

### Several Cases Checked by Police

Central Point - Things seem to be getting back to normal following a period of activity in Central Point, according to Chief of Police Ed Zander.

Accidents reported included one when a car, driven by Florence Marie Meddock, route 2, box 672A, Central Point, struck Daniel Joseph Terry. Terry was taken to Sacred Heart hospital by ambulance where he was treated for minor lacerations and received a cast for a fracture of the right arm. Mrs. Meddock was cited for failure to obtain an Oregon driver's license and improper lane usage. The accident occurred on North Third st., between Scenic ave. and Princess Way.

Extensive damage occurred to both vehicles when autos, driven by Thomas Roy Hutchens, 76, of 335 Alder st., Central Point, and Pat Rae Zander, 19, of 765 Ash st., also Central Point, collided at the intersection of Fifth and Alder sts. No injuries were reported. Miss Zander was cited for failure to yield right of way, police said.

Ann Ruth Padgett, 44 South Fourth st., reported that the shrubbery at her residence had been damaged by a motorbike.

Beverly Ann Henderson, 136 Oak st., reported that a

proowler had damaged a screen and opened a window at her residence.

Ivis Clay, 214 Alder st., reported to police that he saw a juvenile enter a parked vehicle. Later a 14-year-old juvenile was questioned regarding the incident. His admissions cleared several cars and window prowling cases, including the case at 136 Alder st., Zander said. The youth was released to the custody of his parents, pending a juvenile court hearing, according to police.

Fifty years ago, it took the motorist 35 days to cross the continent, compared with six days now, says the American Automobile Association.

## Sir John Falstaff Overwhelms Audience on Opening Night

Clearly, Sir John Falstaff in Shakespeare's "The Merry Wives of Windsor" is a "big" role, one which calls for immense talents.

When Robert Benson made his initial appearance before the first-night audience at the Ashland festival last night as the over-sized rogue, there was a stunned pause.

Then, as one, the audience gasped, "Ooooooh," and broke into applause.

He was mountainous! He seemed to fill up half the stage.

His costume, heavily padded over his already sizeable

frame, and his superb make-up were perfection.

If Benson had been barely able to recite his lines, the audience — won completely at first sight — would still have loved him.

**Balanced Cast**

But, amid a balanced cast of considerable skill, Benson went steadily up hill, seeming to be better in each scene than he was in the previous one.

The strength-dare we say weight? — of his performance lay in the nuances and subtleties of his characterization, the precise timing of his de-

livery and the surprising agility of his stage movements.

He wisely abandoned the constant and too hearty roar adopted by most actors who interpret the part, and instead varied his pitch, volume and mood as the lines and the action dictated.

Near the final scene, a pair of antlers rakishly atop his head, he gave a lecherous squeeze to the merry wives he had under each arm and postured magnificently.

"I am a prize buck," he said grandly, "divide me."

It was almost too much, and had Benson been a torca-

dor, the overwhelmed audience would have awarded him both ears and the tail on the spot.

He was easily the finest Falstaff in our experience, and we have no expectation of ever seeing a better one.

Despite his bulk, and the nearly awesome size of his performance, Benson's shadow, however, did not put his supporting players in the dark.

**Played Pleasingly**

Daniel J. Hoppe, in his second season at the festival, was a ringer as the excitable French physician, Dr. Calus,

a most unlikely suitor for the hand of diminutive Anne Page, played pleasingly by Virginia Flick.

"By Gar," he would explode over and over again, "By Gar!"

Then he would set himself in dueling position, scowl fiercely, and lunge at his imagined enemy, puncturing neat, round holes in the night air.

"Uh," he would say, withdrawing the blade from his victim's body with obvious satisfaction.

It was a finished performance.

The merry wives, who conspired delightfully to lure on the fatuous Falstaff, were played creditably by Elizabeth Huddle and Judith Hoppe.

The broader part of Mistress Quickly, the cheerful busybody who works in behalf of all three suitors for Anne Page at the same time, was developed with admirable flair by Marian Halley.

**Male Roles Dominate**

However, the title notwithstanding, this is a play in which the male roles dominate. And Director Ed Brubaker has managed to evoke an amazing variety of characters, each distinctly different and vivid.

John Getgood stands out as the amiable host of the Garter Inn, the residence of Falstaff and his rascally crew.

It seemed at times that Getgood was making too much out of too little, but the eye was compelled to watch him when he was on stage, and that is the acid test.

The hapless husbands of the merry wives were played by Richard Graham and Charles Taylor. The latter's role is bland and he did quite as much with it as could be expected.

Graham, enjoying considerably more latitude in the part of Ford, who is not at all sure his wife isn't attracted to Falstaff, won frequent applause for his characterization.

**Country Simpletons**

A trio of chuckle-evoking country simpletons, Shallow, Slender and Sir Hugh Evans, played by Jon Cranney, Kirk Mee and, of course, Hugh Evans, added to the merriment.

So, too, did Robert Trumbek, James Smith and Bruce Salvatore as Bardolph, Pistol and Nym, the sharpies who are satellite to Falstaff.

The blond handsomeness of Jeffery Craggs, who played Fenton, the inevitable winner in the contest for Anne Page, was marred by a ridiculous peach-fuzz beard, which served only to blur his features, rather than enhance them. To your razor, sir!

It is premature, since the other three plays this season haven't been performed yet, but we'll wager a crown or two that "Merry Wives" will be the clear favorite of the audiences this year.

Last night's blue ribbon crowd sure liked it. And we did too. (G.H.B.)

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**Curtailment of Simmons Institute Operations Sought**

Portland — (UP) — The federal government Wednesday took action to curtail the five-state operations of the Charles Simmons Institute.

Last U.S. Attorney Sidney Leszak filed a complaint in Federal Court here asking an injunction against operations and stock sales of the institute and seven allied corporations. Leszak requested the firms be frozen and placed in receivership.

The complaint, charging violations in security sales and deals including diversion of investment funds for personal use, was brought under the Federal Securities Act.

**Show Cause Order Issued**

Federal Judge Gus Solomon ordered the firms and six individual defendants to show cause July 31 why a temporary injunction should not be issued.

Federal authorities indicated the complaint climaxed three months of investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Simmons, \$1 million operations in Oregon, Washington, California, Arizona and Texas.

**La Pine Acres Head Named**

The defendants, in addition to Simmons, are William F. Gressinger, Portland, an associate in conducting Simmons' lectures; Charles M. Simmons II, Los Angeles; Richard L. Longnecker, Cle Elum, Wash.; Francis A. Butterworth, San Jose, Calif., president of La Pine Acres, Inc., near Bend; and Douglas C. Shepherd, Los Angeles.

Corporations charged in the complaint were Human Relations Foundation, a Washington corporation; Simmons Institute, Inc., a California corporation; Simmons Institute of Seattle; Educational Corporation of America, an Oregon group; University Village, Oregon, Inc.; Transamerica Property Corp.; La Pine Acres, Inc.; and Universal Mortgage Co., Los Angeles.

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