

# Use of Fingerprints Valuable Aid to Long Arm of Oregon Law

By William Warren  
United Press Correspondent  
Salem, Ore., Apr. 28—(U.P.)—The long arm of Oregon law has fingers: fingers able to span a continent and nab a man who fled from Oregon state prison 33 years ago.



A United Press story the other day disclosed that Louis Strof, 63, who walked away from Oregon state prison here in 1917, had been picked up in Somerville, N. J. The tired little hobo who had lived from handout to handout in the years after his escape was identified through his fingerprints—prints taken way back in the days when he was admitted to the state prison.

Did fingerprints go back that far? Indeed they did, said Warden George Alexander. The prison began taking prints in 1910, being the first in Oregon, along with Portland police to adopt the system introduced in this country in 1904.

That introduction to America was an interesting one. The occasion was the St. Louis World Fair, England sent the crown jewels for exhibit at the fair, and men from Scotland Yard came along to guard them. Sir E. R. Henry had set up a fingerprint system for Scotland Yard and the men who came with the crown jewels took fingerprints as a precautionary measure. The system took hold in this country. Of course the Chinese had been practicing a form of fingerprinting for several hundred years, but this was new for America.

**Other cities Adopt Plan**  
Gradually other cities added fingerprint departments until now prints are taken by police departments of all the large cities and many of the smaller ones. Every sheriff's office in the state takes prints.

When the state police were organized in August, 1931, they started a master file of fingerprints and it now is available to every peace officer in the state and to authorities in other states. A copy of each set goes to the FBI in Washington for its master file and a copy goes into the master file of the state here.

The Oregon Bureau of Identification here—the OBI—is directed by George A. Kanz, who has most of the records in his mind so that he just about knows if there is or isn't a record on a man when his prints come in.

The OBI checks each card of fingerprints against its files. If the man has a previous record, or is wanted elsewhere, the information is sent to the authorities interested.

**Information Sent**  
In turn when other states find through fingerprints that a man has a record in Oregon or is wanted here, the information comes to the OBI. Or if the FBI finds the man has a record it informs this state. That's how fingers of the long arm of Oregon law reached out to fetch Strof back to Oregon state prison.

That brings up another question. How long do these prints

last? Longer than a man's lifetime, says Kanz. And that's as long, of course as they are useful. Says Kanz:

"When we have positive proof that a man is dead, his card is taken from the active files and placed in the inactive or dead file. We keep these indefinitely. An insurance company may want proof of his death or identification. Or relatives may make inquiry. When we have no positive proof, but our files show that the man is 85 or 90 years old, we presume him to be dead, and his file goes into the inactive list."

**395,000 Master Cards**  
The OBI has some 395,000 master cards in its active files. It has only about 8,000 in its dead file. But the reason for the seeming discrepancy is that it's only been in recent years that the dead file has been kept. Before then, the records were destroyed after proof of death.

Besides, the OBI has some 130,000 photos of criminals and a separate single finger file made up from the master files, each of which records all fingers and thumbs. The reason for the single finger print files, taken only for those men who have been convicted of major crimes or crimes of violence, is so that, in case of a robbery, only one fingerprint is found at the scene, the OBI can use that fingerprint to put the finger on the criminal.

The long arm of Oregon law, indeed, has firm fingers.

## Medford Man Named College Alumni Head

Portland, Apr. 28—John Brewer, member of the June graduating class of Lewis and Clark college, has been appointed executive secretary of the Albany-Lewis and Clark association. He will assume his new office in June.

Brewer's responsibilities will include promotion of alumni activities and general college public events with special attention to annual tours of the college choir and men's glee club. For the past two years he has been student manager of the choir tour and director of the men's glee club.

Prior to three years' army service Brewer was office manager of Consolidated Freightways in Medford.

He is a member of Acacia Masonic fraternity and Blue Key national honor society for men. He was graduated from Medford high school in 1940 and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Brewer, 307 Laurel street, Medford.

## Employment Lowers Along Pacific Coast

San Francisco, Apr. 27—(U.P.)—Employment on the Pacific coast decreased during 1949 in line with a nationwide trend, the U. S. bureau of labor statistics reported today.

Industrial and commercial employment in California, Washington and Oregon averaged 4,091,000, a decrease of 3 per cent since 1948.

Principal declines were felt in manufacturing, especially machinery and shipbuilding, construction and trade.

However, in the last quarter of the year, "encouraging" revivals were noted in residential building, lumber and trade.

**TACTICAL ERROR**  
Coral Gables, Fla.—(U.P.)—Mrs. Grace A. Flinje picked the wrong car to bump into when she turned to wave at a friend. Her car slammed into the rear of a police cruiser, doing \$83 damage. Mrs. Flinje paid a \$15 fine.

Mile Rock Lighthouse, about half-a-mile off San Francisco, is visible for fourteen miles at sea.

## Medical Professor Warns on Use of Magic Hormones

San Francisco, Apr. 28—(U.P.)—A Stanford university medical professor warns that ACTH and cortisone, the "magic" hormones used successfully in treating many diseases, may have toxic effects.

Dr. William Kazell said last night that ACTH and cortisone are now "tools of laboratory and clinical research and not cures for diseases."

He said their promise lies in the hope that derivatives of the two substances will be found which do not have harmful side effects, are less expensive and which will relieve or cure certain diseases.

**May Build Resistance**  
He said ACTH, a protein substance, might build up in the body such a resistance that a patient would not respond to continued injections of it.

"ACTH, on long continued administration," Kazell said, "can produce a condition not unlike diabetes in some individuals, and this elevation of blood sugar is not always responsive to the use of insulin."

ACTH, he added, can also produce a condition of droopy through enlargement of the adrenal glands and an elevation of blood pressure "to dangerous levels."

**Gland May Cease**  
He said the prolonged use of cortisone probably will cause the adrenal gland of the patient to cease functioning properly. It can also produce a condition of droopy, he said.

## Control Board Urges Food Budget Increase

Salem, Ore., Apr. 28—(U.P.)—The state board of control approved an increase of 10 per cent in the food budget of the Oregon state hospital today.

Secretary of State Earl T. Newberry proposed the increase, saying he did not feel that patients at the state hospital here were getting the proper grade of food.

**Rate Revision Asked**  
The board also decided to ask the 1951 legislature for an upward revision of rates for voluntary patients at the hospital. Most of these are ones being treated for alcoholism. Voluntary patients now are charged in accordance with the ability to pay, up to \$25 a month. The legislature will be asked to increase the rate to a maximum of \$50 a month, with \$60 a month the rate for voluntary alcoholic patients.

Gov. Douglas McKay said he thought the legislature would approve the boost if the members understood the situation.

"It costs more money if we are to bring the food diets up to the proper standard," he said. "And I believe that some patients and their relatives are financially able to contribute to these increased costs."

Gov. McKay asked that a study be made of the use of autos by various state institutions with a view toward coordinating vehicle use.

**Pooling of Cars Urged**  
"I believe there is a waste in the use of cars among the institutions," he said, "and if a plan could be worked out where a vehicle of one institution could handle services for another nearby institution, the state might save considerable money."

He mentioned the Fairview home, Hillcrest school for girls and tuberculosis hospitals as being in the same general vicinity where vehicular use could be pooled.

The board took under consideration a proposal to build a warehouse here to store surplus property bought by the state from the federal government. Wakefield Walker, executive secretary of the state educational agency for surplus property, said the warehouse could be built for \$20,000 to \$25,000 and the cost could be made up in rentals over a period of about four years.

The state gets about \$200,000, original value, worth of surplus from the federal government a month. Wakefield said surplus property will be available to the state for about six more years.

**OUTRANKED BY WIFE**  
Manchester, N. H.—(U.P.)—One ranking navy officer doesn't rate a salute from Petty Officer Horace L. Carter. The officer is Lt. Cmdr. Donna Carter, his wife, and a navy nurse. Carter calls her "dear" instead of "sir"—at home.

## HONEYMOON DATE KEPT

San Francisco—(U.P.)—Fifty years ago Arthur L. Osborne promised his bride they would return for another honeymoon at San Francisco's Palace hotel. They have just kept the date. Osborne wondrously admitted, "I didn't believe the promise would be kept myself." Both are 75 years old.

## MATCH COVERS PRIZED

Colorado Springs Colo.—(U.P.)—Few book match cover collectors in the country are more enthusiastic hobbyists than Louis Carlson, a mailman, started his collections 10 years ago. Today he has more than 25,000 different match book covers.

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