

Highway Progress Thought Near End Late in Year 1922

(This is another in a series of articles entitled "Glimpses at Highway History," compiled by Ralph Watson, highway department writer. — Editor's note.)

On Nov. 24, 1922, Oregon's highway system—so far as federal aid is concerned—was "jelled" when the federal bureau of roads and the highway commission reached a meeting of minds regarding the designated highways, and the mileage, for the construction of which the government would allocate its funds.

This agreement made no material change in the main or trunk line highways which had been set up by the commission, but it established a definite basis for joint endeavor which has not since been changed except by an increase in the percentage of federal funds allowed.

The first federal aid law limited federal funds to "post roads," roads over which the mail was to be carried. Later this was changed to "such projects as will expedite the completion of an adequate and connected system of highways, interstate in character."

It required that before federal aid would be given, the state must set up a system of highways not to exceed seven per cent of the total highway mileage in the state, and that federal money should be spent with the mileage limits of that seven per cent. Those provisions have been modified by an amendment increasing the percentage by one point whenever the designated roads were 90 percent completed.

Progress to 1922
The state in 1922 had 41,825.7 miles of public roads, which entitled it to a federal system of not to exceed 2,927.8 miles. The remainder of the road mileage was left to state, county and city financing and it is upon this program that the commissions have been working since 1922.

Oregon's highways at first were 16 feet wide, compared to 15 feet in California. On that standard the close of 1922 saw the state with 837.7 miles of paved highways; 1,197.3 surfaced macadam or gravel; 1940.2 still unpaved. Fifty percent of the system as then contemplated had been completed with practically all of the more important and most expensive portions entirely completed.

That was the optimistic view of the commission on Nov. 30, 1922 when its biennial report states: "Except for the construction of one single mile of pavement (through Rainier) the Columbia River highway is, at the end of 1922, a completed highway. . . . The completed cost exclusive of those sections within cities and towns will aggregate approximately \$11 million. . . . The Pacific highway, 345 miles in length, stands practically completed; 327 miles paved, the remaining 18 miles improved to a very excellent all-season road."

The Roosevelt Highway had been "extensively improved" but not yet "opened over its entire length." Its total cost when completed was estimated at \$10 million, covering its entire 409 miles.
Cost Told
That was the way they felt about the highway job when the commission balanced its books as of Nov. 30, 1922. From the beginning of the highway endeavor in 1913, the commission had expended \$56,809,107 in highway construction and its contingent expenses. Of this total, state funds, from bonds and other

Welfare Budget of Marion County Higher

Salem, Ore., Apr. 20—U.P.—Marion county's welfare budget for next year will be about \$1,454,000, Marion Bowen, county welfare administrator said today.

The budget for the fiscal year starting July 1 will be \$60,000 higher than the current fiscal year. County and state welfare commissions have both approved the budget. The county's contribution to the budget has been increased by \$19,690 to \$265,000.

The budget will include: general assistance, \$221,000; old age assistance, \$984,000; aid to dependent children, \$229,000, and aid to the blind, \$20,000.

The federal government provides 52 per cent of the old age fund, 30 per cent for dependent children and 48 per cent for the blind. The remainder of each fund is furnished on a 70-30 basis by state and county.

revenue sources, represented \$43,963,030; county cooperative funds, \$8,202,166; federal funds, \$4,546,530, and railroad funds \$97,381. Of this total approximately \$31 million were expended during the 1921-22 biennium.

Up to then the commission had been wheeling along on 16-foot highways and believed they could see the sunset of their endeavors with their job more than half done. They did not foresee how fast, or how far, the economic world was going to travel on rubber; envision the fleets of 72,000 pound trucks the millions of motorists, the high speed and the super highways. They thought they almost were ready to hang up their tools. In reality they had just outlined the backbone and a few of the ribs of their final handiwork.

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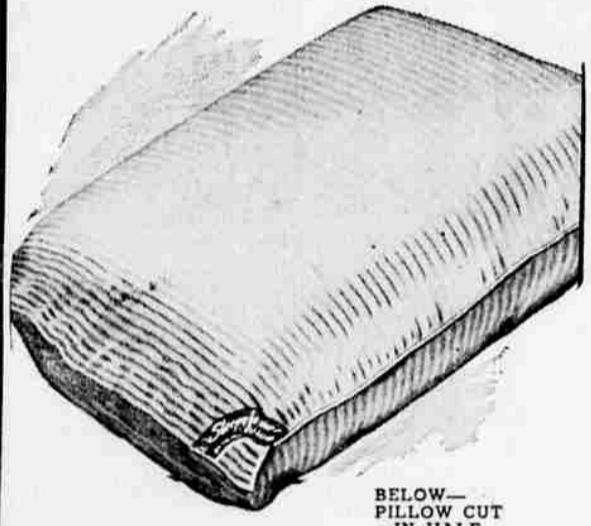
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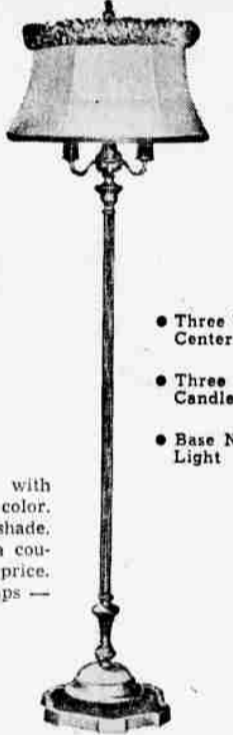
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