

Sherman County Journal
Sherman County Observer
Established Nov. 2, 1888
Grass Valley Journal
Established Oct. 14, 1897
CONSOLIDATED March 6, 1931
Wasco News-Enterprise
Established Nov. 1891
CONSOLIDATED March 4, 1932
Published Every Friday at
Moro, Oregon

Entered as second class matter at
the Postoffice at Moro, Oregon
under Act of Congress of March
3, 1879.

MEMBER
OREGON NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

OFFICIAL COUNTY PAPER
SUBSCRIPTION RATES
Payable in Advance
ONE YEAR \$1.50
JANUARY 29, 1943

TAX PROBLEM

Tax committees of the legisla-
ture have not yet gotten down to
hard work on the job before them
—that is, not the work of writing
bills for presentation to either
house. The matter of discussion
about what to do with the tax situa-
tion goes on day after day with
many new, and some novel ideas
being put forward.

The legislature will have to de-
cide whether it will reduce the
state income tax or follow the
lead of Governor Snell and keep
it as it is. If it is reduced, how
much will it be? There is a pro-
posal for a fifty per cent reduc-
tion, for the removal of the split
bracket, for an increase in the
higher brackets to compensate for
the reduction in the lower brack-
et.

The school bill has been amend-
ed by the school teachers them-
selves until it bears little resem-
blance to the one passed last No-
vember, although the same idea
is still included. Teachers want
the entire balance remaining at
the close of the just-ended calen-
dar year. The method of actual-
ly getting the money back to the
school districts so it will really
reduce taxes is the main problem
the teachers and the legislative
committees have before them. It
is a hard job, especially if the
sending of surpluses back is con-
tinued over a long period. There
has been agreement to allow the
state to use income tax money for
its legitimate purposes instead
of taking all over \$7,750,000.

Then there is the matter of a
reserve fund. The governor wants
a reserve fund to use in the ex-
pected post-war depression in
such ways as seem fitting to him.
Others want a reserve fund to be
set up for the sole purpose of re-
ducing state property taxes after
the expected depression. The gov-
ernor would apparently be satis-
fied with a reserve fund set up
for two years; those who want a
reserve fund for direct property
tax relief want the fund to be
so set up that it could not be
used for anything else.

This would require a constitu-
tional amendment, for, without
an amendment, a following legis-
lature could use it any way it
saw fit.

There are others who are pow-
erful who think the best thing is
to use the surplus now to reduce
taxes, even though state taxes are
already low. The income tax is
not so low, but in general state
taxes are not burdensome.

There is the matter of some
pay-as-you-go plan that would
put the great fund of wages and
salaries being paid to defense work-
ers whose residence in the state
is probably temporary. Such a
plan is difficult of attainment be-
cause it has not been used any
place and it would have to be
written all new and then, of course
be subject to trial and error until
the bugs were worked out of it.

Some sort of a withholding tax
on wages and other income is pos-
sible, but in case of cessation of
the war would not be a very ef-
fective means of keeping up the
state's revenue.

There is a suggestion that a
bill may be thrown into the hop-
per to give some tax credit for
improvements made to real prop-
erty, but it is still in a nebulous
state and may not be worked out
in time for this session.

The sales tax is still talked of
by Senator McKenna, who would
like to be of some aid to large
property owners in the metropol-
itan district. He has a theory of
a new tax system for the state
which would include a sales tax,

a smaller income tax, and a prop-
erty tax limitation. This has been
talked of many times before. As
a practical matter it is not im-
portant, for the people are notori-
ously careful about voting new
taxes.

H.B. 20

House Bill 20 is the bill that
would repeal all exemptions on
the taxation of real property. It
it receiving as much abuse as any
bill in this session, and for sev-
eral sessions previous, as well.

Each of the groups who have
been fattening on tax exempt
property ownership feels that the
bill is a personal attack on it. It
isn't.

There are probably good rea-
sons for not taxing some of the
things exempted by the law;
there can hardly be any good re-
ason for exempting all of the prop-
erty that now pays no taxes.

One can hardly expect cemete-
ries to pay a tax; no one would
for no government agency would
destroy them if foreclosed. Plac-
es of actual worship can hardly
be taxed as a practical matter,
either, nor can municipal property
used for strictly governmental
purposes.

There is much property that is
used for profit making that does
not pay taxes. Much of it is in
direct competition with property
that does pay taxes. Much of it
is in direct competition with prop-
erty that does pay taxes. Build-
ings, hospitals, schools, etc. are
in this class.

If of no greater value, the bill
may serve to prevent additions
to the already too long list of
tax exemptions listed in the law.

REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Continued from page one.
71,000 pounds instead of 54,000
pounds. The truck men used to
ask for 68,000 pounds but have
gone up in their estimates of how
big a truck should be.

The bill is a hardy perennial,
having been around Salem for
these many years, and always
having been decided in favor of
the railroads instead of the trucks.
However, the state has previously
permitted large trucks during war-
time.

There isn't much else but there
will be. The end of the period
for introducing new legislation in
the house is next Saturday. The
speaker says it will be five o'clock
sharp and that bills will have to
go through the Legislation and
Rules committee after that date.
The senate makes no such rule,
and, besides, committees can in-
troduce bills. A large influx of
new legislation is looked for be-
fore Saturday, although both the
house rules committee clerk, who
writes many of the bills, and the
attorney general's office report no
great list of bills waiting to be
written.

If the senate follows the action
of the house it will be possible
for wine bibbers to partake of
their favorite beverage over the
bar, providing that the wine must
be naturally fermented, not over
14 per cent alcohol, made of ber-
ries and other natural fruit juic-
es. The seller of wine must pay
a license of \$50, which in most of
the 22nd district will probably
prevent the sale for what wine
drinkers there are among the
wheat farmers and sheep herders
of the 22nd district like the hard-
er, quicker stuff. Incidentally,
the fortified wines, which make
up over 90 per cent of wine sales,
will probably be put in liquor
stores or abolished entirely if the
sentiment against "winos" grows
around the legislature. "Winos"
often wind up in state institutions.

So far the only unemployment
compensation amendment offered
is for a very minor change in the
law, and this may be one session
when that law does not cause a
disturbance of some rather violent
sort.

Snow in Salem is an entirely
different thing than in the east-
ern Oregon country. Here it is
sort of a pest that no one expects,
or welcomes. There are no snow
plows to take it off the streets
and roads, and, apparently, no
snow shovels to take it off the
sidewalks, for pedestrians are
walking in the streets between
the capitol and the town because
the trail is broader and better
packed there. (Note to the edi-
tor—pedestrians are walking in
the streets in Sherman county,
too). It rained the first of the
week and it is likely that the
storm is pretty well over except
for a few days of wading in slush,
that would be a beneficence to the
grain fields—but isn't here.

In-Other Days

From the Observer, Jan. 23, 1904

Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Ragdale
are at home from a visit to Cal-
ifornia with Mrs. R.'s parents and
sister, C. H. Belshee and J. B.
Morrison and family. Mrs. Mor-
rison, who was dangerously ill,
has quite recovered.

A thief or a combination of
thieves are infesting Moro and
vicinity. L. Barnum Monday night
had a visit from them and now
his locker lacks 20 jars of straw-
berries. Dr. Idleman has con-
tributed a cord of wood to them
in two weeks and Van Kirk at
DeMoss contributed a cord in one
night. Several others have had
articles stolen until they are dis-
pergite, and now a watch is being
kept and as soon as the right
ones are located Sherman county
will lose a resident or two but
the census of the Salem pen will
be increased that much.

From the Observer, Jan. 30, 1914

Weather, the common, steady,
reliable Sherman county sort that
Jupiter Pluvius generally gives
this section, seldom receives more
than passing notice; when a wind
storm hits high places as did the
storm of Sunday night, then we
have to mention that the wind
gauge came near being dislocated
by the pivotal action of the ele-
ments upon its superimposed an-
atomy. That may be going some
for language, but the wind was
a close second.

C. R. Belshee is having his
great market completely renovat-
ed and repaired; the way the work
is being done will help keep the
shop warmer in the winter and
cooler in the summer.

From the Observer, Feb. 1, 1924

A. C. Thompson has recovered
from a 30-day siege of the flu,
last Saturday being his first day
on the streets during that time.
A relapse when he was nearly
well helped to lengthen his stay
at home.

At the regular meeting of the
city council Tuesday evening an
ordinance was passed setting the
curfew hour at 8 o'clock "or any
other hour designated by the city
council." Under the terms of the
ordinance the hour is now set at
7 o'clock and affects all under the
age of 18 years. As the days be-
come longer the hour will be
changed by resolution of the coun-
cil.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. A.
M. Zevely, in this city, was glad-
dened last Saturday morning,
January 26th, by the arrival of a
baby daughter.

WILLIAMS' COLUMN

(Continued from page one)
without paying one cent of prop-
erty taxes. Yet the little fellow
who owns his home a block away
pays his \$75 or \$100 a year taxes.
Many of the legislators would
like to know the reason why, and
Multnomah club is only one of
many which have been on the free
list for years.

While we're on the tax subject,
several lawmakers are giving real
attention to the problem of col-
lecting state income taxes from
the thousands of shipyard workers
and others who are certainly in
the tax-paying bracket, but for
the most part seldom pay. Many
are new arrivals in Oregon who
do not own homes, but as a rule
they have families and one or
more youngsters of school age.
As to be expected, these workers,
who are receiving wages as high
as \$12.50 per day, pay nothing in
the way of city or state taxes,
yet they demand and receive the
benefits of government that tax-
payers receive.

Observations from the press
box: Frank Bramwell, former
superintendent of banks, here on
business. O. D. Eby of Ore-
gon City, chairman of the Wil-
lamette valley flood control pro-
ject, drops in to talk about floods.

Arthur McMahon of Albany
looks around. . . and so does
Charles Sanford, vice president
of Pacific Power & Light. . .
King Byran of the retail fur-
niture dealers looks things over,
ditto the one and only Louise
Palmer Weber of Portland and
Frank Severs, assistant district
attorney. . . Clyde Martin, the
timberman from Tacoma, chats
with Jim Cassell, the automotive
big-shot from Portland. . . Gen.
Ralph Cowling, chief of the state
guard, looks very happy. . .
the governor just signed the guard
bill. . . Kelly Loe, big-time
labor man, here to keep Bill Nick-
erson company.

Out of the Mud

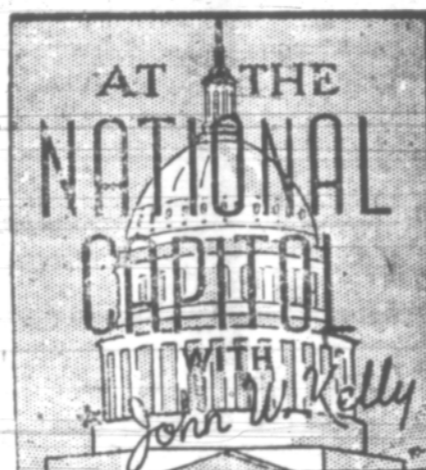


Mrs. Jean McMullen of Perryville,
Md., is ready to hook up winch of
army half truck, purposely ground-
ed in the mud of the automotive
test course at Aberdeen, Md., prov-
ing grounds. Mrs. McMullen never
had a job before, except that of
bringing up her son of five.

Mugs From Trees



A visit to the giant Panama air
base makes one the recipient of an
individual, inscribed coconut drink-
ing mug. Here Col. G. F. Hix,
commanding officer of the base and
originator of the idea, points to his
own drinking mug.



Continued from page one.
in direct competition with the do-
mestic product. It has been es-
timated that in excess of 260 freight
cars will be required to move the
imported pears, which, incidentally,
are consigned to an import-
ing firm in New York city. Reason
given for having Argentina
ship the fruit is that the United
States hopes to win that country
away from Germany.

There is scarcely a county in
Oregon that has not written to
the congressional delegation in-
sisting that something be done
to induce the office of price ad-
ministration to increase the ceil-
ing on milk. The cry is that the
price ceiling prevents dairymen
from receiving cost of production.
Senators and representatives have
been in constant communication
with OPA.

The Japanese relocation center
at Tule lake and others in Cali-
fornia and Idaho are to be in-
vestigated by a congressional
committee. Report is that these
camps are receiving without lim-
itation food which is rationed to
citizens; that the schooling is
costing too much; and that sub-
versive aliens are causing trouble.

Moro Lodge No. 113, I. O. O. F.
Moro, Oregon.
Meets 1st and 3rd
Tuesdays in the
I. O. O. F. hall Tra-
sient and visiting
brothers are cordi-
ally invited to meet
with us.

Charles C. Wilson, N.G.
Percy Thompson, Sec.

Lupine Rebekah Lodge No. 116
Moro, Oregon
Meets 2d & 4th Tues-
day of each month.
Visiting members wel-
come.

Coila Belshee, N.G.
Erance Johnston, Sec.

Bethlehem Chapter, No. 78, O. E. S.
Moro, Oregon.
Meets Every Second and
Fourth Thursdays in each
Month. Visiting members
Invited

Norma Balager W. M.
Marie Hoskinson, Sec.

SADDLE and RIDE
By ERNEST HAYCOX

THE STORY SO FAR: Clay Morgan,
a solitary man who cannot forget the
wife who died hating him, refuses to
"play ball" with Ben Herendeen, a
rancher who wants to run the cattle
country his own way. Morgan is a big
rancher and knows he must protect him-
self against rustlers and "nesters," but
he doesn't like Herendeen's methods. Of
his old friends, only Hack Breathitt has
not gone over to Herendeen's side. The
house and Gurd Grant—are supporting
Herendeen more or less in self defense.
Gurd Grant's sister, Catherine, is in
love with Clay. She comes to see him
and is forced to hide when riders are
heard approaching. The first is Hack
Breathitt, out of breath from hard riding.
Now continue with the story.

CHAPTER V

Hack Breathitt stepped to the
porch. He said: "I guess I need a
little help on this." He was a thin,
spotted shape in the shadows; he
was swearing softly to himself, full
of anger. He listened to the strength-
ening rush of the yonder horses.
"That will be Herendeen and Lige
White and Gurd Grant. It has come
to a hell of a pass when a man
can't ride these hills as he pleases."

Clay Morgan said, rough and sud-
den: "If they're stepping on your
feet, take a shot at them."

Hack let out a heavy, irritated
sigh. "Not yet, Clay. I'm tryin' to
be peaceable."

They said no more, for the three
ranchers had reached the yard.
They were stopped, they were keep-
ing to their saddles, and letting the
silence run; they could see Hack
and Morgan on the porch, touched
by the outshining lamp light from
the living room of the house.

The three left their saddles, slow-
ly coming into the light. Morgan
had his quick sight of their faces, of
Gurd's worried expression and of
Lige White's embarrassed dislike at
what he was now doing, and of Ben
Herendeen's bony, flat triumph.
"Is that what I expected," Herendeen
said.

"You're lucky I didn't knock you
out of that saddle," grumbled Hack
Breathitt.

"If you had nothin' to worry
about, why run?" asked Herendeen.
Hack Breathitt was a shrewd man
and he had no trust in Ben Heren-
deen. He said, halfway between out-
rage and amusement: "Wasn't run-
nin', Ben. I was just bein' careful.
I just kept rememberin' Ollie
Jacks."

Gurd Grant said: "We were com-
ing along the trail down by Dell
Lake and saw you and Pete Bor-
ders riding together. Pete hid off
one way and you went another. All
we wanted to know was why you
camped with him last night. But
you made a run of it."

"Clay," said Herendeen, "you pro-
pose to shelter every brush-jumper
that comes along?"

"Hack's a friend of mine," stated
Morgan, "and he's on my land. I'll
stand behind him."

Herendeen said, to Breathitt, "If
I ever see you around my country,
Hack, I'll open up on you." He
swung on his heels and left the
porch.

From his place by the doorway,
Morgan noticed Gurd Grant swing
from the porch end with a strange
jerk of his shoulders and cross at
once to his horse. He mounted
quickly, waiting for Lige White and
Herendeen. Darkness covered this
yard but Morgan saw Gurd's white
and vague and staring face in the
heavy shadows. A moment later all
three of them trotted from the yard.

As they left, Lige White said
something to Grant. Gurd Grant
never heard it. In stepping to the
end of the porch he had noticed his
sister's horse in the farther dark-
ness and at that moment all his
long wonder at her relations with
Morgan froze into solid certainty—
and left him, in that one passing
interval, no longer Morgan's friend.

Hack said: "Well, I'll drift along."

"Put up for the night, Hack."

"No," said Hack. "But I'm obliged
for the help." He looked down at
the floor, involved in his own un-
certain thoughts. "It is the last
time I'll run from those fellows,
Clay. I wanted no shootin'. Now, I
don't give a damn."

"Watch your step. Don't let Ben
push you into the wrong stall."

Hack drew a long breath. "So
far," he said, "I ain't done a thing
to be ashamed of, Clay. I want
you to know that, Well, so-long."

He was soon gone, galloping south-
ward down the narrow valley. Mor-
gan waited until the sound of all
these travelers faded into the night
before going to the living room.
Catherine came from the hallway
toward him.

"Clay—did he see my horse?"

"I took it back of the house."



Mrs. Gale suddenly reached for
the smallest child, wrapping her
apron around him—

And if the did take anything I'll
kill her. I guess you've done us all
the hurt you can. Go on and leave
us alone. Someday, maybe I can
pay you back."

"Hold on there," said Herendeen.
He got off his horse and walked
up to Gale, catching the front of
Gale's shirt in his fingers. He shook
Gale a little but there wasn't any
resistance in the older man at all,
his body swayed to the pressure of
Herendeen's arm. Mrs. Gale's eyes
showed a sudden terror. One of the
boys reached down to seize a rock;
he would have thrown it at Heren-
deen if the girl hadn't caught his
arm.

Herendeen said: "You had better
keep your damned mouth shut.
Hitch up that team and get out of
the country. I don't want to see
you on this range again."

He released Gale and returned to
his horse. Connor and McGeen
joined him, the three of them cir-
cling the snapping, twisted rush of
fire; flames broke through the shan-
ty's roof and the sky above this
area began to glow. Looking back
as a matter of caution, Herendeen
saw the family still standing by the
juniper tree. The girl had taken
the youngest child in her arms. Gale
had moved over to his wife. His
arm was around her; she had throu-
gher apron across her face and was
crying.

"Time for what?" asked Gale.
"Time for what?" asked Gale.
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"Time for what?" asked Gale.

"Late Friday afternoon, just as
Clay Morgan was ready to leave
the ranch for War Pass, Vance
Ketchell came into the Long Seven
yard and dropped off a tired horse.
Vance was a steady-going young man
who once had been a puncher for Heren-
deen's Three Pines and now owned
a few cows of his own up on the
slope of the Cache Mountains. He
didn't say anything for a moment
but Morgan saw that he was under
considerable strain—and waited for
Vance to make his talk. Vance
fashioned a cigarette, lighted it and
stood with his feet apart, staring
across the narrow valley gaps. He
said, "Pretty country," but really
didn't see it. When he pushed his
hat back a mop of hair, black as
crow, dropped down on his forehead.

"Clay," he said at last, "you hear
about the Gales?"

"Yes."

"I saw them over in Freeport yes-
terday. Pretty tough—pretty tough."
He smoked on and Morgan knew he
had not yet come to his point. Some-
thing on the summit of the Mogul
Hills seemed to interest Vance
Ketchell as he added casually: "I like
the family—I like the girl."

"Sure," said Morgan, and under-
stood part of Vance's trouble then.

"Clay, if that can happen to a
nester, it can happen to me. I'm
pretty small potatoes and it looks
like something's afoot to push us
out." He stared at Morgan, then said
in an idle voice, "I heard the big
outfits held a meetin' the other day."

"Wasn't present," said Clay.

He knew what lay in Ketchell's
mind. Ketchell was a cow hand at
heart but he had his own interests
to worry about now, and the affair
at the Gale homestead hit pretty
close. Ketchell was figuring out the
politics of the country, wondering
where his, Morgan's, weight would
be. Ketchell was too old a hand to
ask the direct question, but never-
theless he kept circling around,
hunting an answer.

Ketchell said: "I don't think it
was right of Herendeen. Can't blame
a big outfit for watchin' its own
fences, but I ain't so ignorant as I
used to be. Small folks have got
rights, Clay. There's a hell of a
lot of them in this world—and they
got rights."

"If I were Gale," said Morgan,
"I'd cut the price of that home-
stead out of Herendeen's hide."

He saw relief change Ketchell's
face completely. Vance tossed
away the cigarette; he was grin-
ning beneath the shadow of his hat
brim. "Yeah," he said, "Well, see
you in church." He was on the horse
and soon away and somewhere in
his mind was a decision formed in
that little space of time.

(TO BE CONTINUED)