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Cholera Struck Vengefully On Pioneer's Oregon Hiway

TRAGEDY AND HARDSHIP STALKED TRAILS AS WAGONS CUT HUB-DEEP RUTS ACROSS PLAINS

Any reader who has additional information on names, places or events covered by Mr. Robinson are invited to write the newspaper. In this way, a more complete historical series will be possible. Address letters to Hervey S. Robinson, % Beaverton Enterprise, Beaverton, Oregon.

(Continued from last week) The year 1852 was the one in which there was the heaviest immigration over the Oregon Trail. It is estimated that 15,000 people came over the trail that year.

The route which, only ten years before had been a mere path, so vague and indistinct that Dr. Elijah White, bringing a company of emigrants to Oregon on horseback, was obliged to employ guides to show them the way, had now become a mighty highway where heavy ox-drawn wagons marching in an almost continuous column had worn ruts, hub-deep in some places, across the plains and mountains from the Missouri river to the Cascades of the Columbia and over the Barlow Road into the Willamette valley.

This was the year in which the cholera epidemic raged furiously. The earliest pioneers, in spite of the fact that they were blazing a new trail, had somewhat better conditions enroute.

They found better forage for their stock. The grass in 1852 had been eaten off by thousands of animals and the later wagon trains often had to take the leavings or seek camping places two or three miles off the beaten track.

The earliest comers found everything fresh and pure, the water unpolluted. But the larger number of emigrants swarming over the same route, camping on the same sites, and using the same source of water supply, without any sanitary facilities, encountered serious trouble.

That year Barton Constable, father of Mrs. John Quincy Adams Young, died upon the road to Oregon, leaving six orphan children, whose mother had died before they left Missouri. Three months later the youngest of the children died, and the five surviving members of the family were cared for the rest of the way by a nephew of Mr. Constable.

Mrs. Nancy A. Ball, of Wilsonville, related to Fred Lockley, some years ago, her experiences upon that memorable trip, when she was a little girl, less than eight years old. She said:

"We spent six months crossing the plains to the Willamette Valley, and the memories of that journey are still vivid." Her father, William Robbins started for Oregon with his family, consisting of his wife and eight children.

One of these children, Sarah Jane, five years old, died and was buried on the plains, but that was only the beginning of their troubles; soon four other members of

their party were carried off by the dread cholera, not an unusual occurrence. Wilson Tigard, who came the same year, states that sometimes only one or two members of a large family would survive.

Said Mrs. Ball, "I remember the storms we had on the Platte and the Little Blue. I remember twice when our oxen stamped. And I remember, too, that it was on the Little Blue that the cholera struck us. Three of my father's sisters died within 48 hours of the cholera."

"All three of my aunts were buried in one grave. We had no lumber from which to make a coffin, so a broad grave was dug and a feather bed put in the bottom of it. A blanket was then spread over the three bodies and brush put in on the blankets. They shovelled in the dirt. My uncle also died of cholera on the Little Blue."

William Robbins took his donation land claim near Tualatin, and in 1856 met with a tragic end. It was a hunting accident and no one ever knew just what happened. He had started out to look for game and didn't return when they found him he was dead, his discharged gun lying across his body, apparently he had stumbled, accidentally discharging the gun.

There are many descendants of William Robbins still living in this section of the country. Nancy was married about 1861, to Larkin Ball.

She told Fred Lockley, at the time of the interview, "We were

married by George Olds, a justice of the peace. There are six of my children still living. My son, Elmer E. Ball lives at Bonita. My son Henry A. Ball is a school teacher and lives at Hillsboro. I live here in Wilsonville with my daughter Ada McConnell. I have 15 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild."

Many other residents of this vicinity in early days came in 1852. Among them, William E. Walker and his son Robert; Henry Tucker and his family, including his son Thomas, and Wilson Tigard. Many stories of that fateful year on the trail have been handed down to their children.

(Continued next week)

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INCOME TAX HEADACHE

Beware the Ides of March. On that day, a great upheaval will have been concluded by the populace and many recriminations will have been voiced. Like an overhanging sword hangs the impending date.

Ah, yes! On this day, the collective wage earners and recipients of other income, whether by interest, by investment, by gift or by lottery, make annual tithe to the treasury of the United States. By this day, the status of a vast horde of public servants strengthens. At least for another year, they will be able to function in carrying out the multitudinous tasks and chores that government requires.

There are only four days remaining of next week in which to complete tax statements—signed under the dire threat of perjury—and make payment to the collector of internal revenue.

Perhaps there are some who must still busy themselves at the task. For such, the government has most kindly prepared a comprehensive booklet, boldly labelled "Your Federal Income Tax" which is destined to answer all questions that might arise.

At the outset, the booklet warns, income tax laws are of necessity complicated. But the Treasury Department has gone all out to simplify the matter, as far as it can be simplified. There is a detailed index and new chapters added to the edition published in 1948.

Many of us, shamefully dilatory and procrastinating, have kept putting off the inevitable job of trying to make sense of the matter of filling out form 1040—in its various sub-forms. Faint-heartedness can overcome even the most sturdy and valiant.

Obviously, there is but one course to follow. Take the bull by the horns and meet the problem head-on! This is done by a more or less constant routine.

First, you rustle about half-a-dozen pencils, using great care that each one is sharpened to a needle point. This might well consume thirty minutes, if proper diligence is employed.

Next it is required to hunt up the tax form and spend some time in minutely studying all questions and all possible answers to these questions. You must come to a conclusion of deductible and non-deductible, separate return or joint return, whether a tax may be paid in installments or, as it says, in one great, gashing lump.

By this time, your nerves are badly strained and a great unease comes over you. Recommended treatment is a cup of coffee and maybe a piece of chicken or a crust of bread left over from Sunday dinner.

After working out the answer to your tax three or four times, not always arriving at the same figure, a great light will dawn. You will suddenly see, with amazing clarity, how this whole confusing task may be resolved.

The American public is long suffering and basically honest. Tax payment, of course, is always painful and we do not feel required to pay more than the law demands. And so, comes this revelation that tells us how to determine the exact amount, taking into consideration all individual circumstances.

Yes, these tax consultants, whether private or furnished by the Department of Internal Revenue, certainly cure the headache of income tax time!

ROAD BONDS OR LEVY?

A strong case may be built around a popular conception and yet be wrong.

Washington county is faced with a crisis, as is well recognized by anyone who has occasion to travel over its many roads. Heavy rains, following the damaging freeze of January, are completing destruction of roads that, at the start of the year, were none too substantial.

There are stretches of county highway where chances of getting through without the use of chains, jack and strong words is decidedly remote. And rather than have this condition finally "touch bottom", the roads just worsen more and more.

It was in full recognition of this situation that some 150 representatives of various county communities came together in a mass meeting, February 28, to discuss ways and means of getting out of the mud.

First constructive result of the meeting was: the request that a planning commission be named to survey county roads and make an estimate of recommended improvement, including probable costs. The concept is to not only make immediate, emergency repairs but to lay the foundation for a road system which will stand up, even if there is another unusual winter or two.

Second constructive result of the meeting was a basic agreement that such an ambitious program as a planning commission would set up will require money that can only come from the pocket of taxpayers.

A strong case was built, by an ably-speaking farmer, on the advantage of a special levy. He pointed out, with logic and conviction, that taxes are mounting at an alarming rate. And with the fearful prospect of some sort of recession and depression threatening

to knock the props out from values and prices of farmlands and other real estate, a continuing bond issue obligation might break many.

Having gone through a disastrous experience in the thirties, the speaker based his remarks on facts. He envisioned vast parcels of land being sold for taxes and, as a companion effect, the repudiation of county obligations.

His endorsement of a "moderate special levy" for roads met unanimous approval of those assembled. "Pay as you go", it is called. Pay as far as you can go, it might more definitively be stated. A moderate levy of 5 mills, it was pointed out, would bring in about \$182,000, on present valuations.

Another speaker assumed that interest charges on a bond issue of \$5 million would approximate \$100,000, which charges might better be spent directly on road improvement.

Whether the special levy contention meets the requirements of the situation is open to question. In the first place, a 5-mill road tax would bring in little more than was available last year, when \$100,000 was borrowed from the state to meet an emergency condition.

Then there is the question as to what are the requirements of the county road situation. Are we solely concerned with madly throwing on more crushed rock to make roads passable and following the present routine of not providing proper drainage? Is the county going to be satisfied with a continuing emergency status, without getting to the heart of the matter which proves present roads are inadequate?

It seems a little belated that the county court is now concluding emergency operations will not suffice. But it is at least a start of solution with this overdue beginning point.

Road money, it seems, will be better expended if there is some technique applied to construction. Full concern for drainage must be adopted. Proper base to stand the rigors of today's traffic is believed to be the answer to the roads which today are falling apart.

Immediate outlay should be far in excess of costs some five years from now, if proper measures are employed. These measures include a project which encompasses the entire county road network with proper engineering and full knowledge of the importance of drainage provisions.

Has any believer in a special levy the answer how sufficient funds may be so raised to do the job that is demanded? "Pay as you go" is good, conservative practice. But it represents a weak solution to a need that is paramount.

A bond issue, on the other hand, could be sold on a staggered basis, over a period of five years, and be repaid in ten years or more. Under such a plan, adequate money could be obtained when needed most, at the start of roads rehabilitation.

There will be a number of new road users come into the county within the next five or ten years. And they will pay some proportion of a long-range project with bonds. A special levy, however, will bring insufficient money to start the proposed road program. And present property owners will pay for roads whose service should continue for much longer than the taxable year.

The county roads planning commission will do well to consider all phases of the problem before officially recommending either road bonds or a special levy to rescue the county's roads.

THE COW STORY UP-TO-DATE

It doesn't make any difference whether you are a Republican, a Democrat or an Independent; the following article from the Bernice, La., News-Journal is good for all to read who wish to see our American system of representative government survive.

Capitalism: If you have two cows, you sell one and buy a bull.

Socialism: If you have two cows, you give one of them to your neighbor.

Communism: If you have two cows, you give them to the government and the government gives you milk.

Fascism: If you have two cows, you keep the cows and give the milk to the government.

New Deal: If you have two cows, you shoot one, milk the other, then pour the milk down the drain.

Fair Deal: If you have two cows, you let them starve so you can buy your milk in cans, thus making business better.

MUSIC'S GREATEST GIFT

The world mourns the passing of Harry Lauder, whose rich voice enriched millions to whom he sang. He was justly famed, with his jaunty airs and the lilt he gave to Scottish melodies.

To many, he was perhaps a comedian, a sort of passing troubador who brought a snatch of jollity. But he will be remembered for long, by many throughout the world.

In an almost forgotten interview, he once answered a question as to what was Music's greatest gift to the world. He described it as "the song of a mother with a sleeping bairn on her knee."

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