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CONCERNED OVER FATE OF WILD HORSE DROVES

Drought and Other Unfavorable Conditions Held to Demand Action by The State.

(By Colonel E. Hofer in Sunday Oregonian.)

The Oregon State Humane society is confronted with a problem of what to do with the increasing bands of wild horses in eastern Oregon. It is estimated that several hundred thousand of these animals are scattered over the range counties. At one time they were a great economic asset of that region. They were rounded up, branded and partially broke, and then driven into western Oregon and other coast states as a ranch supply of work horses. These bunchgrass horses were of fair size, very durable and supplied the demand for work horses at a medium price.

Motor vehicles have destroyed the market for these range horses. They have ceased to be a thing of value. Owners of range land and eastern Oregon ranchers seem to think they are not worth the hay it takes to feed them, and they don't. Therefore they have abandoned them, left them on the range to shift for themselves so that starvation is staring these range horses in the face. Many have perished already and the rigor of the winter has hardly commenced. At a low estimate 1,000,000 head will be wiped out by King Winter. Owners of large bands are letting them go, trusting that the few that remain will be sufficient to satisfy their needs for the next year's work.

Rains Are Lacking.

The larger part of eastern Oregon has suffered from a severe drought during the past year. This is particularly true of Harney county, which did not have the benefit of the usual fall rains to freshen the range. In most cases the livestock came down from the mountains in a weakened and poor condition. In many sections snow already covers the ground and the weather has been unusually cold for this time of the year.

After three successive surveys by the state humane society, stockmen generally are feeding their cattle and sheep.

While the winter will be severe they probably will be able to pull their stock through, possibly with the exception of sheep. In many cases large flocks are run by lessens and shoestrings on the open desert. These men are mere herders, owning no land, having no hay stacked, and no shelter. They may pull through with 50 per cent left over in the spring and divide the wool clips and the lambs with the owner. This kind of shepherding belongs to the past, and should be outlawed.

Under the changing conditions of the past 10 years, with motor vehicles rendering the wild range horse almost valueless, the State Humane society, for lack of means and ability to locate ownership of the large bands that move sometimes 50 or 100 miles in a single day, no survey of the actual facts has been possible; no remedy has been worked out. An effort was made in one county to round up and slaughter predatory bands of horses for chicken and hog feed. The humane society sent an officer to superintend the humane killing conditions. Not much could be done. The wild horses are very shy of all human approach. They will keep a mile or two away from pursuers and cannot be killed, even with long-range rifles.

Depredations Are Felt.

In the opinion of Governor Pierce it would take an army of trained horse rustlers and cost \$1,000,000 or more to gather them up and put them in corrals. Complaints of their depredations have come to the Humane society from Mrs. Emma A. Libby, Crane, Or., from Baker county and intermediate stockmen in the inland empire.

William Hanley of Burns believes that conditions would justify any effort put forth to save these horses. He differs in opinion from many range experts in holding that they really have an economic value, and

that they should be fed and not exterminated. He believes that the owners of these horses should be forced by law properly to care for them and intimates that he would be willing to undertake the job on certain terms that have not been fully worked out.

Reports from many of the ranchers show that the situation is rather desperate, and they have no intention of taking any steps to solve the problem, except to let nature take her course. That means that these great bands of once useful and valuable animals will undoubtedly die from lack of grass and water. There should be a survey of conditions in southeastern Oregon especially.

If possible, the roving bands of horses, totaling at least 100,000 head, should be removed from the drought area to parts where feed and water may be procured. It will not pay the thinly scattered ranchers of that region to do it and the stock will not be moved unless state or federal authority can be invoked.

Menace May Grow.

I do not pretend that all my statements are perfectly accurate, but they are based upon written reports from residents of this region, obtained by the humane society during the past 30 days. We are trying to arouse an intelligent humane interest in these dumb brutes that, unless exterminated by a very severe winter, or disposed of on some economic plan, will become a still greater menace to the livestock grazing interests of eastern Oregon. The humane society could accomplish something for the wild horse situation if the state would furnish money for expenses, but it gets only a pitiful \$1000 a year to enforce humane laws over the entire state. It is time for the state to take some action itself, in the interest of the livestock industry.

Dr. W. H. Lytle, state veterinarian and secretary of the state livestock sanitary board, was asked by the writer for opinion on the wild horse problem in eastern Oregon. I close this review of the situation with his statement. In the course of an interview he throws a little optimism into what might be called a deadly, hopeless situation. He said:

Dr. Lytle Quoted.

"That feed is really quite scarce in eastern Oregon is true, but there has been a considerable growth of grass in certain districts that were so far removed from available water that the same could not be grazed by animals in this district during the summer months. With the coming of snows and rains it is possible that there will be ample feed for all of the wild horse population of eastern Oregon.

"The situation is such that there should be some humane way devised whereby these wild horses could be gotten rid of. They eat the grass that might well be profitably used by other animals that would return a profit. Besides they increase in numbers and as time goes by there will come a time when many of them will perish because of lack of feed. Individuals are unable to cope with the situation that presents itself in eastern Oregon as regards these animals.

"I believe it would be wise to have some form of legislation passed in this coming session of the legislature where these animals could be called strays, so long as they are not carrying visible brands, and be gathered up and humanely slaughtered and possibly used for the purpose of feeding hogs or poultry. The cost of gathering up these animals will probably not be in excess of any money that will be returned from their sale. Many of these animals are now unbranded and are, from a range point of view, really the property of no one. Even though it were possible to compel owners humanely to take care of their stock there would be no way of forcing action against these unbranded animals."

ISSUE TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

The Central Oregon Telephone Co. will issue a new directory about the first of the year. New subscribers, or those contemplating installing phones should get their order in and have the phones connected up during the present month and be thus assured of their name appearing in the new directory. Business firms will be given the privilege of placing advertising in the directory.

MURDERER OF SHERIFF GETS FIRST DEGREE

Local Attorney Reports Case as Hard Fought; Appeal to Supreme Court Likely.

Archie Cody, the man who killed Sheriff Goodman last August, was found guilty of murder in the first degree by a jury in the circuit court of Malheur county at Vale the first of this week.

C. H. Leonard, who volunteered his services in aiding in the prosecution of the case, arrived home following the trial and in discussing it with a representative of this paper stated it was a hard fought case throughout, the defendant being represented by Atty Newman of Medford and Geo. W. Hayes of Vale. Prosecuting Attorney Lytle of Malheur county and C. H. Leonard were in charge of the prosecution.

A motion for a new trial has already been denied and it is quite likely the case will be appealed to the supreme court. General satisfaction is expressed by the people of this section at the verdict, as they feel the man is guilty of murdering a peace officer.

POPULAR YOUNG PEOPLE WED

Newton Hotchkiss and Miss Jessie Shepard were married last Monday forenoon at the Baptist parsonage by Rev. Eugene Howd. Both are well known and popular young people of this city where they have resided since childhood. Newton has been engaged in the stock business for several years following his graduation from school. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Hotchkiss, pioneers. His bride is a charming young lady who had been following the profession of teaching following her graduation from the Harney county high school. She is a granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Cross, highly respected pioneers.

The newlyweds left immediately for the P. G. Smith Warm Springs ranch where Newton is looking after Phil's stock for the winter. They succeeded in getting out of town before their friends could give them a proper recognition, but were not so lucky on arriving at their destination as it somehow leaked out a newlywed couple had come into the neighborhood and it didn't take them long to gather and give them a noisy welcome. Mr. and Mrs. Hotchkiss have the good wishes of a wide circle of friends in which The Times-Herald is counted.

WORK BEGINS MONDAY ON TERMINAL BUILDINGS

General Superintendent Here on Inspection; No Announcement Of Regular Train Service.

W. B. Skogerson, engineer in charge of material and construction, has moved his headquarters from Crane to Burns, the living car having been brought up yesterday morning attached to a special that brought Gen. Supt. L. G. Pierce and Division Supt. E. C. Mansfield. Mr. Skogerson's office car had been brought up to the terminal grounds before.

A representative of this paper called upon him yesterday and upon inquiry found that active work on the terminal ground buildings and improvements will begin on next Monday morning. Material is on the ground to begin work on some of the improvements and more will arrive as needed.

Mr. Skogerson could give no information as to when regular train service might be expected. He said that the general superintendent and division superintendent had made the trip up to ascertain conditions and how far the improvements had progressed but finding no water tank or coal bunkers, in fact no facilities whatever, therefore could not make any announcement.

The special train up yesterday morning was the cause of much speculation among our citizens and all kinds of rumors were afloat. However, this paper could find nothing of an authentic nature in regard to the railroad or sawmill situation other than has been given in this article.

Mr. Skogerson has his family and living quarters in Burns now and indications point to his remaining for several weeks, at least.

PIONEER STOCKMAN DIES

Hubert J. Smith died at the home of his mother in this city on last Saturday, Dec. 6, following a short illness. He took sick in Silvies valley while looking for stock and was brought down to the family home in Burns on Friday.

Hubert had been a successful stock man in this county ever since his boyhood, having started with his own herd of cattle at the age of 14 years and accumulated a large property. He never married and his headquarters were on one of his hay ranches on the island.

Deceased was born May 14, 1881 in Buena Vista, Oregon, and came

to Harney county with his parents in 1886 where he had since resided. He attended the public school in Burns but quit the school room early in life to devote his entire time to the stock business. He was a member of Harney Lodge, No. 77, I. O. O. F., also affiliated with the Rebekah lodge and the Odd Fellows Encampment. He was an upright citizen who held the confidence of his entire acquaintance.

He is survived by his mother, Mrs. W. E. Smith, two brothers, Ernest and Dele Smith, four sisters, Mrs. V. C. Gibson, of Parma, Idaho, Mrs. J. E. Weston, of Huntington Beach, California, Mrs. Robt. Drinkwater and Mrs. M. A. Clay, both of this city. His father died four years ago.

The funeral was held Tuesday afternoon from the Baptist church, the service being conducted by Rev. Eugene Howd, the Odd Fellows taking charge of the service at the L. O. O. F. cemetery. A large number of the fraternity were present, as well as numerous friends to pay their last respects to a departed brother and friend.

STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE APPROVES

James S. Gleason, a representative of the state fire marshal's office, was in Burns the fore part of this week to make an inspection and investigation into the location of the Standard Oil Co. service plant in Burns. The site secured for this station was protested to the state fire marshal's office and it was necessary that a hearing be had. Mr. Gleason came here for that purpose but found upon arrival there was really no objections the protest having been overruled by unanimous consent, as it were. The gentleman made a survey of the premises, went over the plans, viewed the location from the standpoint of convenience to railroad lines, and its proximity to fire limits and stated he considered the location ideal for such a station and recommended its establishment.

Mr. Gleason had an informal conference with the city authorities and said that all oil stations had to conform to certain regulations required by the state marshal and that before this concern could open and begin operation it would be necessary for an inspection and approval of the plans. Mr. Gleason further explained that should the time ever come that the fire limits should extend out to the locality and the town of Burns grew to city proportions the oil station would have to move, but until that time comes the present location will stand.

W. L. Best was in from his Silver creek home on Wednesday.

RECLAMATION CHIEF SUBMITS LAND PLANS

Report to Congress Suggests an Upbuilding Program; The State Interest Great.

(Oregonian)

Washington, D. C., Dec. 8.—Recommendations for congressional action to permit a thorough investigation of potential agricultural resources of the west, and for the working out of a programme of reclamation and power development for the benefit of all arid regions, were made in the annual report today of Dr. Elwood Mead, commissioner of reclamation.

Indorsing the conclusion of the special advisory committee on reclamation, embodied in a bill which has passed the house and is pending before the senate. Dr. Mead called attention to a dawning realization that development plans, if lands are to be brought under cultivation without disastrous delays and waste of money and effort.

Much Land Owned Privately

All the changes urged by the committee would be helpful. Dr. Mead asserted, "but if legislation stops with these, the amended reclamation act will not provide a working plan for the development of new projects. The reason for this is the fact that many of the best opportunities for future reclamation are where the land is now privately owned."

Discussing the committee's coordinated plan of settlement, under which the government would be able to purchase or control all privately owned lands in excess of homestead units, Commissioner Mead asserted that if control of settlement were made possible his bureau could go ahead with development, "certain that the future settler could get his farm at its actual value. It could proceed to subdivide excess lands into farms of proper size, adjust the prices of land to agree with productive values and could give long-time payments with low interest."

State's Interest Greater

Touching on the future need for state co-operation and state aid in the settlement and agricultural development of projects, the report recites that the state has an even greater interest than the nation in the character of the people who make homes on this land, since "the foundation of the state's future civilization is laid in these new communities."

During the year the bureau irrigated 1,213,700 acres of land covered by project census statistics. On the cropped area of 1,179,870 acres, crops were grown having a gross value of more than \$65,000,000 of \$55 an acre cropped, as compared with a gross value of \$50,000,000 and \$43 an acre in the preceding year. Including land furnished in whole or in part with water from works of the bureau, the gross value of crops produced in 1923 amounted to more than \$102,000,000, as compared with \$88,000,000 in 1922. Irrigated works operated by the bureau included 100 storage and diversion dams, more than 15,000 miles of canals, ditches and drains, 660 miles of pipe line and thousands of structure incident to the carriage and distribution of water. On irrigation projects were built 9500 canal structures and 1100 bridges, and the total excavation amounted to nearly 235,000,000 cubic yards.

LYCEUM NUMBER NEXT SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

The third and last Lyceum number for this year will be presented on Saturday Evening, Dec. 20th at the Liberty Theatre. Those who admire lively, wholesome amusement will find an inspiration in the program rendered by the Chicago Novelty Artists, Miss Ruth Winslow and Miss Grace Lucille McNett, each of whom is mistress of musical instruments, and each is a gifted dramatic reader.

Regular price of 75c. and 50c. 35c. will prevail. The curtain rises at 8 o'clock.

The next meeting of the Mothers Club will be at the home of Mrs. J. J. Lamphire on December 18.

FOR YOUR UNCLE SAM

