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SCHOOL BILL

Oregon voters, when they passed the so-called basic school law by such an overwhelming majority last November started something in school affairs that will as surely change the school system as day follows night.

For four sessions the senators and representatives from the richer parts of the state had sucessfully prevented equalization that would have taken much tax money from their districts and given it to the poorer and more populous districts. The voters of every county approved the measure, thus generously offering tax money raised in the richer parts of the state to the poorer districts.It was a magnanimous gesture—and an expensive one.

It has now been established that the people approve the policy of more state participation in the raising of school moneys, and that they approve of this distribution on the basis of pupil days attendance.

The bill will have to be amended as it was entirely unoperable as passed. This,the teachers organization that sponsored it agree to, and has in fact made some far reaching amendments itself.

The policy of taking all of the surplus funds over and above $7,750,000 has been discarded and admission has been made that other state funds, particularly the elementary school fund, should be taken out of income tax payments before money is sent to the counties for school purposes.

Under the plan offered now by the teachers eight districts in Sherman county could not participate because they did not levy a special school tax. In Jefferson county there are 22 districts that could receive nothing as of this year. Some change in this program seems needed.

Several plans for making the school bill work according to theory have been written, more will have to be written. Settlement of this problem is the most difficult job in the legislative session this year.

Because the legislative assembly is responsible for the expenditure of all funds appropriated by it, it is the duty of members to make this school bill operable so that state money sent back for school purposes does the greatest possible amount of good. This may mean some major change in the management of Oregon's school system, now one of the most inefficient in the nation. The people have decided that the state should pay for a larger part of school cost. It will now be necessary for the state to take a larger part in school administration.

To put state money into the present system without making it more efficient would be waste and would also tend to retain some of the most wasteful features of the system.

Legislative committees are now studying the law and the many proposed amendments. Some conclusions that are valuable will surely come from their study.

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

The governor's taxation message which is an amplification of the paragraphs given to that subject in his inaugural, seems a sensible approach to a difficult subject. He has changed his ideas to some extent, probably because of studies made since the legislature convened.

He now concedes that there can be some reduction in the income tax but asks that it be on a temporary basis. In fact, times are so abnormal that a long-time tax program could hardly be written at this session. Some of the changes made may prove so satisfactory that they will be retained. That is true. The intent of the governor is that we do those things that will best get us through the wartime years and leave the other stuff to subsequent legislatures.

The message was couched in terms sufficiently broad to meet such changes as might have to be made in the present program to take care of good suggestions that will be made later in the session.

His suggestion on the school bill—that to hold the payments to schools to a certain sum each year—are good. It will be better for the schools to receive a definite amount from income taxes each year than to get a big sum of money for one year and nothing the next. Even the school men agree to that—if, of course, there is assurance that the money will not be spent for other purposes. That can be done now, it seems, with the support of the governor and the expressed will of the people in favor of school aid from the state.

His remarks about the speed of the legislature were in somewhat different vein than had been published from time to time. Fact is that this is a speedy session, apparently well aware that the nation is at war and desirous of getting back home to work. The house has passed or killed more bills than usual and the rules committee is not passing many more through the hopper. A bill has to be good to get by it, and the list is very small. The senate is getting more, however.

It is probable that the message will serve to hasten things along and jell legislative thinking into something definite.

LEGISLATIVE HALL

(Continued from last week)

There is a hearing scheduled, and within an hour the hall will fill up again with legislators and their friends who are interested in the matter at hand. They will go to some stuffy committee room and hear expounded the virtues of this and that course of action, and then after a few minutes of joking in this hall will go to their homes to think over the legislation proposed at the hearing.

The bills for tomorrow are posted in front of the desk where secretaries have taken the bill titles long ago. By taking-up time tomorrow the bills will have been laid on the desks of legislators, where members will look them over and make their decisions about the value of them.

When 9:30 arrives tomorrow the gang will gather again to rustle through the papers, confer over the bills up for passage, talk over other matters, and go into session to pass the decision of the people's advocates for and against the measures on the calendar.

Now the hall is empty. the green covered chairs back of the oaken desks are just so much furniture, the names on the desks are just so much decoration, the lights are a mockery to the present inaction. Tomorrow there will be action when legislator confers with constituent, when member persuades member, when the rolls are called and laws are started on the course of action.

As a means of following the people's will the legislative process sometimes looks awkward and wasteful. As a practical matter it is no more so than are other processes of getting things done by delegations. Since the formation of this country groups similar to this have been meeting and working in halls similar to this, and so far they have so well—in general—represented the will of the people that this nation is now at the top of the nations of the world. This now nearly vacant hall, with its seats from which come "Yea" and "Nay" votes of the people's advocates is something that most of the world does not understand—or enjoy.

REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Continued from Page One

the boys have to make up their minds. If the minds clash, they just clash, and violent words roll out the windows to warm the rain filled air of wet and dreary Salem.

There is nothing very startling about the tax program of the taxation and revenue committee and the governor. There are reductions for nearly every taxpayer, whether he be a payer of property. income, corporation, gift, or inheritance taxes. An effort is being made to equalize the reductions so that all can share about the same in the tax saving.

This theory is based on the assumption that the state's taxation pattern is now fairly well divided among the several groups of tax payers, recognizing that these groups overlap.

What percentage of any state's taxes should be paid by income tax and what part from property taxes and other taxes is a problem that has not been determined by any of the men who have written on the subject.

Property now pays about 38 per cent of all taxes. There is a certain stability about the ownership of property that has always caused it to be charged something for the upkeep of the state. Whether it is too much or not enough is a problem for the economic philosophers to worry their brains over.

In the meantime the tendency is to reduce the percentage that property pays to the state and make new taxes pay a greater part.

Kelly's Column

Continued from page one

ample, the chief of the industrial branch, office of civilian supply in war production board, went to Harvard and, until he joined the government seven months ago, was vice-president of a paper company. To farmers he has issued a statement that food production can be increased by a better use of horseshoes. He has four suggestions: (1) Re-set the shoes to get more wear out of them; (2) eliminate the shoes where the horse is doing something non-essential to war; (3) eliminate unessential styles; (4) horse owners can save shoes by removing them immediately after a period of necessary road work, where shoes are necessary only during certain periods.

The Harvard graduate apparently thinks shoes can be slipped off and on like a pair of rubbers and that they come in a variety of styles, whereas there are only large, medium and small. This man might be capable in the paper division, but not in dealing with horseshoes.

* * *

President Roosevelt last year announced that he wanted 8,000,000 tons of merchant marine shipping. The production was 90,800 more than he called for. One yard alone, Oregon Shipbuilding Corp., sent to sea a total of 1,219,400 tons, which represented 113 Liberty ships. The Vancouver yard produced 30,800 tons, or six ships, and Swan island yard 16,600 tons.

WILLIAMS' COLUMN

(Continued from page one)

resentative Perry of Columbia county now holds the lead for bills introduced with 14 to his credit, and Wallace of Portland still holds first honors in the senate with 11.

* * *

At the close of business Monday, March 1, the legislature will wind up its 50th day of the session. From then on the lawmakers will work without pay. From the looks of things now, it seems almost a certainty the boys will be there for at least another week after March 1, unless they hold many night sessions. Most all of the important bills are yet to be acted upon. At the last election the voters extended the regular session from 40 to 50 days, but when you take eight Sundays and two legal holidays out of this total it only leaves 40 days of working time, and that's mighty short for legislative business once every two years. Not for close to 30 years has the legislature been able to complete its chores in the allotted time and go home.

* * *

Observations from the press box: Jim Bain, district attorney of Multnomah county. looks things over—and so does Al Brown, county auditor; he wants his salary raised—Sheldon Sackett, Marshfield publisher and once the partner of ex-Goevrnor Sprague, chats with the boys—Ralph Cake, the Republican bigwig, whispers in attentive ears of the lawmakers—Dave Eccles, ex-budget director drops in to talk shop—Wallace in the senate and Harvey in the house do most of the orating—And the secretaries now get $6 per day—and their pay doesn't stop on the 50th day—it goes on and on until the session adjourns sine die.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Mary Edith Sayrs has been appointed Administratrix of the Estate of Omer G. Sayrs, Deceased, and has qualified as such. All persons having claims against said Estate are hereby notified and required to present the same duly verified to said Administratrix at Moro, Oregon, within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice, The first publication is February 12, 1943.

Mary Edith Sayrs,
Administratrix.

J. Tracy Barton,
The Dalles, Oregon.
Attorney for Estate. 14-17

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

All persons having claims against the Estate of Edwin H. Van Patten, deceased, are hereby notified to present them, with the proper vouchers and duly verified, to the undersigned, the duly appointed, qualified and acting Administrator of the Estate of Edwin H. Van Patten, Deceased, with Will Annexed, at Wasco, Oregon, within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice, to-wit: February 12, 1943.

T. Lester Johnson,
Administrator With Will Annexed.

Date of First Publication, February 12, 1943.

Date of Last Publication, March 5, 1943. 14-17

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Blanche Estella Everett has been appointed Administratrix of the Estate of Lulu B. Spencer, Deceased. and has qualified as such. All persons having claims against stid Estate are hereby notified and required to present the same duly verified to said Administratrix at Wasco, Oregon, within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice. The first publication is February 5, 1943.

Blanche Estella Everett,
Administratrix.

J. Tracy Barton, The Dalles, Oregon, Attorney for Estate 16

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

All persons having claims against the Estate of Wilford Belshe, Deceased, are hereby notified to present them, with the proper vouchers and duly verified, to the undersigned, the duly appointed, qualified and acting administratrix, of the Estate of Wilford Belshe, Deceased, at the office of T. Lester Johnson, in Moro, Oregon, within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice. to-wit: February 5, 1943.

Hazel Belshe, Administratrix
Date of First Publication—February 5, 1943.
Date of Last Publication—February 26, 1943.

It seems that humans aren't the only ones to have shoe styles restricted—just think of the poor horses.

Want Ads

FOR SALE—A few good work horses. From 12 to 17 hundred, under 8 years old. Roy Belshee, Phone 754, Wasco. p14-16

ORDER NOW for March heavy cockerels, April Reds, Hamps., and Leghorns. Leghorn cockerels $2.50 per hundred any Thursday. Write for circular. Hart's Hatchery, Beaverton, Oregon. c14tf

FOR SALE—Soft Federation seed wheat. 40 or 45 sacks. Hugh Walker, Wasco. Phone Wasco 711. p14-16

Moro Lodge No. 113, I. O. O. F.
Moro, Oregon
Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays in the I.O.O.F. hall Transient and visiting brothers are cordially invited to meet with us.
Charles C. Wilson, N.G.
Percy Thompson, Sec.

Lupine Rebekah Lodge No. 116
Moro, Oregon
Meets 2d & 4th Tuesday of each month. Visiting members welcome.
Coila Belshee, N.G.
Clarence Johnston, Sec

Bethlehem Chapter, No. 78.O.E.S.
Moro, Oregon
Meets Every Second and Fourth Thursdays in each Month. Visiting members Invited
Norma Balsiger W. M.
Marie Hoskinson, Sec.

SADDLE and RIDE

By ERNEST HAYCOX

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THE STORY SO FAR: Clay Morgan has decided to play a lone hand against Ben Herendeen, a rancher bent on running the cattle country his own way. The two men have been enemies for years, having first fought over Clay's wife, Lila, who died hating him and believing she should have married Herendeen. Morgan is a solitary figure, devoted to his nine-year-old daughter, Janet. Although two women, Catherine Grant and Ann McGarrah, are in love with him, they know he cannot forget Lila. Of his former friends, only Hack Breathitt has not gone over to Herendeen's side. Gurd Grant, Catherine's brother, hesitated about joining Herendeen, but became Morgan's sworn enemy when he discovered that Catherine had been to his ranch. Hack Breathitt, seen camping with Pete Borders, a rustler, is being watched by Herendeen's men. Now Clay has just learned that Government Valley is to be auctioned at Sage City, 190 miles away. Morgan knows Herendeen will be bidding for the land, and he is determined to get it. Meanwhile Hack Breathitt has encountered some of Herendeen's men.

Now continue with the story.

CHAPTER VII

Hack Breathitt held himself in the thick shadows by the courthouse corner and saw McGeen and Liard Connor leave the Long Grade saloon. The two of them immediately separated, McGeen turning toward Old Town while Connor traveled to Gentry's stable. More Three Pines riders drifted from the saloon, moving toward the dance hall. Instead of going up the stairs they turned down the black alley between the Odd Fellows' Hall and the adjoining saddle shop. Meanwhile Clay Morgan walked down Stage Street with Harley Stewart, these two going into the bank. A light flashed on. Jesse Rusey appeared from the darkness, at once crossing to the bank and looking through the window. Lige and Mrs. White left the dance hall and passed Hack, on the way to the hotel. Hack heard Lige say in his light, courteous voice: "I'll have a drink or two with the boys, then we'll go home." Presently Lige returned from the hotel, passed the saloon and followed the Burnt Ranch road, disappearing toward Mrs. Benson's house. Hack clucked his tongue in disapproval, saw Morgan come out of the bank, and went at once toward his partner.

"Stayin' around, Clay?"

"No," said Morgan, "I'm riding out." He saw the glitter of Hack's gunbelt buckle. "What's up?"

"Nothin'. Nothin' at all."

Morgan said: "Don't let anybody push you into the wrong stall, Hack," and turned across the street to his horse. Morgan stepped into the saddle; he kicked his feet into the stirrups, sat there a moment looking ahead of him, and went out of War Pass at a long-reaching gallop. Hack thought, "I ought to be with him." Liard Connor appeared at the bank corner, exactly opposite the point he had disappeared from a few minutes before, whereupon Hack Breathitt crossed Stage Street, passed the hotel and ducked down an alley. He threshed around the broken boxes and tin cans and bottles behind Shevlin's pool hall, made a wide sweep of this completely black area and came into the street again near Old Town.

At this same moment McGeen stepped from the shadows of the blacksmith shop. He had his head turned, watching the up-street direction, but whipped around when he heard the strike of Breathitt's boots. The two stood here, face to face with half the street between them. Hack didn't say anything. He held his ground, showing McGeen his swift, malicious grin. McGeen pulled up both hands and caught the lapel of his coat, which was his way of showing Hack he didn't want to draw, and afterwards he rolled up the street toward the saloon. Connor was near the door of the Long Grade; he saw McGeen—and started down to join him.

Breathitt's laughter was a soft bubble in his throat. He crossed the street and circled the blacksmith shop at a short, jumpy run. He trotted on around the Odd Fellows' building into a small vacant lot adjoining Gentry's saloon. The dance-hall lights fell on the street and, hugging the side of the wall, Hack saw Liard Connor step from Gentry's. Hack was softly laughing again, at Connor's back. He said: "Wrong way, Liard," and watched Connor jerk around.

Connor said: "All right — all right." But he wasn't talking to Breathitt. Bones McGeen broke out of the shadows near the bank. Somebody kicked out a window in the dance hall, the glass splattering around Breathitt. McGeen had quit advancing. Liard Connor, no longer in motion, said again, "All right,"

Eureka Lodge No. 121 A-F & A-M
Meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursday evenings of each month. Visiting members are cordially invited to meet with us.
W. F. McLeod, W.M.
C. V. Belknap, Secretary

and dropped his hands.

They had him hipped. Drawing, he had his one single moment's choice—McGeen on his left or Connor in front of him; knowing Connor to be the tougher man, he threw his shot that way. Connor's head flew up and—

The sound of Hack Breathitt's gun pounded between the walls of the street.

And was drowned out by Bones McGeen's quick-following fire. Connor fell on the walk and pulled himself to his knees; his gun had dropped on the walk and now he crawled forward, trying to reach it, and fell again with his arm stretched out full length, fingers touching the gun's butt.

Hack Breathitt felt McGeen's shots breathe by. He snapped an answer across the street, meanwhile plunging past the open mouth of Gentry's toward his horse. The shadows sheltered him and McGeen's shots crushed through the soft wood of the stable wall, wide of their mark. Men's boots pounded down the Odd Fellows' stairway; somewhere a woman screamed. Breathitt was on his horse, racing along the Burnt Ranch road, when, looking back, he saw four Herendeen men rush from the side of the courthouse. McGeen was in front of him, but fading back from Breathitt's fire, into the shallow alleyway beside the bank. Lowbent, Breathitt went by him, pounding the pony with his spurs. There was a short following fire and afterwards, in the safe darkness beyond town, Breathitt's Indian yell sailed up. He was a fugitive then, and knew it; and this was his way of telling them so.

Morgan took the desert road as soon as he left War Pass, heading northeast into the open flats.

At midnight, from a summit point he looked down upon the breaks of the Crooked River, whose rounded peaks and shale pinnacles and bare ravines lay tangled and disheveled in the moonlight. From this elevation he saw one lone light buried in a far pocket, which was the location of Vane Walrad's ranch, and went downgrade into the river canyon.

Beyond one in the morning, he sighted a close row of poplar trees beyond the stream. He passed over a swaying cable bridge, the gelding's feet booming up enormous echoes from the planking. Before he saw the house definitely he began calling: "Hello there—hello. Walrad!"

There was a yard behind the poplars and the blurred skeletal outline of corrals and wagons and hayracks, and a house almost hidden by the trees. A door slammed. He passed through the poplars to reach a front porch, and held his seat here until Walrad's voice came at him, sleepy and uncharitable. "Well, who is it?"

"Clay Morgan. I'm riding straight through to Sage City, Vane. My horse is going bad."

"Morgan?" said the man, and was still. Morgan heard a pair of horses stirring in the adjoining corral. One of them softly whinnied, and then the rancher said with a reviving cordiality, "Sure, Clay."

"I'll be back to pick up my horse in two days."

Moonlight put a silver, phosphorescent glow to the road's dust. Pulling in for a walk, Morgan looked at his watch and found it to be half-past two; one hour later with the moonlight changing and day not far away, he knew his horse was done. Nor could he see the shadow of ranch or house ahead. He let the pony drop to a walk and in this time-eating way covered the next half-hour. The road climbed to a long roll of land, tipped over the crest and point into a shallow meadow, through which a creek ran with a pale glowing. There was a box elder grove here. Coming to the water he let his horse drink; and heard a rustling in the low tree branches. A tall white horse, followed by three others, came out of the covert and stopped.

He roped the white horse, saddled it, and left his worn out pony to graze.

Ten hours out of War Pass found him threading the pine timber. Here and there a woodcutter's road led away, and occasionally he saw cattle grazing.

At noon the country changed again, the pines dropping behind and a canyon taking him down a rocky draw. Shortly thereafter a desert of scab rock and sage, smoky with fall's heat and fall's distant brush fires, unrolled before him. Nowhere did he see a break—either the shape of a ranch, or a town, or a moving object. He had his moment of tremendous disappointment; and then, completely clearing the canyon, he discovered, on his right, a chuck wagon and a half-dozen riders seated around it.

He pulled over at once, but remained in the saddle until the wagon boss said: "Get off and pitch in."

He stepped stiffly from the saddle, found a tin plate and cup at the tail gate of the chuck wagon and helped himself to the pan of short ribs and Dutch-oven bread by the

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The sound of Hack Breathitt's gun pounded between the walls of the street.

fire. He crouched here, drinking down two hot strong cups of coffee without delay, before touching the solid food. The mark of the long ride was on him and on the big jaded horse, and Morgan knew that the crew, sprawled idly under the sun, saw all this and were making their guesses. A man on the run, they would be thinking. He finished his meal and tapered a cigarette and lay back on the ground, propped up by an elbow. This food hit him like a shot of whisky. It took the heaviness out of his muscles, it made him cheerful. But he was increasingly pushed by the sense of wasting time. He said: "Which way to Sage City?"

The wagon boss drawled: "There's a trail about five miles over yonder. Keep on it. I hear old man Lowry ain't in good health."

Morgan thought about that. The brand on the big white horse was Running L. Maybe that was what the puncher was talking about.

He said: "Never met him. I've been on the trail since last night at nine o'clock, from War Pass. I swapped horses at Crooked River, and roped this one off the grasslands. What I need is a fresh horse for the ride into Sage City. I'll be back this way day after tomorrow."

"Not a bad ride," said the wagon boss idly, and let the silence come on.

The wagon boss had made up his mind. He said: "No, not a bad ride at all. Take that strawberry."

Morgan rose at once. His upper legs had gone stiff; he stamped his feet on the ground and limped over to the white horse. He put his gear on the strawberry and hit the saddle.

At three thirty, with eighteen hours of steady riding behind him, he came upon a main break in the road. One fork led into the southeast, the other swung toward the north. It was now within a half hour of the land office deadline; paused at this junction, scanning the forward haze with an anxious eye, he made out no kind of a blur on the horizon. This land ran straight into the cloudy mists, flat as a board. A few fresh prints showed either road; they were alike, these roads, as to the wear and tear of usage, and nothing gave him a hunch except that the northern fork seemed to head more nearly toward the spot he thought Sage City ought to be.

And so he took it, but two miles later this road brought up before the burnt ruin of a ranch house.

He wheeled around, backtracked to the junction and followed the other route. Wagon tracks came from the desert and dropped into the road, a wavering wheel-and-hoof pattern coming out of nowhere and leading apparently nowhere. It was then four o'clock and he thought he had lost his race. Twenty minutes later the desert marched to a rim that fell downward three hundred feet into a valley. The road descended a sharp grade. At the bottom of the grade, straddling the silver streak of a shallow river, lay Sage City, its gray housetops and dusty streets making a toy town's pattern from this elevation. He set the tiring pony into its last run, came down the grade and crossed a wooden bridge. He saw the half-empty street, the false-fronted buildings and the once-white spire of a courthouse sitting athwart the far end of the street. When he reached the courthouse and stepped down, a pair of men came out of the door.

Morgan said: "Land office in there?"

They nodded. He passed into a shadowed hall, heard voices through a half-closed doorway, and pushed that door before him. There was a man standing by a desk; this man was saying: "Seventy-eight hundred. That's the bid. Another bid, gentlemen? Another bid?"

There were only four other men in the room. One of them, standing by the room's side-wall with his face turned from Morgan at the moment, was Charley Hillhouse.

Charley Hillhouse said: "Eight thousand," and came about and discovered Morgan.

(TO BE CONTINUED)