

Early Days On Pokegama Railroad Line Recalled By Pioneer Engineer

By MALCOLM EPLEY

The days when Klamath county railroading was in its highly informal infancy are vividly recalled by H. M. Webber, a resident of Lenox addition, who was engineer on the Klamath Lake railroad—the famous Pokegama line of the 1903-1907 era.

Webber got a job on the Pokegama railroad in 1904, after it had been operating trains for a few months from Thrall, on what was then the main line of the Southern Pacific, to Pokegama, a logging camp in southwestern Klamath county about 35 miles from Klamath Falls. For several years, this was Klamath's main line of transportation to the "outside."

On his first day of work, there was a train wreck on the line. Webber was a member of the crew bringing a car of lumber down from Potter's mill, which was on a spur about three miles from Pokegama. The car jumped the track and dumped the lumber.

Re-Railed and Left

The car was re-railed, and left on the main line with broken ties and the lumber could be re-loaded.

The next day, the passenger train—the passenger car was a converted boxcar—came down the grade. The engineer forgot, and as the train rounded the bend it smashed head-on into the parked boxcar.

Passengers were sent sprawling, but as was fortunately the usual case on the Pokegama line, nobody got seriously hurt in the wreck. One man, Sam Ball of Roseburg, sustained a broken thumb, the most serious casualty.

Webber recalled that the Klamath Lake railroad improved its passenger equipment later by getting an old show car from the Southern Pacific railroad.

Took Pokegama Stage

Passengers bound for Klamath Falls took stages from Pokegama, and came in behind the horses. Many of them rode the stage as far as Keno, and came into Klamath Falls by launch on Klamath river. Freight also came both ways, and there were large warehouses at Pokegama for storage of freight in transit.

Webber recalls that the train crews were especially interested in the liquid freight that was bound for Klamath Falls' very active saloons. The train crews never lacked for liquor. It was conveniently drawn from the whiskey kegs, simply by raising one of the hoops, boring a small hole, draining off the drinks in a big tin cup, plugging the hole and replacing the hoop.

It was the custom for the crew to make off with the engine on Sunday, when the trains made no regular runs. They would ride the old coffee-grinder up the line to Fall creek or some other stream, and get in the day fishing.

Rockpile Incident

On one occasion, the crew "swiped" the engine and went to a dance at Potter's mill. Coming home, the operator of the engine, being somewhat befuddled, failed to see a pile of rocks that had slid down on the tracks, and the engine was wrecked.

Officials of the line never said a word. But when pay day came, the gang who rode the engine to the dance simply didn't get any pay for that month. That took care of the cost of bringing up a Southern Pacific wrecker and re-railing the engine.

The Pokegama line was standard gauge, but there was a switchback or two that made it possible to get up and down the steep canyon grades. Webber recalls that his pay was \$75 a month.

The Klamath man followed railroad most of his life, usually contributing his services to the operation of logging railroads. His last job was at Canby, Calif. He is now retired.

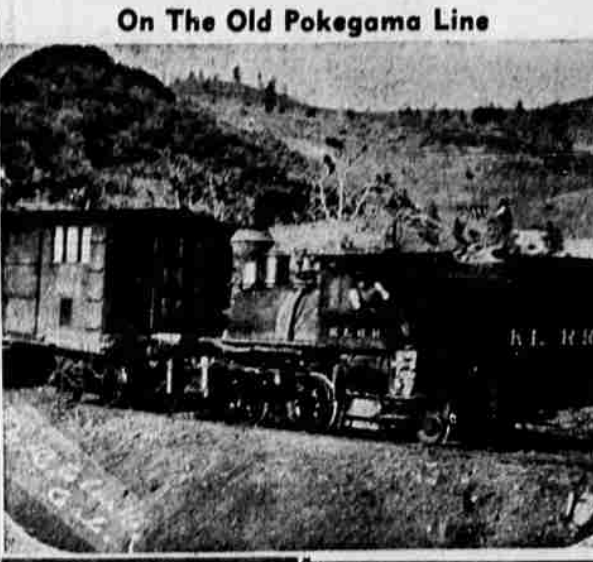
The Klamath Lake railroad was expected for a time to extend its rails to Klamath Falls, but it went out of the picture of transportation in this area when the California and Northwestern was brought here from Weed, and was then "sold" to the Southern Pacific, which presumably was behind the project from the start.

Posse Plans Medford Trip

The Klamath Sheriffs Posse will ride 30 strong in the Medford parade and rodeo on Saturday, June 14.

A drill was held Tuesday night at the fairgrounds and another will be held Thursday night, the troop being drilled by Lt. Mel Henry of the posse. Capt. E. P. Ivory and Sheriff Lloyd Low will ride the points in the parade and exhibition drill at the Medford rodeo, Saturday evening.

Horses will leave the fairgrounds by truck at 9 a. m. Saturday, and a final drill will be held in Medford at 5 p. m. just before the parade which will start at 6 p. m. Following the evening rodeo performance the horses will be trucked home, and the majority of the posse will be in



Queen For A Day Visits Shasta Wonderland

RED BLUFF, June 11—An attractive, 28-year-old housewife of Fresno, Calif., who gained national publicity last week because she's never had a honeymoon, is visiting in the Shasta-Cascade Wonderland at the present time, enjoying that long-awaited adventure.

She is Maxine Campo, a mother of two daughters, who was named Queen for a Day on Jack Bailey's popular radio show after she related that her husband's income was \$10 a week at the time they were married.

Originally scheduled to have reigned over the Mid-Summer Ski tournament in Lassen Volcanic National park, the petite "Queen" was offered a full week's honeymoon by the Red Bluff chamber of commerce and the Merchants' Boosters here, after the ski tourney was cancelled because of adverse weather. She was presented to the community early this week in a "command performance" at the State theatre.

Here is a picture of the coffee-grinder locomotive and the converted boxcar that made up passenger equipment on the Klamath Lake railroad, Klamath county's first rail connection with the "outside world." The Pokegama line operated in the first decade of this century. H. M. Webber, below, a resident of Lenox addition, was an engineer on the pioneer line.

Klamath Falls for the queen's try-out for the Klamath rodeo, on Sunday, June 15.

Don't let the opportunity pass. There are vacancies to be filled in the U. S. navy today. So don't delay. See your local recruiter today.

Three Girls Register In Queen Race

The sign-up for candidates for queen of the July 4th rodeo has started, with three girls already registered with Ruth Nelson, rodeo secretary.

Number 1 on the sign-up is Jessie Totten, 16-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Totten, 1511 Dayton. Jessie is a junior at KUHS, she has been riding for four years and owns her own horse. She was born in Boise, Ida.

Number 2 is Deiores Hunt, 305 Hillside, daughter of Mrs. Yleria C. Hunt, is 16 and has been riding for years. She was born in Klamath Falls and owns her horse.

Number 3 is Nancy Balentine. She is 17 and a native of this city. Her parents are Mr. and Mrs. U. S. Balentine, 1904 Huron. Nancy was graduated from KUHS last year, has a horse and likes to dance, skate and ride.

Still Open

All girls interested in becoming queen of the 1947 rodeo may sign up with Mrs. Nelson at rodeo headquarters, Balsiger Motor company, Main and Esplanade. Headquarters phone is 9800.

Outlying communities, especially Dorris, Tulelake, Fort Klamath, Bonanza, Bly, Merrill and Malin, should register their candidates with the secretary immediately. The try-out is Sunday, June 15, and the queen's ball is Saturday, June 21.

All candidates will be photographed by Kennell-Ellis and their pictures will appear in The Herald and News.

Several valuable gifts are being offered by Klamath Falls merchants.

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for the queen, her court and various rodeo events. Charlie Head's saddlery is offering a tooled leather belt with a silver buckle for bronze riding.

The Gun Store is offering a belt and buckle for calf roping and Drew's Manstore is putting up a belt and buckle for bull riding. Jim Stevenson of Macdoel, in charge of all the roping events for the rodeo, is giving away a thoroughbred yearling filly for an event to be announced by the rodeo committee later.

The Klamath Rodeo association is giving riding hats and shirts to the queen and princesses. The queen will also receive a silver-mounted saddle from Sears Roebuck and company, and a Morgan chestnut sorrel filly from J. W. Whiteline, box 445, Klamath Falls.

Danforth Named League Adjutant

P. J. Danforth has been elected to the post of adjutant and paymaster of the Marine Corps league, replacing Ed Newell who has moved to Los Angeles.

The next meeting of the league is scheduled for Friday, June 20, at 8 p. m. in the EGO hall. Members and the auxiliary were present for the last meeting on Friday.

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Rain Threat To Beet Crop

TULELAKE, June 11—Beet growers and some 200 Mexican laborers sent here for blocking, thinning and weeding the sugar beet crop are scanning the skies anxiously in the hope that the wet weather is over. Clark W. Fensler, representing the Spreckles Sugar company, believes that no serious damage has been done as yet but more than 2000 acres of the crop are in need of immediate attention.

The Mexicans, here on a contract basis, are living at the Growers' camp in the former army camp at Newell and are responsible for their own living costs. Work in the fields had just gotten under way when the recent storm started.

Some loss of potato seed by rot is reported and it will be several days before machinery can be taken into the fields for cultivation.

The grain crop in most areas, according to a report from the Growers' office, is excellent.

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