

A \$1000 Prize-Winning Story

'Cipher in the Snow'

It started with tragedy on a biting cold February morning. I was driving behind the Milford Corners bus as I did most snowy mornings on my way to school. It veered and stopped short at the hotel, which it had no business doing, and I was annoyed as I had to come to an unexpected stop.

A boy lurched out of the bus, reeled, stumbled and collapsed on the snowbank at the curb. The bus driver and I reached him at the same moment. His thin, hollow face was white even against the snow.

Facts Stare From Bus

It didn't register for a minute. I glanced quickly at the scared young faces staring at us from the school bus. "A doctor! Quick! I'll phone from the hotel..."

"No use. I tell you he's dead." The driver looked down at the boy's still form. "He never even said he felt bad," he muttered. "Just tapped me on the shoulder and said, real quiet, 'I'm sorry. I have to get off at the hotel.' That's all. Polite and apologizing like."

"Kid From Milford Corners"

"Don't know his name; some kid from Milford Corners," was the reply.

It was like that in the faculty room and the principal's office. "I'd appreciate your going out to tell the parents," the principal told me. "They haven't a phone and, anyway, somebody from school should go there in person. I'll cover your classes."

"Why me?" I asked. "Wouldn't it be better if you did it?"

"I didn't know the boy," the principal admitted levelly. "And in last year's sophomore personalities column I note that you were listed as his favorite teacher."

I drove through the snow and cold down the bad canyon to the Evans place and thought about the boy, Cliff Evans. His favorite teacher! I thought. He hasn't spoken two words to me in two years!

Never Talked, Never Smiled

I could see him in my mind's eye all right, sitting there in the last seat in my afternoon literature class. He came in the room by himself and left by himself. "Cliff Evans," I muttered to myself. "A boy who never talked." I thought a minute. "A boy who never smiled. I never saw him smile once."

The big ranch kitchen was clean and warm. I blurted out my news somehow. Mrs. Evans reached blindly toward a chair. "He never said anything about being ailing."

His step-father snorted. "He ain't said nothin' about anything since I moved in here."

"Hadden't Been So Dumb"

Mrs. Evans pushed a pan to the back of the stove and began to untie her apron. "Now hold on," her husband snapped. "I got to have breakfast before I go to town. Nothin' we can do now anyway. If Cliff hadn't been so dumb, he'd have told us he didn't feel good."

After school I sat in the office and stared bleakly at the records spread out before me. I was to close the file and write the obituary for the school paper. The almost bare sheets mocked the effort. Cliff Evans, white, never legally adopted by step-father, five young half-brothers and sisters. These meager strands of information and the list of D grades were all the records had to offer.

"Never Belonged"

Cliff Evans had silently come in the school door in the mornings and gone out the school door in the evenings, and that was all. He had never belonged to a club. He had never played on the team. He had never held an office. As far as I could tell, he had never done one happy, noisy kid thing. He had never been anybody at all.

By JEAN E. MIZER, Teacher and Counselor, Wood River High School, Hailey, Idaho; Guidance Director for Blaine County, Idaho, Schools.

How do you go about making a boy into a zero? The grade school records showed me. The first and second grade teachers' annotations read, "sweet, shy child," "timid but eager." Then the third grade note had opened the attack. Some teacher had written in a good, firm hand, "Cliff won't talk. Uncooperative. Slow learner." The other academic sheet had followed with "dull," "slow-witted," "low I.Q."

Children Have Resilience

They became correct. The boy's I.Q. score in the ninth grade was listed at 83. But his I.Q. in the third grade had been 106. The score didn't go under 100 until the seventh grade. Even shy, timid, sweet children have resilience. It takes time to break them.

I stomped to the typewriter and wrote a savage report pointing out what education had done to Cliff Evans. I slapped a copy on the principal's desk and another in the sad, dog-eared file. I banged the typewriter and slammed the file and crashed the door shut, but I didn't feel much better. A little boy kept walking after me, a little boy with a peaked, pale face; a skinny body in faded jeans; and big blue eyes that had looked and searched for a long time and then had become veiled.

Voices Discourage

I could guess how many times he'd been chosen last to play sides in a game, how many whispered child conversations had excluded him, how many times he hadn't been asked. I could see and hear the faces and voices that said over and over, "You're dumb. You're dumb. You're a nothing, Cliff Evans."

A child is a believing creature. Cliff undoubtedly believed them. Suddenly it seemed clear to me: When finally there was nothing left at all for Cliff Evans, he collapsed on a snowbank and went away. The doctor might list "heart failure" as the cause of death, but that wouldn't change my mind.

We couldn't find ten students in the school who had known Cliff well enough to attend the funeral as his friends. So the student body officers and a committee from the junior class went as a group to the church, being politely sad. I attended the services with them, and sat through it with a lump of cold lead in my chest and a big resolve growing through me.

Looks for Veiled Eyes

I've never forgotten Cliff Evans nor that resolve. He has been my challenge year after year, class after class. I look up and down the rows carefully each September at the unfamiliar faces. I look for veiled eyes or bodies scrouged into a seat in an alien world.

"Look, kids," I say silently, "I may not do anything else for you this year, but not one of you is going to come out of here a nobody. I'll work or fight to the bitter end doing battle with society and the school board, but I won't have one of you coming out of here thinking himself into a zero."

Most of the time—not always, but most of the time—I've succeeded. (The story is true, but the names of the characters and the location have been changed.)

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of growth, commitment and revelation.

"Journey Among Brave Men" by Dana Adams Schmidt. A New York Times correspondent's experience among the rebelling Kurds in Iraq.

"Turkey Today and Tomorrow" by Nuri Eren. Up-to-date account of political, social, economic and cultural developments in Turkey.

"Mississippi: The Closed Society" by James W. Silver. A discussion of the rioting and attack on U.S. marshals at the University of Mississippi.

"Cow People" by Frank Dobie. Recalls some of the men of a bygone era in Texas.

"Complete Book of Winter Sports" by Arthur Liebers. An authoritative guide to skiing, skating, hockey and other sports.

"Skiing the American Way" by Peter Estlin. An interpretation of the American ski technique, a specific uniform technique being adopted by professional ski instructors in the United States.

"Christmas the World Over" by Daniel J. Foley. Includes celebrations and customs from the U.S., Australia and many countries of Europe, Latin America and Asia.

"1001 Best Places to Live When You Retire" by Helen Heusinkveld. A directory telling where they are, what they cost and what they offer.

"Children and Others" by James Gould Cozzens. Short stories comprised of first-person reminiscences of childhood and boarding school, Civil War stories and other subjects.

R. Smith Receives Major Committee Posts at Salem

Representative Robert F. Smith, House majority leader, was appointed to three major committees at the opening of the legislature at Salem this week by F. F. Montgomery, new Republican speaker.

The recently re-elected representative for Malheur and Harney counties was appointed to the Highways committee, the taxation committee and chairman of the State and Federal Affairs committee.

One of the major issues before the Taxation committee will be the various property tax relief proposals. Representative Smith states, "The governor's budget calls for no new general fund taxes, and I am hopeful that we can get some relief for property taxpayers this session."

The new session of the legislature got under way Monday when over 100 bills were introduced. About 90 of these were appropriation bills.

Introduction of appropriation bills on the first day, something never done before in Oregon, was made possible by the early meeting of the Ways and Means committee. This committee, which examines the governor's budget, has been meeting since Dec. 28.

The House of Representatives also adopted a rule requiring lobbyists to register. This rule, something new in Oregon, is another "first" of the Republican leadership of the House. It requires lobbyists to disclose the names of their employers and the amount of fee they have been promised contingent upon their success in influencing legislation.

Representative Smith said, "This is a much needed addition to the rules. The activity of lobbyists in the legislature should be a matter of public record."

OSU Geographer Cites Five Valuable Assets Concerning Growth of Oregon

Oregon has five tremendously valuable assets and attractions that will help bring rapid development in coming decades, an Oregon State university geographer has predicted.

Dr. Richard Highsmith listed:

1. A highly favorable physical location—a reversal from the past—that is marginal to the most rapidly growing areas of the nation.

2. Land in several qualities and considerable quantity.

3. Water—perhaps most important of all.

4. Climates ranging from mild-marine to dry continental.

5. A long border on the Pacific that provides opportunities enjoyed by only a handful of states for marine advancements, ocean studies, resource development and shipping.

The croplands, forests and water are the foundation for notable growth in the economy and population of the state, said Highsmith, who is editor of the Pacific Northwest Atlas and acting chairman of the OSU Department of Natural Resources.

Reluctant to Face Growth

"The development in fact may come more rapidly than the state is prepared to handle in an orderly manner, in part, because many Oregonians are reluctant to see it come and are closing their eyes to the inevitable," Highsmith stated.

Oregon's location "way out West" has been a considerable disadvantage in the past, Highsmith remarked. Freight rates have complicated marketing of some products, for example. But the population explosion on the West coast has brought major markets nearby and reduced reliance on the east, he observed.

In fact, the West today has a quality of "magnetic attraction" for the entire nation, Highsmith believes.

Value of Water Cited

Water availability offers a major industrial asset, Highsmith observes, and is the key to development. The value of water is dramatically demonstrated by areas that lack it and are frantically seeking water sources.

With water, greatly intensified land use is possible in Oregon, he noted. The climate too provides fine opportunities for diversity in crop production, recreation and permits easy transportation movement throughout the year, he added.

Highsmith sounds one note of caution in the rosy picture for rapid development. That is the formulation of a "priority rating to provide a measure of protection for the very basic resources."

Croplands Should Be Kept

Quality croplands should be given to other uses "very grudgingly and only after alternatives prove to be impossibilities," he suggested. This is already a problem in the Willamette valley, it was noted.

Finally, Oregon needs to gain from the lessons provided by the experiences of other areas—notably California—where rapid and uncontrolled growth has meant

Area Veterinarians Slated to Give Tests in Beef, Dairy Herds

Testing for tuberculosis of all cattle, two years old or over in registered beef and commercial dairy herds, is required to maintain Malheur county's accreditation.

This announcement was made last week by George W. Bain, county extension agent, and is in accordance with word received from USDA and Oregon Department of Agriculture.

This testing, to be accomplished as near Feb. 1 as possible, is to be done by local practicing veterinarians at no expense to the operators involved since it is a federal and state accreditation program.

Testers will be assigned to the various areas and milk routes by Dr. Robert F. Mowrer, federal veterinarian, and the local veterinarian will contact producers for appointments.

It is necessary, according to Mowrer, to inject the cows and check them for reaction within 72 hours.

Coming Events . . .

Tonight, 8 p.m. — Adrian PTA meeting in high school building.

Tonight, 8 p.m. — Nyssa PTA meeting in school cafeteria.

Tonight, 8 p.m. — Snake River Gem club meeting at Dead Ox Flat community hall.

Jan. 15, 9 p.m. — Second ward Gold and Green ball in Nyssa LDS stake house.

Jan. 16, 8:30 p.m. — Pinochle party at Oregon Trail Grange hall.

Jan. 18, 8 p.m. — Eastern Star meeting in Masonic hall.

Jan. 19, 8 p.m. — Christian Women's Fellowship meeting in local church.

Jan. 20, 2 p.m. — OKK club meeting at home of Mrs. William Peutz.

Malheur Potato Growers to Meet Tuesday at Boulevard Grange Hall

Marketing and wireworm control will be the major topics at the annual meeting of the Malheur Potato Growers association slated to begin at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, at Boulevard Grange hall. Steve Besse, Malheur county extension agent, reports that a most interesting and informative program has been arranged.

A discussion on marketing of potatoes—processed versus fresh, how long will high prices prevail and where do we go from here—will be led by Roland Groder, marketing specialist from Oregon State university.

A panel analysis and discussion of wireworms includes an impressive array of panelists with Dr. J. A. Onsager of the Entomology Research division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, leading the list.

Other Panelists Named

Also serving on the panel will be Bob Every, OSU entomologist; Frank Phipps of Geigy Chemical company; Harry Namba, Ontario potato grower, and a field man from Ore-Ida Foods, Inc.

Other items of interest on the agenda will be discussions on the current potato seed situation and on the new variety, Norgold. New directors will be elected during the meeting.

Lunch will be served by the Grange ladies through the courtesy of the Malheur Potato Growers association. All potato growers are urged to attend.

Malheur Safety Council Organized

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fic violators are on hand for the training. He will also run the projector and do commentary on films to be shown, and serve as prompter during group discussions.

Guest Instructors Planned

Guest instructors will also be on hand for each of the training sessions. They will include practicing medical doctors, optometrists, insurance men, school teachers, lawyers and law enforcement officers.

Those attending the training sessions, Petrie stated, will be traffic violators, referred to the school by all courts in Malheur county. If they fail to pass the final test, they will then be referred back to the original court.

The chief added that anyone can attend the training meetings, either as a student or guest. The program, he said, is being sponsored and all materials prepared by Oregon's Traffic Safety Education division, in conjunction with the National Safety council, with the purpose of creating a safety-minded public through combined efforts of local law-enforcement officers and the state safety department.

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New Books Listed at County Library

New books going into circulation Saturday, Jan. 16, at Malheur county library include the following.

"Familiar Freshwater Fishes of America" by Howard T. Walden. A guide which gives the history, habitat, migration and breeding habits of freshwater fishes as well as suggestions on landing them.

"America's Best Deep-Sea Fishing" by Heinz Ulrich. The author tells the salt-water fisherman where to fish along the coast of the U.S., Hawaii, Mexico and the West Indies and gives detailed information on 30-some species of salt-water fish.

"The Science Book of Modern Medicines" by Donald G. Cooley. An account of the development of modern medicine.

"Wonder Drugs" by Helmuth M. Boettcher. In tracing a history of antibiotics a German writer offers interesting facts about medical cures and customs of the ancient and medieval world as well as discussing the discovery of such drugs as penicillin, streptomycin and aureomycin.

"The Year of the Rat" by Mladin Zarubica. Told to the author by a hunting guide in the Bavarian Alps, this is the story of the substitution of an English agent for a German general in order to mislead the German command about the Allied invasion.

"Espionage and Counterespionage" by Arch Whitehouse. Adventures in military intelligence.

"The Man Who Was Sherlock Holmes" by Michael Hardwick. Biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

"Legion of Strangers" by Charles Mercer. A vivid history of the French Foreign Legion.

"Mining Frontiers of the Far West" by Rodman W. Paul. A history of pioneer silver and gold mining, of mining methods and of pioneer mining communities.

"The Responsible Self" by H. Richard Niebuhr. An essay in Christian moral philosophy.

"The Low-Fat Cookbook for Gourmets" by Helen Belinkie. A collection of recipes checked by a hospital dietician for accuracy of low-fat cholesterol count.

"Crewel Embroidery" by Weldon's Needlecraft Editors. A book that shows the novice as well as the more experienced needleworker how to create unusual and useful articles for home and personal use.

"Hurry Sundown" by K. B. Gilden. A major novel of the new South and its problems—racial, social and political—that tells of the involvement of an entire community in Georgia's rich delta country in a struggle set off by two men, one white, one Negro, who unite in their refusal to sell land to a Northern syndicate.

"The Rope Bridge" by Cecilie Leslie. A novel about an English girl brought up in the game country of Northern India.

"A Moveable Feast" by Ernest Hemingway. Sketches of the author's life in Paris during the 1920's.

"A View of All the Russians" by Laurens Van Der Post. The author, permitted to spend more time and travel more widely in Russia than most foreigners, presents a description of present-day conditions there.

"ESP: A Personal Memoir" by Rosalind Heywood. An autobiographical excursion into the world of extrasensory perception.

"The Gathering of Zion" by Wallace Stegner. An account of the Mormon trek to Utah.

"Tomorrow's Weapons" by Brig. Gen. J. H. Rothschild. The author argues vigorously in favor of an open acknowledgment of chemical and biological warfare and the use of such weapons as gas and germs in modern war.

"A Warless World" edited by Arthur Larson. Twelve leaders in the field of international law and history give their ideas on the preservation of law, economic improvement and social advances possible in a disarmed world.

"The Military Establishment" by John M. Swomley. An account of the growing power of the military establishment in the life of the United States.

"The FBI Nobody Knows" by Fred J. Cook. A documented, highly critical study of the FBI.

"The Strange Tactics of Extremism" by Harry Overstreet. An examination of the John Birch society and other groups of similar persuasion with suggested methods of combating extremism.

"Mr. Kennedy and the Negroes" by Harry Golden. An informal overview of white leadership and actions in the last 22 years affecting the American Negro revolution for equality.

"Extreme Magic" by Hortense Calisher. A collection of short stories.

"The Pilgrim Project" by Hank Searls. A space adventure.

"To Sit on a Horse" by Albert Morgan. A story about a retired vaudeville singer.

"Friday the Rabbi Slept Late" by Harry Kemelman. An unorthodox mystery.

"So Long at the Fair" by Bonner McMillan. A novel set in the farmlands of Texas just prior to World War I.

"Beyond Arabian Sands" by Grant C. Butler. The people, places and politics of the Arab world.

"The Wind's Will" by Gerald Warner Brace. A story set against the background of a Maine small town, of the summer between high school and college which becomes for David Wayne a time