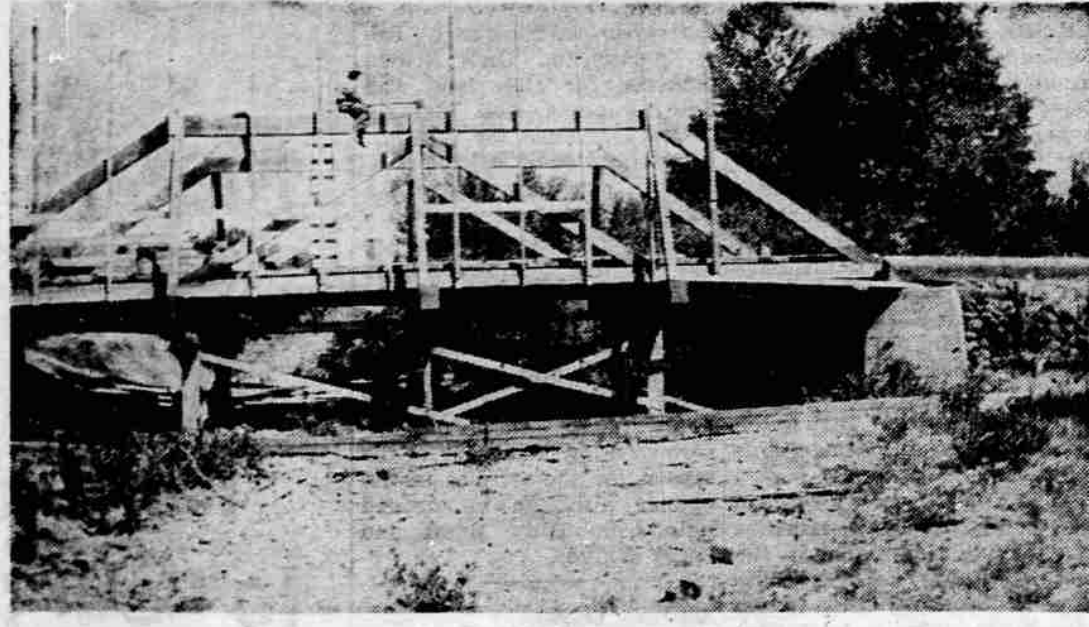


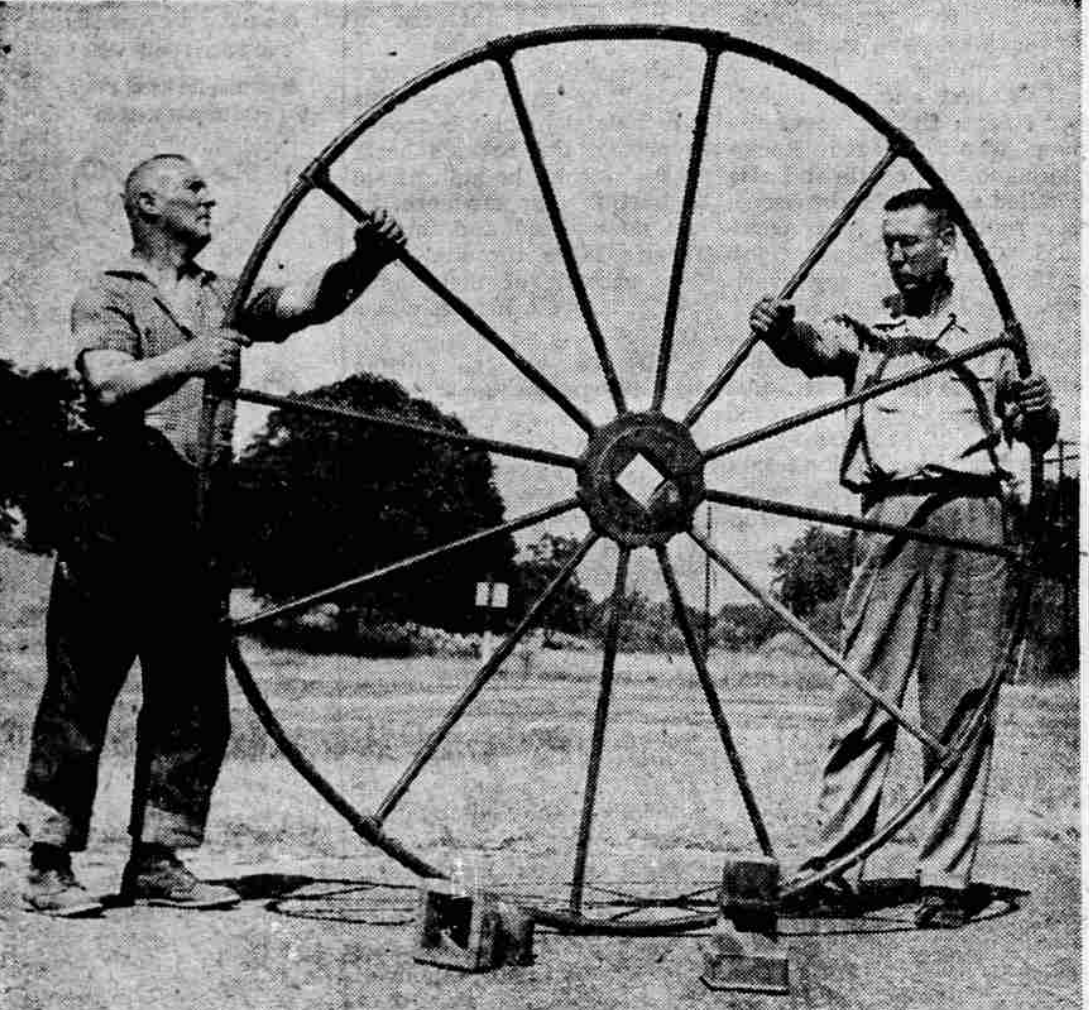
Hartmans Built County's Early-Day Bridges



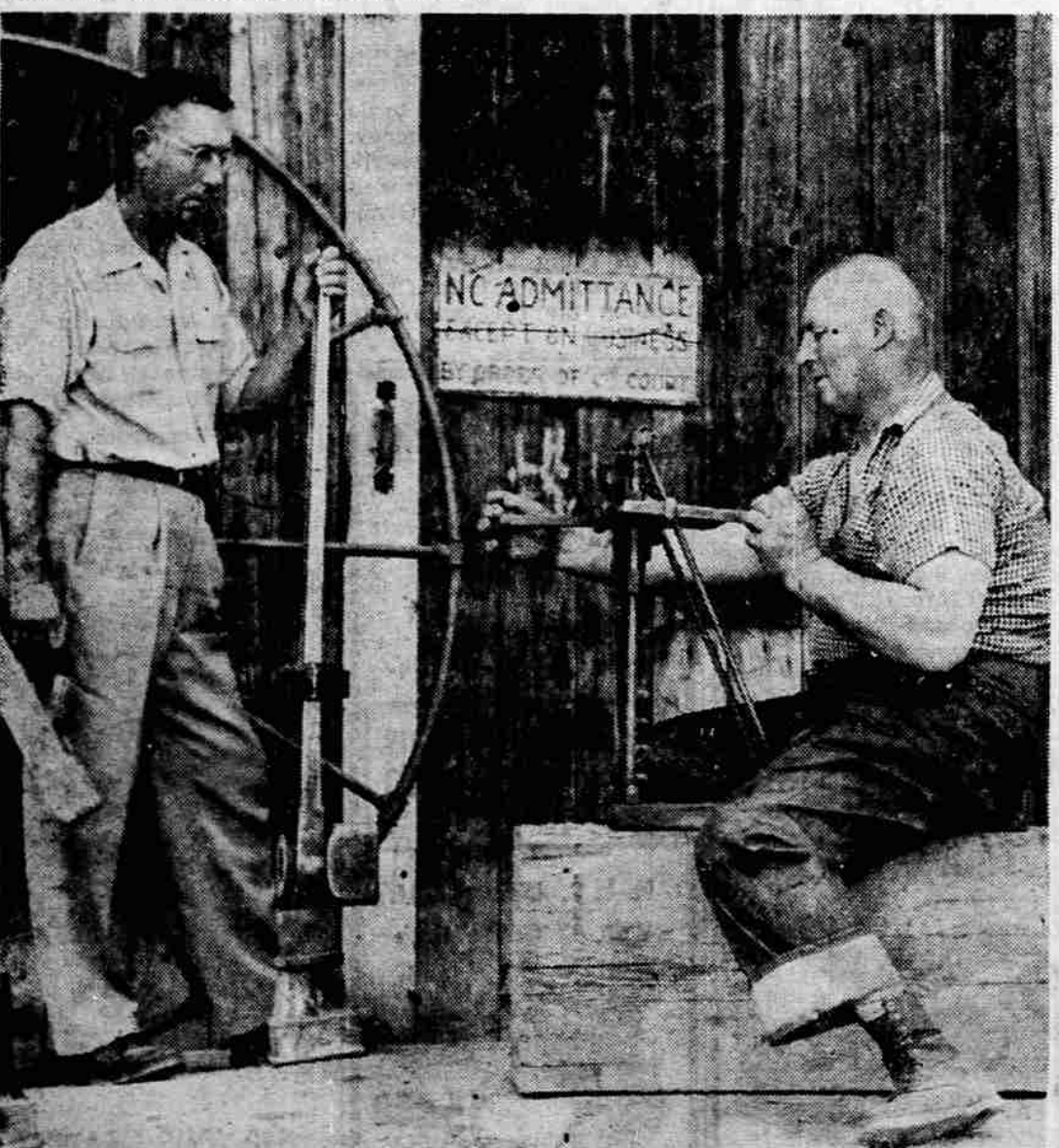
ANTELOPE BRIDGE—In 1922, the Hartman brothers and a small crew erected the covered bridge over Antelope creek, which, along with its "twin" in the same area, are still used. Lyal is shown above, astride the top beam, as he is tightening a nut with the big ratchet wrench.



HORSE POWER—In the early days of bridge construction in Jackson county, pilings were driven into the ground by means of a horse-operated "hammer," like the one pictured above. The men are Bill Owings and Bill Moore, who, with their horses, were hired by the day by the county to operate the pile driver. The picture was taken in 1922.



WHEEL WRENCH—Lyal (left) and Wesley Hartman, above, look over the old wheel wrench that was used by their father in the 1890's to tighten the nuts on the large steel rods used in bridge construction. In order to get enough pressure, four or five men were required to turn the wheel. Sockets of various sizes were used in the wrench, two of which are shown in the foreground above.



BORING MACHINE—Lyal Hartman, above, demonstrates the method of drilling holes in bridge timbers with an early day boring machine. Both hands were used to work the cranks that turned the auger. Wesley Hartman is holding a big ratchet wrench and an old wooden carpenter's plane, both of which were used by the brothers in bridge construction in the 1920's. Sign on the door of the old county shop in Jacksonville reads "No admittance-by order of co. court."

Men Recall More Than 500 Bridges They Constructed

By BOB VROMAN
Mail Tribune Staff Writer
Spanning rivers and creeks, gullies and ditches on the network of roads throughout Jackson county, some 200 bridges of all sizes and kinds carry the area's workaday traffic. Few motorists pay any attention to them as they pass. To Wesley and Lyal Hartman, who have been employed by the Jackson county bridge department for 40 years, the structures are something more than a mere adjunct to the county road system. They are timbers, steel, concrete and pilings—a means of getting from one side of a creek to the other.

The Hartman brothers, both of whom came to work for the county in February, 1919, and have had their jobs longer than any other present county employee, are almost legendary in the annals of early-day bridge building in this area.

Bridge Foreman
Wesley is, and has been for many years, superintendent of the county bridge department and Lyal is bridge foreman.

Their father, Jason Hartman, came here as a bridge builder in the 1890's and taught his three boys, Wesley, Lyal and Homer, the trade, from the ground up. Homer, who now lives elsewhere, is the only one that didn't stay with it.

In the old days, Wesley relates, there was no heavy machinery and timbers and rocks for bridge piers had to be moved by hand. He remembers how pleased his father was when he acquired his first tackle block and cable that replaced the rope they had been using to lift the timbers into place on the bridge.

Muscle-Power
The larger bridges, up until the mid-1920's were all the wooden covered type, often made of timbers cut from large trees and hand-hewn on the spot. Horses were used to drag timbers from the woods and to operate pile drivers. They also pulled wagon loads of supplies from town to the bridge site. But mostly, bridge building in the era before machinery took sheer muscle—power on the part of the men.

The boys helped their father on a number of bridges in the county when they were in their teens, but the first job where they did a "man's" work was on the McKee bridge over the Applegate, which Jason had contracted to build in 1917. The bridge still stands today but is out of use, being replaced by a new concrete bridge a few hundred yards upstream.

The brothers, like their father, are powerfully built, tall and muscular. They live in Jacksonville in the large two-story brick house purchased by their father and mother in 1910, located on the left as one drives into town from Medford. The house, now painted yellow, is one of the historic landmarks in Jacksonville and will be 100 years old next year.

Jacksonville Schools
The two men, who have never married, "batch" in the big high-ceilinged house, surrounded by such lavish appointments as an imported marble fireplace and beautiful stained glass window panels. All three of the boys attended Jacksonville schools.

One of their favorite recreations as young men was hunting, and an album of pictures taken with a box camera through the early '20's shows them with many trophies, including deer, bear, coyotes and hawks.

When on a bridge job in a more remote section of the county they would haul in supplies and equipment and camp there until the bridge



FRAMEWORK—The men above are working on the roof of the Antelope creek bridge, which was built by the county in 1922. Covers over the bridges added little to their strength, but protected timbers from exposure to weather and made them last years longer.

was finished, which took from two to three months on the large covered bridges. Guns came in handy then to provide fresh meat for camp.

Deer Incident
In 1909, according to Wesley, when they were helping their father on the Laurelhurst, or Peyton covered bridge as it was known then, on the upper Rogue river, they sighted a deer swimming downstream with the current. Jason picked up a gun and waited while the deer came ashore and walked right into camp, where it was felled with one shot. It was the easiest meat they ever got, he said.

Only eight of the old covered bridges still stand in Jackson county. One is the Laurelhurst, another is the one over Lost creek, which flows into the South Fork of the Little Butte above Lake-creek. Two others are in the Wellen district on Antelope creek, and another pair is located on Evans creek. McKee bridge and Hawk bridge on the Big Butte below Butte Falls completes the inventory. McKee and one of those on Evans creek are the only ones that are not still in use.

At one time, the Hartmans say, there were over 700 bridges in Jackson county of various types, the bulk of them being those over flood gullies and smaller streams. A lot of these have been replaced by concrete box culverts or corrugated steel tubes. Some years ago, the Hartman brothers figured out how many bridges they had built and the figure came to over 500. They said they have now lost track of the number the department has constructed in recent years.

In the old days, the county shop, or warehouse, which still stands, was located south-east of the courthouse in Jacksonville. An addition to the original shop was built sometime later, but has been since torn down and the only visible signs of it are its concrete foundation blocks.

Small Bridges
Wesley and Lyle supervised and helped build numerous small bridges through the years, but the "glorious" days of building the old covered bridges stands out in their memory. One project, the construction of the Hawk bridge over Butte creek in 1922 is one they will never forget, they said.

The bridge got its name from a man by the name of Hawk who talked the county into putting it in. Male residents of the area, some 16 in all, promised to help with the labor, but only three older men showed up. The job took them three months.

This particular bridge was a difficult one to build because of the curve in the wooden approach, and the fact that the span called for an 80-foot supporting beam of 12 by 14 inch material. Most of the timbers in the bridge were hand-hewn, while the

supporting piling and rafters was made of poles. A covered bridge will outlast an open one by many years, the Hartmans say, because of the protection against weathering afforded by the roof.

The only repair made on the Lost creek bridge, which was built before 1890, has been the installation of two new sets of underpinning and one new roof. It has outlasted all the early-day open bridges and is older than any bridge of any type in the county.

Tell of Old Horse
The brothers tell of an old horse named Topsy who had worked so long around bridge construction that he was trained to walk out over the water on two by 12's in order to bring a beam into place. Wesley relates sadly that they had to shoot him after his leg was broken in an accident.

The tools they used in the old days included a huge wheel wrench that was used to tighten the large nuts on the steel braces and supports and a giant ratchet wrench, both of which accepted various-sized sockets. Another tool was a hand-operated boring machine that had interchangeable augers. It was used to make holes in the timbers for the steel rods and also to cut series of holes for a mortise joint. The remaining wood being chiseled out. A large wooden carpenter's plane was also part of their equipment. The tools are soon to be given to the Jacksonville museum.

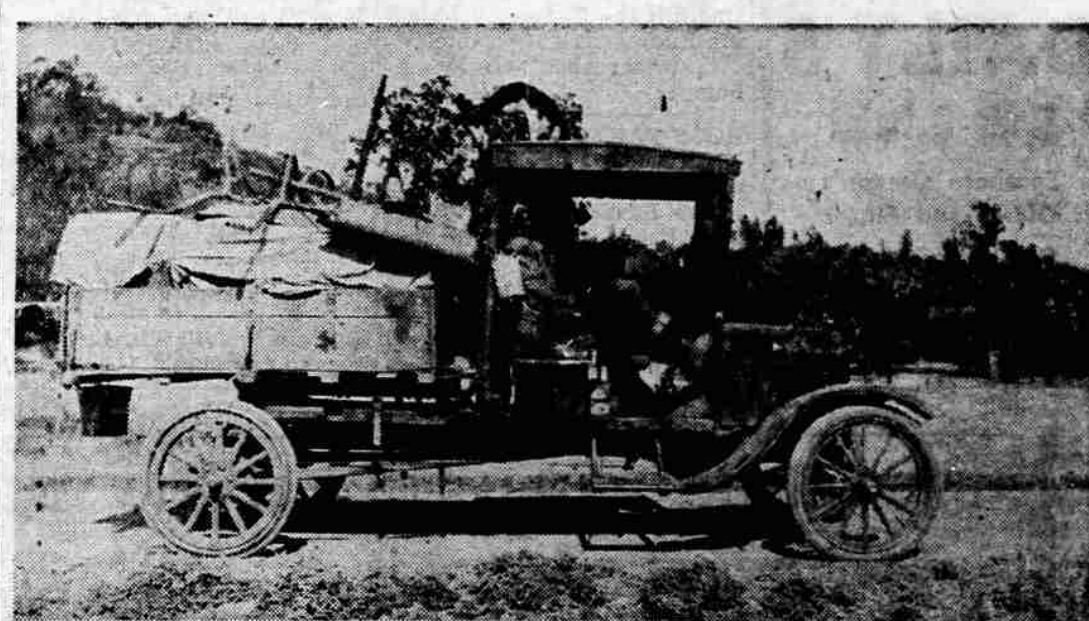
In addition, they had several one-ton pile driving rigs, operated by horses. The first motor trucks purchased by the county were two 1919 Model T's, which came without windshield, bed or seat, Lyal described them as having a motor, chassis and steering wheel, and little else.



COVERED BRIDGE—This old covered bridge, which still is in use today, was built by the Hartman brothers in 1922. It spans Big Butte creek about three miles below Butte Falls. It is known as the Hawk bridge, after a man by the name of Hawk who asked the county to put it in. Timbers in the bridge are 80 feet long, hand hewn from logs cut on the site.



UNDER CONSTRUCTION—This picture of the Hawk bridge over Big Butte creek was taken by Wesley Hartman before the "cover" was put on. Man in the picture is his brother, Lyal. The Hartmans had a box camera with which they took a great many pictures of bridge construction during the 1920's. All except two of the pictures here are from their photo album.



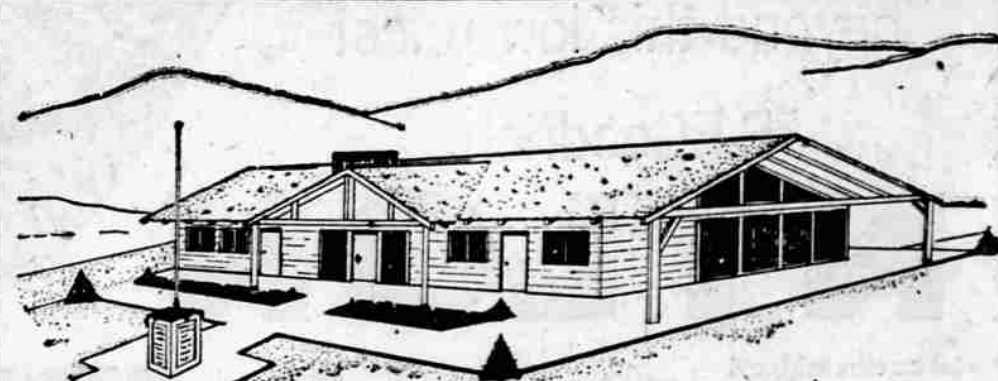
FIRST TRUCK—This 1919 Model T truck was one of the first two purchased by the county for hauling supplies for construction work. The picture, taken in 1924, shows the Hartman brothers, loaded down with camping gear and groceries, as they were ready to leave on a bridge job in the Reese creek district. The rear wheels had solid rubber tires.

RACKET BILL ATTACKED

Memphis, Tenn. — (UP) — Sen. John McClellan (D-Ark.) chairman of the Senate Rackets Committee, charged Friday the House Labor Committee had taken the heart out of the Senate-approved labor "bill of rights." He said "elimination of criminal penalties for union officials violating the rights of rank-and-file workers has virtually emasculated the bill."



MEDFORD PAINT and Wallpaper Store
6th & Holly—Diagonally Across from Post Office
PHONE SP 2-9321
We Give S&H GREEN STAMPS

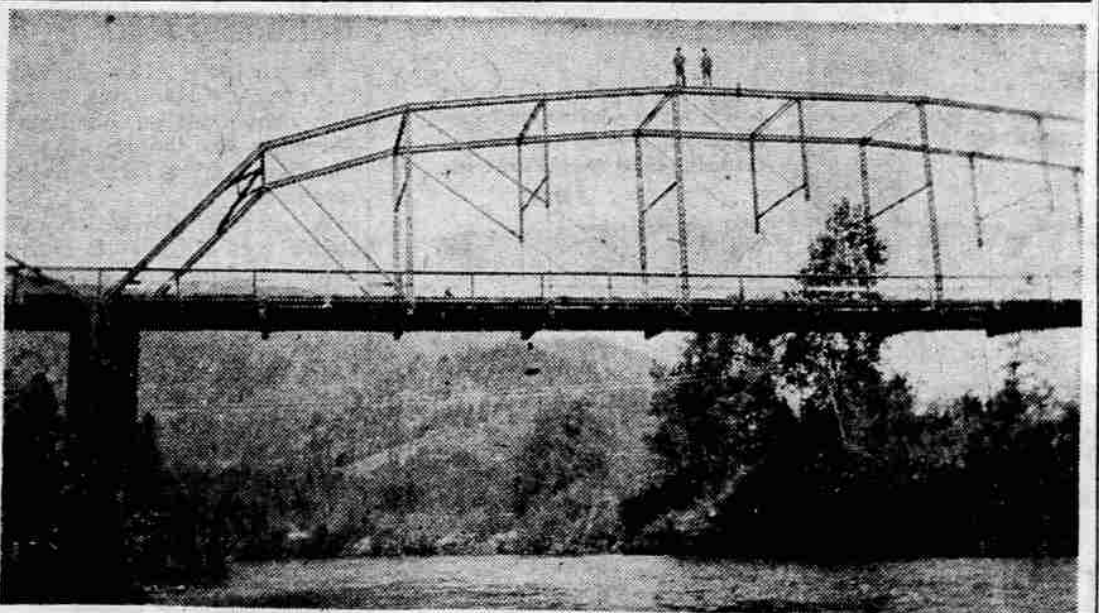


Choice of Selection

At Hillcrest Memorial Park we have the Magnolia, Roselawn, Sunset, Crestview, Hillside, Glen Haven, and Crown Point sections to provide a memorial within your means. In addition we have the Garden of the Angels for infant burials. All these sections are perpetually cared for, to insure year around beauty.

HILLCREST Memorial PARK

Bill Driscoll, manager North Phoenix Road
Phone SP 3-6162 or SP 2-7111



RIVER BRIDGE—The picture above, taken in 1929, shows Lyal and Homer Hartman standing on top of the high beam of the first bridge at the town of Rogue River. They had just finished painting the steel and later did extensive repair of woodwork.