

Sherman County Journal

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1933.

BUDGET TIME

Next week the county will be, or should be, budget conscious. The county budget committee will meet to determine the amounts of money that must be appropriated for each budget item, the non-high school board will make their budget Saturday and the cities and school districts must be making their financial plans as well.

Preliminary estimates are to the effect that the county budget will necessarily be higher than it has been for the past two or three years. Other budgets may be higher. For several years levying bodies have refused or neglected to put anything in their budgets for bond retirement and it is probable that the inclusion of such an item will be insisted upon this year. The county faces the fact that the old age pension law will require several thousand dollars to be paid to aged indigents coming within the terms of the act. It is roughly estimated that this will cost the county ten thousand dollars.

The change in non-high school district government will bring to light a matter that will probably cause a slight rise in the tax for high school tuition. An error in the books of the superintendent several years ago resulted in a large deficit in the high school tuition fund. The court has been reducing this each year by levying a larger tax than was needed. Now the new non-high school board will only levy for their actual needs, but the deficit will still be due the several high school districts by the county. Therefore the county will have to levy a tax to clear up this matter which will make two high school tuition items to be paid through no fault of the present generation of county officials. It will likely tend to increase the total tax.

Then there is the pending problem of hiring a county agent. If this is done it will raise the county budget. If it is not done the cost will fall on the wheat control association which includes practically the entire county anyway so it just depends on which pocket the people want to take the money out of for the secretary.

The budget meeting of the county will be held Thursday, October 5, and all persons paying taxes in the county may attend. The court is usually thankful for helpful suggestions from taxpayers regarding the budget and will, in our opinion, be glad to hear individual statements on budget items.

INFLATION

What we need in this country is a form of inflation that will raise the income of everyone without raising the cost of living, or at least one that will increase income more than it does the cost of living.

If we could have cheaper dollars to pay debts with and higher dollars to be paid wages with we would all be prosperous. As the philosopher said we want to cut off the top so thin there is no bottom. It is generally assumed that inflation will make it easier for the debtor to pay his debts. It would make it easier for him to get dollars with which to pay debts, that is certain. It will also make ordinary living cost so much more that there will be nothing to pay with and the worst of it is that living costs tend to go up before any thing else.

It's some like a poker game. A few have won all the chips. It won't help things for long to redistribute them and start another game under the same rules. We need to change the game so that more people can win.

If Mr. Farley wants to get into New York politics he'd better go back there. It looks like he has gummed up the works so Tammany could win again, but maybe that's what he wanted to do after all.

Instead of saying 'as easy as falling off a log', we can say, as easy as licking Jack Sharkey.

Willard Marks will be a valuable addition to any board or commission and if there is anyplace where competent persons are going to be needed it is the board of higher education in this state.

It's likely to be quite a shock to us to receive a \$31,000,000 electric plant.

The Oregonian photographer has designed a cross eyed camera so the picture take won't look so foolish.

The Anti-saloon league now is known as the anti-liquor league but still the anti is the important part of their name.

The annual revolution in athletics is taking place and next week everyone will know the high scoring half back instead of the best pitcher.

Grass Valley

George Wilcox, Earl Olds, Tom Alley and Arnold Dunlap returned Sunday from their hunting trip with a deer apiece. Their party of four with Lawrence Wilcox and W. B. Wilcox coming with two others from Portland brought home eight bucks.

Charles French has been quite ill at his home here for the past two weeks.

Roy Feely and family were here this week while Roy accompanied Ed Alley, Arch Zehner and John Hays on a hunting trip to Suplee.

Mrs. A. F. Balzer entertained the bridge club at her home here Wednesday afternoon.

The bridge near the jail is nearing completion.

Fred Peters is visiting in Portland this week.

Bob Moore and family while returning from Portland this week suffered an accident to their car near Mosier.

Dr. Foley celebrated another birthday the 26th with an anniversary dinner at his home.

Mr. and Mrs. Gus Engstrom returned from their California and Missouri trip Saturday, but expect to return to California within a few days. Gus says that Sherman county looks awfully good compared with the country he drove through.

The teachers reception will be held Thursday evening October 5 under the auspices of the woman's club.

Ray Blake, Tom Garrett and J. D. Pike returned this week from hunting with enough deer meat for a spell.

For Sale: A set of hack harness. See L. R. French.

Eben Kee had the misfortune to wreck his car Saturday night while driving home. E. Sorahan was concerned in the wreck and damaged his car also.

Lester and Cleo Barnum, Earl Genry, John Rolfe and Gerald Blagg are home from the central Oregon country where they went after deer. They brought home a couple.

W. C. Schilling and wife were in Penitentiary Saturday looking over the bucking horses at the Round-Up.

Mrs. W. H. Todd is here and has started to high school.

Dr. M. B. Taylor, formerly a medical man of these parts, was here this week looking after business affairs concerning his ranch.

Arch Russell and Chas. Engel returned from a deer hunting expedition Saturday with a specimen.

Rinehart Wassermiller and wife were here this week end and left Monday for the John Day country accompanied by Jacob Wassermiller. They will work their mine in that country this fall and winter.

The state highway outfit is working on Sherars road this week preparing it for winter.

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Ritner were here from Condon Saturday night.

Miss Jessie Pike is home again after a summer's work in the Wasco country.

Jim, the Conqueror

"My uncle was a scoundrel. He employed scoundrels."

"Still, he was your uncle. You know, of course, that with Don Jaime's breed of cat an uncle is a kinsman, no matter what he does. I've felt like telling the boss he was all wrong about you, but then I'm only a hired man, and the hired man who speaks out of his turn to Don Jaime gets fired pretty sudden."

"If you'd only told him!" Roberta wailed. "Oh, if you only had!"

"Why didn't you tell him yourself?" he retorted. "You're one of the parties at interest, aren't you?"

"There are things no girl can say when a man acts as queerly as Don Jaime does, Mr. Hobart. He's so sensitive, so retiring—"

Mr. Hobart choked and to cover his strangled exclamation coughed violently into his cupped hands. "About as sensitive and retiring as a steer on the peck," he retorted, "but he is proud. If he thought there was the least chance of your refusing him he'd never ask you to marry him in a thousand years."

"Indeed! Is that possible, Mr. Hobart?" Then, it suddenly dawned on her that her conversation with Ken Hobart hitherto could have been covered in five hundred words, she was appalled, not only at his garbality but at her own. "Isn't this conversation getting a trifle—personal and delicate, Mr. Hobart?" she suggested. "Really, I haven't the slightest idea why I am discussing such an intimate subject with you."

"Well, I have. I want to discuss it," he replied calmly. "When I discover that Don Jaime has ridden away to get killed because life won't mean a thing to him after you're gone—and when I find you ruining your peaches-and-cream complexion crying over this greaser—"

"How dare you? He's not a greaser!" "Nobody but a greaser would act the way he does. Well, as I was saying, having discovered the lay of the land, I felt it my Christian duty to interfere and offer some sound advice."

"What do you advise, Mr. Hobart?" "Would you marry this Higuenez hombre if he asked you?"

Roberta blushed furiously and hung her head. "Come," Mr. Hobart urged, "this is serious business. There's a question before the house and it merits an answer. Would you marry the idiot and chuck all your sheep money into the pot with him and help extend his irrigation system and buy about a thousand pure-bred Hereford breeding cows?"

"I would, gladly. If I married him I'd be his partner as well as his wife. I could be a good partner."

"None better," agreed Mr. Hobart. "Well, if you want him, go get him. He's yours for the asking."

"Mr. Hobart! How dare you? No girl asks a man to marry her!"

"That's why we have so many old maids, Miss Antrim. Now, listen to me. If you hop aboard that horse of yours and ride after Julio he'll lead you to that old branding corral where he and Don Jaime are going to dig in and do some fancy shooting. You'll have time to get to the scene of the festivities before they get going, have your little pow-wow with Don Jaime, and then beat it back here before dark."

"Oh, Mr. Hobart, I couldn't! I'd feel so brassy. I'd die of shame."

"Very well, then, die. Don Jaime is sure to die, because he doesn't want to live. Of course he'd never let you know that, but right here in this note he left me he says: 'Adios, amigo. See that Miss Antrim gets to the station all right, and whatever you do, don't plant me in the same cemetery with her uncle.' You can save a human life if you care to. If you do not care to—well, that's your own business."

Roberta got up, walked to her horse and mounted him. "Thank you a lot, Mr. Hobart," she gulped. "You're a true friend."

"I'm glad I measure up. I'd be out of luck if the boss' wife got sore at me. Hello, here come Caraveo and the trucks. I must head him off and send him down the road a few miles farther, to save time." He made a flying leap to his horse and galloped away to meet the riding boss.

Just as Roberta disappeared over the sky-line he gave Enrico Caraveo his orders, then without waiting for his five men to follow he galloped swiftly after the girl.

"D—n it," he muttered. "I got so interested fixing things for Don Jimmy I clean forgot that girl wears pants, and a two-gallon hat. Some one of those roughnecks may mistake her for a man!"

CHAPTER XIII

The huge satisfaction felt by Ken Hobart at his interference in other people's business was shattered now, as he thought of Roberta, garbed in riding breeches and flannel shirt and wearing the conventional wide-brimmed and high-crowned hat of the country. Riding along the sky-line she could very readily be mistaken for a man—and such mistakes, in the impending circumstances, might reasonably be fatal! It was incumbent upon him, therefore, to catch up with her, to guard her approach to that old branding corral in the valley, to make

her take every advantage of the ground, to scout the territory for her.

Also, a new and disturbing thought had occurred to him. What if Dingle had decided to make sure of the water for the sheep by taking possession of the water-hole before Don Jaime could get there? Of course it was unbelievable that the latter would ride boldly up to the water-hole before making a careful reconnaissance, since instinct, the custom of the country, and his army training would indicate that course to him. On the other hand, was Don Jaime's mind completely on the task in hand? Was it not probable that thoughts of a sentimental nature might lull him into indiscretion? Verily, Ken Hobart could take no chances. There was immediate need of haste and he hastened; and he galloped along the backbone of the ridge he was sickeningly aware that he was not the only one who was hastening.

There was Don Jaime, to begin with, hurrying to get to the water-hole and consolidate his position. He knew the country well and was a hard, fast rider. After him came, on hot boots, his reinforcements—the devoted Julio. Duty was duty to Julio—and, as Don Jaime had stated, that youthful retainer had a personal interest in the forthcoming activities. Hurrying to catch Julio, that he might lead her to the water-hole, Roberta was pounding along on her fleet hunter; and after Roberta came Ken Hobart.

"If anything happens to that girl," he told himself, "I'll just keep right on in the general southerly direction and never come back."

The low range away to the east—and suddenly, in a cup-shaped valley far below, Ken Hobart saw the sheep—saw that they were being driven, not grazed. They were within a mile of the water-hole, and Julio was not in sight. At the foot of the range Roberta, stationary, sat her horse and took stock of the situation.

She had lost Julio! Hobart looked back. In the distance he could see his five men following him. He waved his hat and one of them waved in return; so without further ado he rode down to join Roberta.

The girl held up her hand, enjoining silence, as Hobart reined in beside her. "Listen!" she commanded. He bent his head. Faintly to him came the report of rifles.

"There were twenty herders with the band an hour ago," the girl reported. "Don Jaime counted them. There doesn't appear to be that many now."

Hobart swept the scene with his binoculars. "Ten! Half the gang went ahead to preempt the water, and Don Jaime has walked into them. He's alive and kicking, though. If he were not, there wouldn't be any shooting. And Julio hasn't got there yet. Well, he'll be careful. He'll probably come in from the rear and help the boss out. I wish I knew whether Jaime is in the old corral or at the water-hole. Smokeless powder, you see. One cannot tell. But the sheep move forward! That indicates confidence. Yes, Dingle has the water!"

"Then Don Jaime's fighting ten of them."

"Looks that way. He must be in the old corral, because he wouldn't last a minute in the open. The corral is boarded close and the light is failing. If he keeps moving he will not be too easy to hit."

Julio rode out into the open a quarter of a mile south of them. Instantly Hobart pulled his rifle, sighted carefully and threw up the dirt in front of the boy to attract his attention. When Julio pulled up and looked around to see where the attack came from, Hobart waved his hat at him and moved out from the sheltering fringe of bushes onto the grassy floor of the valley, Roberta by his side. Instantly Julio recognized them.

"You stay where you are, girl," Ken Hobart commanded. "My other five men will be riding down the hill pretty soon. You tell them my orders are to charge the men with the sheep immediately."

"What are you going to do, Mr. Hobart?"

"I'm going to join Julio, and the two of us will advance along the south side of this valley toward the water-hole. The range will be too long for the herders with the sheep to stop us. I think Jimmy's in a jacket and needs help mighty bad, so Julio and I will furnish what we can. Adios!"

He galloped away diagonally across the valley, motioning for Julio to join him. The boy did not hesitate. Roberta watched them in an agony of apprehension.

The herders with the sheep were firing at Hobart and Julio, galloping across their front. Ken had stated that the range would be too long for effective fire by men not versed in the science of accurate shooting at extreme ranges, but nevertheless the girl saw Julio's pinto go down, saw the boy shoot out over the animal's neck. He was up instantly and back beside the horse.

"Getting his rifle," Roberta thought. Ken Hobart had pulled up and was riding back to Julio, who, in turn, was running to meet him. There was not an instant's pause in the stride of the horse, yet Julio mounted double behind Hobart, the horse whirled, and the daring pair were on their way again.

There, alone at the foot of the hill watching this drama, Roberta prayed for those men as she had never prayed before; she cried out in agony when Ken Hobart's horse went to its knees, rose again—and stood still. Even one so unversed in warfare as Roberta could realize that the poor brute had been hit and crippled. She saw Ho-

bart and Julio dismount and, kneeling some twenty feet apart, open fire on the distant herders as calmly as if shooting at a mark!

And then, over the crest behind her, came the five men detailed to follow Ken Hobart. They came down the slope at a fast gallop, spurred on by the sounds of conflict in the valley below, but slackened speed as they sighted the girl, holding up her hand in a signal to halt.

She trembled so she could, with difficulty, speak coherently. "Don Jaime—engaged at the water-hole with ten men—Ken Hobart and Julio over south—shooting at the herders—Ken says—rear attack!"

The three American riders gazed at her, not quite comprehending, drossers, perhaps, of receiving more explicit instructions in such an emergency. "What are you standing there for?" Roberta cried hysterically. "Follow me. I'll show you." With a suave little dig of her dull dress spurs she was off, the five men streaming behind her. Across the northern flank of the valley they reined, the patter of rifle fire from the herders probably drowned the sound of their thudding approach, for they were within a hundred yards of the nearest men before the latter saw them. One of them fired at Roberta. She thrilled with a cold fear and a wild exultation as the bullet whistled past her head. . . . Afterward she had a faint recollection of a dark, frightened, but defiant face that loomed for an instant in front of her before she rode the man down. Pistol shots . . . then a backward look. Behind her the five rode with upraised pistols, flourishing them at her, yelling a fierce approbation of her leadership.

The sheep, in panic, fled wildly, leaping over each other, bleating, leaving a cloud of grayish white dust behind them. Roberta rode into the cloud—rode through the fringe of stragglers, knocking them down, leaping over and among them. Her horse, plunging and swerving, was striving, with common sense rather uncommon in a horse, to avoid the woolly bodies under his feet, and Roberta was forced to ride as she had never ridden before. Pistols popped behind her. . . . She was clear of the sheep. . . . Her dull little riding academy spurs prodded her mount's flanks; the quiet rose and fell. . . .

She caught the gleam of sunshine as the last level rays of the dying day were reflected on a pool. Among some rocks beyond the pool three figures moved, the crackle of fire grew louder; she could discern the sharp, spiteful reverberation of it now. Where was the corral? Don Jaime was there, wounded, dying perhaps. . . . She saw it—a circle of weather-beaten boards, nailed so close together that the fence appeared like a wall. Straight at it she drove her mount, realizing vaguely as she did so that it was a hurdle at least a foot higher than she had ever faced in sport. . . . She saw her horse's ears flicker; felt his stride slacken a little; then his head shot forward and his ears came up straight. Good horse! He was not going to refuse the jump! She felt him gather himself for the leap, and took a firm grip on the reins. "Alley oop!" she cried.

While in midair she saw Don Jaime off on the right flank, standing in the bed of a wagon, firing over the fence; then she was over and inside the corral with him. "Jimmy!" she shouted. He turned, staring at her amazed. Then he jerked the bolt of his Springfield and yelled: "Down! Flat!"

She rode up to the wagon, slipped off, pulled the rifle from the scabbard and unfired the cartridge belt from her pommel. Then, with a slap on her horse's rump, she sent him trotting across the corral.

And then Don Jaime acted. He leaped down at her, his powerful arm

"Alley oop!" she cried.

swept her backward and off balanced; she slid down his body gently to the ground and he threw himself beside her.

"Oh, my G—d, sweetheart, why did you come?" he almost moaned. "Because I love you, Jaime Miguel Higuenez. You are in danger and I couldn't stay away, I'll help you, Jimmy. If you have to die—I want you to know before that happens—that life without you—will be desolate—"

He crooned to her in Spanish, his hot eyes devouring her, his grimy perspiring hands caressing her cheek. "I always knew you were a thoroughbred," he gulped finally. "Lie here and do not move. This is a private fight and you haven't been invited. I've got to keep moving. I've run miles from one side of this corral to the other, firing through knotholes and gaps in the boards. If I stay still

they'll locate me and I can't afford that—now!"

He rolled away like a tumbleweed. A bullet crashed through the fence and struck where he had been lying a second before. And then Roberta proved herself a woman. She flinched.

CHAPTER XIV

She came to lying in Don Jaime's arms in the dry grass beside the water-hole. She looked up at him without understanding, then closed her eyes again. "Well, Jimmy," she murmured presently.

"We're back in the sheep business again," he assured her solemnly. A silence. Then: "Any casualties, Jimmy?"

"Yes. Three dead horses and two wounded and about a dozen sheep with broken backs and legs. It seems you rode over them. Ken Hobart's pinto, but nothing worse than what he's been used to. Adolfo de Haro, one of my riders, is dead, and Lambert, O'Gady, and Martinez Trujillo are badly hit. But I do not think they will die. Julio Ortiz has lost a little finger. Dingle and nine of his men are dead to date and the final returns from the river should make the affair unanimous. Fraser, Juan Espinosa, and Julio Ortiz are following them. They took our mounts and now I'll have to get busy, load our wounded on Dingle's chuck wagon and go home."

"Was that his chuck wagon in the corral?"

"Well, it used to be your Uncle Tom's, so I presume it's yours now. Dingle got here first, ran his chuck outfit into the old branding corral to camp for the night and turned his mules loose there. Then he occupied the rocks beyond this water-hole and waived to see what might turn up before dark. I turned up—unexpectedly—rode wide around the herders, approached the corral from the rear and had opened the gate and entered before either side discovered I was trapped. They couldn't see me clearly, but through the chinks in the corral boarding they could see something—something against the light. At that they couldn't be sure that something was me, my horse, or their mules, and they didn't want to hit the mules, so they were careful."

"It was close work and after I'd moved around a lot and had located all the knot-holes and wide chinks in the boards I made them keep their heads down. Then when the firing started out on the flat, and they saw Ken's men, led by you, making a pistol charge on the men with the sheep, Dingle got cold feet. You rode through quite a barrage, sweetheart, but once you'd topped the corral they figured I had reinforcements, so they ran for their horses and rode south. That is, some of them did. I climbed upon the wagon seat and fanned their rear; as they fled down the south side of the valley they bumped into Ken and Julio, who emptied two saddles each. Do you know, darling, that you have a pistol bullet through the muscles of your back, rather well on the right side? Nothing fatal, but you'll sleep on your left side for a month!"

"I'm a little fool," Roberta murmured weakly.

"Yes, but a gallant little fool. You have some of your late Uncle Tom's ferocity and courage in you, Bobby. Oh yes, old Tom always preferred odds and good shelter in combat, but he would stand up to it when he had to. He couldn't be bluffed off this range and he forced me to make good."

"Are you hurt, Jimmy?"

"Not a scratch."

She raised her left arm and curled it around his neck; he lowered his face until his cheek touched hers. "You're such a terrible man!" she whispered. "Oh, such a terrible man!"

"But you love me, just the same?"

"Yes, but I wouldn't have told you—I'd have died first. It's all due to Ken Hobart. He told me—"

"Hush, sweetheart. He's confessed. He told you a few of the most wonderful lies on record, and when he found you'd been hit he cried like a baby. Swore that if you died he'd commit suicide—provided I didn't kill him first!" He lifted her to a sitting position. "There's old Cupid Hobart sitting over yonder. Look at him. He's still blubbering."

"Ken!" Roberta called weakly.

The ex-ranger got up and limped painfully over to her, knelt and took her hand. "You're a good liar," she murmured, "and a grand fighter, and a grand friend—and now I'm going to decorate you, Ken Hobart—on the field of battle."

"Kiss her, fool," Don Jaime roared. "And you can kiss her again the day we're married. That's the privilege of the best man, but after that, believe you me, partner, she's not going to give away any more samples to hard-boiled old waddies like you."

"Oh, my God, forgive me," Ken sobbed childishly, and brushed her pale cheek with his tobacco-stained lips.

"On the lips, man," Don Jaime commanded. "You don't know good kissing when it's offered to you."

"I been chewin' tobacco," the victim protested.

"I don't care," Roberta assured him. "Jimmy chews it, too."

To be continued.

Newly Wedded Man—By George Lucile; these biscuits of yours look exactly like those my mother used to make. 20 years ago.

Wife—How delightful! I'm so glad. Man (biting one)—And, by George, I believe they ARE the same biscuits.

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