

THE CAPITAL JOURNAL

E. HOFER, Editor and Proprietor

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HAPPENINGS ON THE ROAD TO THE BURNS COUNTRY

Burns, Oregon, Wednesday, June 30.

After waiting a day the auto to Burns never got back as scheduled. So we started on the long drive to Burns with a pair of cayuses, and H. R. Dunlap pushing the lines.

He is at the head of a large wholesale house and a retail store at Vale. The latter is called the Vale Trading Co., and the forwarding and jobbing business is the Merchants Wholesale Co. There is more forwarding than wholesaling, although the latter is growing.

Westfall, Beulah, Drewsey, Harney, Burns, Narrows, Diamond, Lowen, Skull Springs, Dill, Brogan and in all about twenty trading places are supplied from Vale. The freighters bring in wool with four to ten horse teams and take out freight. The forwarding business consists in paying the freight on shipments to Vale, checking the shipments, collecting damages and shortages. The merchants in the interior settle every thirty days, but some run accounts longer. The Merchants Wholesale Co. forwards wool, hides, pelts and alfalfa seed. The past two years wool sold at Vale at 10 to 14 cents. It had to be stored in the warehouse for sales days. The buyers were very particular in the advertised sales days and the sacks had to be opened and all the wool sampled. This year wool sold delivered at Vale for 20 to 22 cents. None went begging. A great deal was sold before it was sheared. The buyers went out onto the ranges and bought it up. Not much laid in the warehouses and there was nothing to sell on sales days.

The stage road to Burns follows up Bully creek. Three streams center at Vale, the Malheur, the Willow and Bully. Out about twelve miles we cross an iron dyke. The oil lands lie on both sides of this. The dyke runs from southeast to northwest. The first canyon is about a mile further, or perhaps two miles. Birds and school houses seem to be equally scarce in this part of the state.

Fourteen miles out we passed the old Frank O'Neil place, now run by Jackson, with plenty of hollyhocks, shade trees, a fine verandah and a few chickens. This is a famous eating and resting place for stages. We got a drink (of water) and passed on.

Speaking of drinking, this is a dry county, and while hard drinking has been reduced, and those who sell it are probably rendered more careful, the sales of "near beer" are very large. It is shipped in bottled form, packed in barrels. It is shipped as "beer" but the bottles are not labeled at all. There is little or no drunkenness. The empty bottles are shipped out. In place of being "near beer" it is just common beer, and not being labeled is of poor quality, having no reputation or brand to maintain. It costs more than good beer from kegs, pays the manufacturer more, and the retailer gets more profit than if he sold labeled goods or by the glass. At some places the bottled "near beer" is sold by the glass, two glasses for 25 cents, and small ones at that. The big schooner for 5 cents is a thing of the past in the dry county.

Experience With Autos.

Tired of waiting for the stage line auto, and Ford's auto, we decided to hit the road with private conveyance. Out about twenty miles we found the stage line machine lying in a canyon with a broken axle. The Ford machine that has gone through to Burns in ten hours punctured seven tires going sixty miles and was still on the road Wednesday afternoon. The Boise party composed of Messrs. Atkinson, Shellenberger, Davis, Gibson and a chauffeur, got out of Vale at 4 a. m. and had breakfast at Westfall. Their machine was a dandy Franklin, with about 28-inch wheels, four-cylinder, and a regular whizz of a driver. When we were zig-zagging up Cottonwood canyon we wondered how an auto ever got up even as far as Westfall, and began to wonder whether our beautiful Franklin was still in commission and if it would ever live to get back to Boise. Up the canyon we soon came to some springs of ice cold water. Here the syringa was blooming in abundance, as perfectly as in the Willamette valley.

The mail line auto was a strong built machine made by the International Harvester Co. It has the power to climb steep, rocky mountain roads, but was weak in the axle.

At 6:30 we were over the first divide—we cross three between Vale and Burns—and trotting down the great slope into Westfall. The stage line auto with its broken axle was lying in the middle of the road and our bronchos trotted by No. 1905 right merrily. The great basin lay spread out below. The Westfall valley is as green and smooth as the top of a new billiard table. The grain, alfalfa and poplars had the rich dark green peculiar to perfect irrigation. It is the home of prosperous ranchers, and two stores in her sell \$100,000 a year of merchandise.

We left Westfall at 9:15 Wednesday night. We were at the top of Ben Deer mountain; by midnight and flew down a grade that was several hundred feet straight up and down. Two a. m. we stopped for lunch and fed and watered our teams. We were headed for Beulah valley, a 45-mile night drive, but not destined to get there. At 3 a. m. we met Ford with his auto coming out of Burns, put one team in the stage barn, sent the other on ahead and got into the 40-horsepower car. What a pleasure it was to set back in the rich cushions of the upholstered tonneau and be swayed from side to side as the great machine ate up the distances. In six minutes we went three miles and would be in Burns, seventy-five miles away, in five or six hours. The great car fairly plowed through the air. We were supremely happy for a space of six minutes, when the car gave a few unearthly pops, began to catch its breath in fits and starts, its pulse was beating very unevenly, and it stopped short and refused to go ahead. The patient Ford, who had driven all night to meet us, tightened a few bolts, touched a few buttons, shook his head, and this he said, "The thing is dead." The storage batteries had given out and no extras in the hold. There we sat on the highway at daybreak, one team on ahead the other left behind at the stage station and Burns seventy-five miles away. We did not swear. We sat by the roadside and waited for sunrise. Some freighters were getting their horses together to feed for the long pull over Ben Deer. Six horses take two wagons coupled, the first wagon with 4800 pounds wool, the second 3600 pounds, or four tons and 400 pounds. The wool comes from as far as Lake county and the freighters get \$1.50 per hundred from Burns. They sleep by the roadside, cook their own meals, and there was where we forgot our troubles at a 5-o'clock breakfast of clear salt pork fried, black coffee cooked in a tin bucket, and warm bread baked in a Dutch oven. No two-dollar dining car meal tasted as good as that simple meal seasoned with alkali dust and eaten with your fingers.

Troubles were ended. I hiked back four miles, got our team hitched up and was back on the dusty trail for Burns at 8 o'clock. The man in charge of the stage station was Mr. Tuener, a son of Judge Tuener of Pendleton, one of the ablest original lawyers of eastern Oregon in his day. We reached Beulah at 10 a. m. and found a family of bright Chicago people running the postoffice, store and roadhouse. The proprietor's name is Allen Gilke. Their house is on the bank of the Malheur. The road crosses the river and climbs to the clouds by easy grades laid by a skilled engineer at not to exceed eight per cent, while the old trail was a regular toboggan slide. Over the rimrock we go and out open wider and wider the great central Oregon valleys.

Away to the west a great dark green tongue of forest tableland extends far to the south. The hillsides are greener and the ridges are dotted with firs and juniper cedar.

E. HOFER.

A kind word to a living husband is worth ten on his tombstone. A young woman who has been jilted by a faithless lover may congratulate herself on having escaped a matrimonial hoodoo. **Floated Flag With Derrick**

Hay's Hair Health

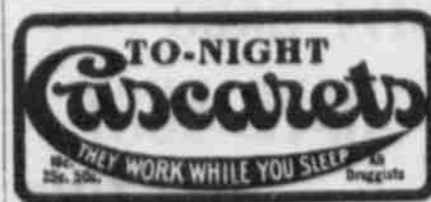
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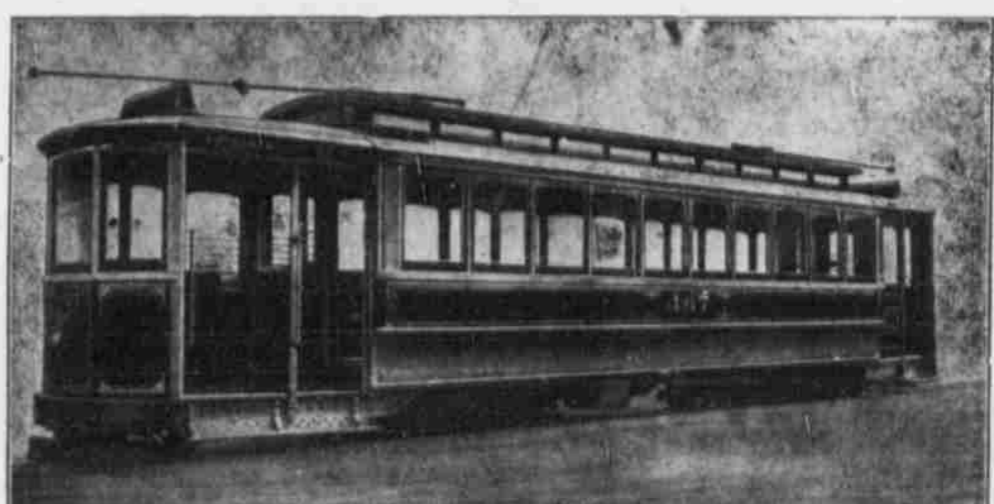
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