the construction of the Sentinel building in 1926.

"Gus" is Mr. Whidden's son. The two of them enlisted in the engineers in Canada when the war broke out and have been across seas for several months.

It is a family letter and the personal portions are omitted, although there was no deletion by the censor before the letter was mailed:

I was going to write months ago but really haven't just got around to it. We are busy as we can be. It's months since we have had a Sunday off, although we might have got off a little early on Sunday but altogether we have been hard at it all the time.

It is our job to see that everyone in England is taken care of before we do anything for ourselves or so it seems to us. We only just moved into huts we erected in our spare moments. Our cooks are still under just a roof with a blow torch for a stove and we wade through the mud to get our grub and either eat it in the open or walk back to our huts, which are quite a little distance from the cook house, but we have hopes of getting things straightened around within the next couple of weeks.

The first fire in a stove I've seen in months has been the last few days since we moved into our hut. The roof still leaks but it is still mighty nice after the tents. Then, too, we have been on a side hill where the foliage from the trees kept the sun out and it was always dark and damp but the last five days the leaves have been falling, but so has the rain, so we are no better off, except that Fritzie can't see through the mist and if he comes down low enough his name is mud and the boys will have some more souvenirs.

We have seen some very good air battles and after watching them, you will soon be able to form your own opinion of who is superior in the air. It's just as one of the German papers said, that the Canadians were crazy. One plane would tackle twenty planes, knowing they couldn't get away with it, but they do and have. Lord Haw-Haw, who is a German who broadcasts from Germany in English every night, said all they needed to do was supply each Canadian with a motor cycle and he would kill himself. He's not more than 50 per cent wrong at that. It's a corker how many of the boys have busted themselves up on the bikes.

The English air force are a fine bunch of fellows and equal to any task they are given.

The Canucks were grounded here a while ago. They were sent out to bomb certain parts close by but like Wrong Way Corrigan, ended up over Berlin and gave her a real going over. If old Uncle Sam keeps Britain supplied with planes, I don't think we need to worry. The civilian population, who are really getting the brunt of the whole thing just now, are being wonderful. I'll bet five to one that Germany cracks up while these people carry on in that same methodical manner they did before the war. They are a wonderful people in a good many ways.

Gus and I are in the same section but different sub sections so are in different huts but see each other each day and work together most of the time. We had five days leave in London together and are now planning and looking forward to our next leave of seven days which is overdue but we are on the tail end of the list.

Gus just takes things as they come but has quite a lot of fun out of it at that but myself, I'll be mighty glad when it's over. But there is still this about it, I wouldn't go back right now if I could. I've got to see this thing through and then I'll go home satisfied but until then I am here and so on.

I suppose in a couple of days you will know who is who in the election and that's just what prompted me to write. I was thinking of this election and making a bet with myself that Roosevelt would win out, as nobody else that I know of here is paying any attention to it.

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Reorganization of the State Industrial Accident Commission with the administrative power concentrated in a manager will be recommended to the forthcoming legislative session. The proposed reorganization is recommended in a report just filed with Governor Sprague by the interim committee for the study of the workmen's compensation law headed by Dean Victor P. Morris of the University of Oregon. The committee's report also recommends that the present three man commission be retained as a board of appeals with its functions limited to policy making and supervision.

"It is the belief of the interim committee that by means of this fundamental change of administration to a manager form the financial condition of the funds will be improved, many financial 'leaks' stopped, court cases reduced in number and safety work made a reality, not merely a dream," the report reads.

While the committee favors an exclusive state fund rather than the optional plan under which Oregon is now operating it was felt that the time is not ripe for a change in that respect at this time.

With a credit balance of \$5,631,162 in its general fund on November 30, the financial condition of the state of Oregon is very sound, according to State Treasurer Walter E. Pearson. Pearson compared this showing on the part of Oregon with the situation in Washington which with only \$2,312,000 in its general fund on the same date had \$7,894,000 in general fund warrants outstanding and with the situation in California which on June 10, last had a general fund warrant debt of more than \$23,900,000. The bonded debt of the state which on January 1, 1938, totalled more than \$66,000,000 is now reduced to \$38,141,285, Pearson reported.

Construction of a new laboratory building to house all of its testing apparatus will be started by the state highway department immediately, it was announced by R. H. Baldock, state highway engineer. The structure, 112x120 feet in size of steel and concrete construction is to cost approximately \$95,000 and will be financed out of highway funds. It will be located at the east end of State street and will form a part of the group of highway department buildings already at that location.

Oregon has a total of 7160 full-time employees, according to a report compiled by State Budget Director David Eccles. Highest paid of these is Chancellor Frederick M. Hunter of the state system of higher education who receives an annual salary of \$10,000. Eleven other officials receive salaries of \$7500 a year. These include the governor, public utilities commissioner, president of the state university, president of the state college and the seven justices of the supreme court. In striking contrast to this high salaried group are 290 state workers who receive less than \$600 a year plus maintenance. Forty-two state officials receive salaries ranging from \$5000 to \$5999 a year; 162 are in the \$4000-\$4999 bracket; 413 receive between \$3000 and \$3999 a year; 1098 from \$2000 to \$2999; 1515 from \$1500 to \$1999 and 2575 from \$900 to \$1499.

Meeting in the state department at noon here Monday Oregon's five democratic electors cast this state's five votes in support of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Henry A. Wallace for president and vice-president, respectively, of these United States. The result of the vote was immediately dispatched to Washington by airmail.

With the biennial session only a little more than three weeks away the atmosphere around the capitol is already taking on a distinctly legislative flavor. Members of the house and senate are continually popping into the state house to confer with Governor Sprague, secretary of state and other officials.

Legislation pending in the department heads, themselves, are busy putting the finishing touches to bills in which they are interested in an effort to have them in readiness when the session convenes. Miss Harriett Long, state librarian, reports that she is receiving numerous requests from legislators for documents dealing with various legislative problems. Members of the house seating committee

met here this week to assign seats to members of the 1941 House.

Talk may be cheap but Oregon patrons of the 12 principal telephone utilities operating in this state in 1939 paid a total of \$73,799,225.26 in rentals and tolls that year, according to a report just released by the public utilities commissioner. The report does not cover the operations of so-called class "D" utilities or those with gross operating revenues under \$10,000 a year. The report of the utilities commissioner shows that there were a total of 173,908 company-owned telephones in use in Oregon at the end of 1939, a gain of 7890 over 1938.

State-owned automobiles and trucks will consume approximately 2,300,000 gallons of gasoline during 1941, according to estimates by the state purchasing department. Contract for supplying the state with its motor vehicle fuel next year has been awarded to the Signal, Standard and Union oil companies for the bulk deliveries and to the Union oil company for the service station business.

Construction of a school building, at the State Industrial School for Girls, is recommended in the report of the Osborne association, copies of which have just been received by the board of Control. The school building, the report recommends, should contain a gymnasium, auditorium and chapel in addition to adequate class room facilities. The Osborne investi-

gators also took exception to the operation of a dairy at the school and recommended that the dairy herd be transferred at once to the state penitentiary in order to relieve the girls of this work.

Of the \$19,527,784 budgeted for expenditure from the state's general fund during the forthcoming biennium \$5,733,690 has been allocated to educational purposes, according to David Eccles, state budget director. Support of state institutions will require a total of \$3,680,153; public welfare, \$2,878,100; general government, \$1,886,274; conservation and development of natural resources, \$1,775,086; protection of persons and property, \$1,474,134; World War Veterans State Aid commission, \$894,787; health and sanitation, \$131,655; miscellaneous, \$116,624.

Registration of out-of-state cars in Oregon during the first 10 months of 1940 fell approximately 20,000 below the record of 1939 covering the same period. Tourist travel into Oregon during November as recorded by the registration figures, fell 30 percent below the figures for November, 1939.

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