

THE SUNDAY OREGONIANPortland, Oregon, September 2, 1934ROAD GOUGED THROUGH ROCK TO GARDEN SPOT IN WILDERNESS

Forest Service and CCC Men Open Route to Primitive Paradise
 Heretofore Locked in Embrace of Three Snow Sisters of Cascades -
 Much of Country Declared Trod Only by Indians and Wild Animals
 in Past

BY LEVERETT G. RICHARDS

Here is the Odyssey of an adventure into one of the few remote western wildernesses, a land of little known loveliness, that lies not 150 miles from the doorsteps of half the population of Oregon and Washington. Locked in the embrace of the three snow sisters of the jagged Cascades - Mount Adams, Mount St. Helens and Mount Rainier - this terra incognita has slumbered through the centuries untouched by auto tire or any foot but that of the redman, and, lately, that of the forest ranger. Now, before the snow flies this winter, this last bit of the untamed and untamable wilderness will be accessible to any motorist with good brakes and steady nerves.

Already a road - if Webster will permit one to abuse the word - has been gouged and blasted out of the rock and through the thick of the forest, penetrating the heart of this last great garden spot of the wilderness gods. Prompted by an acute attack of curiosity, Howard J. Burnham, publicity chairman for the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, and the author laid in a store of provisions, carefully ballasted the expedition's Rocking Chair Six and cast off on an exploration of this road, which proved to be the first automotive expedition to circle the base of Mount Adams.

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From Vancouver the log of the expedition leads eastward on the Evergreen highway to the Wind river valley road, which turns off the Evergreen two miles east of Stevenson. Thence a one-way forest road winds over the divide to Peterson guard station, where Ranger Bob Overbaugh guards the entrance to the Twin Buttes country, famous huckleberry heaven, to which thousands of redmen from the Yakima reservation and white men from Oregon and Washington migrate in normal years.

Last year 10,000 persons camped in the high plateau, plucking and shipping about 95,000 gallons of luscious pie fruit. This year

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the crop failed completely and a few hundred campers picked an insignificant 3200 gallons, Overbaugh reports.

Checking in at this station, the traveler finds a good two-way road the 20 miles to Twin Buttes, a road which will be rock surfaced and straightened by next spring, thanks to Uncle Sam's pick and shovel soldiers, the CCC. Here, 110 miles from Vancouver by way of Wind river, was the road's end, up to a week ago. Now the road goes on. But many a tourist will tarry. For here, as elsewhere in the forest, Uncle Sam's "babes in the woods" have been busy for nearly two years.

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Throughout the Columbia forest they have added ten completely new camp grounds to the forest's previous list of 37 improved areas, Lester Moncrief, assistant supervisor, proudly proclaims. The more spectacular feat of this army of human ants in building roads, planting trees, building fire lines and fighting fires has stolen the spotlight from their humbler but equally valuable efforts to "clean house" and make the camper and motorist comfortable in the forest.

Camp grounds all over the forest have been renovated, enlarged and equipped with camping conveniences, including 160 new camp tables, 60 new fireplaces with cooking arrangements, 30 rest rooms for tired tourists, 45 garbage pits, three camping shelters, five water systems, 7500 feet of pipe line for cold and colder running water, wells, pumps and everything for the camper, in fact, but can openers and cuspidors.

In the Twin Buttes area, for instance, the catalogue of camping attractions includes ample and attractive camping grounds at Race Track, Goose Lake, Peterson, Ice Caves, Guler and Troutlake (hotel at the former), little Goose lake, Cultus creek, Twin Buttes proper and others reserved for indians. Attractions include: Indians at home, the world's best huckleberries, lava beds, lava caves, variety of tree and plant life, flowers, bear and deer, majestic scenery, fishing in five major trout-stocked lakes and hiking to five major points of interest over forestry trails.

But Twin Buttes no longer is Roads End. Heretofore a 300-mile detour has been required to get the 30 miles from Twin Buttes to the upper Cispus river by automobile. Now a forest road takes off through the untouched timber east of aloof Mount Adams, winding down a vast

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valley to cross the Lewis river on a temporary bridge, thence climbing sharply again along the shoulder of Council Bluff on the southwest of the big volcanic heap.

Here one road branches to the east to wander through the Chain of Lakes park, one of the spots that God has never forgot. Here the last of the lava flows from Mount Adams dies in weird contortions amid the bright beauty of serene mountain meadows dotted with lakes that lie like lustrous spangles of the flowers and grass of the meadow land.

But the main road here leaves the mountain behind and heads southwest down past Sheep lake to the Cispus river, where once more it joins an established two-way forest road leading to Randle, Wash., and thence to Chehalis, Tacoma or Seattle. The 25-mile stretch between Twin Buttes and the Cispus, however, is not yet complete. It has been ripped and blasted through the woods and rocks to form a connecting link for necessary traffic. But the automotive Columbus that would attempt this Odyssey today would spend most of his time rebounding from seat to ceiling and back to ceiling. Our Bouncing Bertha leaped ponderously from crag to crag and back to crag like an elephant indulging in leap frog until the bouncing Mr. Burnham began to inquire the cure for mal de mer.

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At present this whole Cispus area, starting at Twin Buttes and embracing the Yakima Indian reservation and the whole of the northern forest is closed to all travel because of fire danger, although this ban may be lifted at any time. By next spring, however, the road from Peterson ranger station to Twin Buttes will be graveled, widened and straightened, and the new link from Twin Buttes to the Cispus road will be widened and graded to accommodate tourist traffic at 30 miles an hour in dry weather, Moncrief advises. In wet weather it will be muddy.

Throughout four or five months of the year this new link serves as a key to the heretofore padlocked paradise of virgin forest, mountain meadows, fishing and hunting, hiking, camping, picnicking and merely scenic touring embraced in this vast, untrammelled area lying

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between Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens. Mount Adams has been said by scoffers to resemble an elegant ash heap. But from the numerous view points along this new road it has a new character and glamour that can never be forgotten. Especially does this new link road open up this ancient and undisturbed expanse of sylvan beauty to Seattle, Tacoma and Chehalis motorists, who now may enter through Randle and the Cispus road. Portland and Vancouver motorists can reach the Cispus road by turning off the Pacific highway at Mary's Corner, and driving 180 miles through Morton to Randle. Other forest roads penetrate to scores of large and little mountain lakes throughout this area, while trails give access to peaks and other natural wonders.

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The expedition's trusty Trapeze, for instance, took a swing to emerald Chambers lake from which we hiked seven miles to precipitious Goat Rocks, where packers report sitting and watching bands of mountain goats hanging by their horns from the snowline and otherwise disporting themselves on the sheer slopes of the pinnacles.

Thence we daring young men mounted our flying trapeze and headed for the Yakima Indian reservation. There Donald Clark, project manager, representing C. R. Whitlock, the superintendent, and Thomas L. Carter, the forest supervisor, guided us across the international boundary to the land of the Indian nation, whence none but us had been admitted except on sheep or forestry business. Neither will anyone be admitted so long as the Indian council frowns on the invading whites as they have for long years.

But don't grieve, stranger, no one but an Indian or a taxi driver could negotiate the ancient auto trails that wander nonchalantly from bump to bump on the reservation, ducking slyly behind trees and popping coyly into creeks and ravines, scrambling up rocky hillsides and diving madly into rivers with parallel logs for bridges. The Indians admire a good road, Clark explains, but they won't use it. They stick to the old road and the old ways. They still change their names as often as the whim seizes them. Akwapete Sawayallil one week answers to Akwapete George the next. While Nicholas Schiskin may blossom out with a moniker that sounds like Willie Hop To It the

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next time he signs the payroll, he may borrow the name of any one of his fourth cousins just as readily as he moves in on any relative bearing the faintest taint of kinship.

About 430 Indians from every corner of the country are represented in the four Indian CCC camps established on the reservation. There are Yakimas, Hopis and Navajos from Nevada, a Mohawk from New York, an Aleut from Alaska, Siouxs, Swinomish, Coeur d'Alenes, Blackfeet, Tulalips, Hoopas, Flatheads and Piutes, all living and working, gambling and eating together with buried hatchet. But the "No Visitors Allowed" sign remains up to tourists, except those on business. So we left the reservation.

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On the south side of the mountain lies another of the areas of outstanding beauty - Bird Creek meadows. This scenic splendor, too, is opened to the motorist this summer for the first time by a road just completed by CCC crews, 150 miles from Vancouver via White Salmon or 135 miles via Wind river, Carson and Guler. Another road, completed last year, gives the motorist access to Morrison creek and Cold springs on the southeast slope of Mount Adams and continues to the 6000-foot level, from which the route begins for the climb to the top of the 12,307-foot mountain. Here, too, a horse trail takes off around the mountain, a 10 days' leisurely trip.

In the long-established Wind river recreation area numerous improvements also have been made. Only 70 miles from Vancouver by surfaced road through Carson, this area is a popular camping and picnicking ground. Camping grounds have been improved at Government springs, where summer homes are numerous; Little Soda springs and Trout creek and Wind river, while trails lead to falls and view points within easy hiking distance.

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Equally accessible is the Lewis river area, 50 miles by good county and forest roads from Vancouver via Woodland and Lake Merwin. Improved roads open up camping and picnicking grounds at Olie Peterson's, the Lewis river ranger station, and Pine creek. Fishing is good in season on the Lewis river, Merrill's lake (a four-mile

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hike), the Muddy fork and other streams. From Olie's a trail leads to the famous lava caves, while a short trail leads from the forest road to the latest miracle of Mother Nature - Christmas canyon, gouged by the flood of last Christmas.

Flood damage to the road leading to Spirit lake from the Pacific highway near Castle Rock also has been repaired sufficiently to permit comfortable access to this old favorite of week-end campers. Besides the public camp two commercial resorts offer cabins, boats and surfboarding. A road leads to timberline for the comparatively easy climb of 9671-foot Mount St. Helens. New trails are under construction to open up the high lake country north of Spirit lake, said to be the best fishing of any group of lakes in the state, lying in the rugged hills.

Seventh on the list of major recreation areas is the recently-acquired Packwood recreation area, 150 miles from Vancouver via Mary's Corner, Morton and Randle. Campgrounds on the Clear Fork, Coal creek and other sites welcome the tourist. Horse trips and hikers to the Cowlitz river, Packwood lake and the Muddy Fork fishing grounds are major attractions. Here, too, the trail takes off for the rugged, unknown Goat rock country.

All roads named above have been improved during the last 18 months and are in good condition, except where noted. Information on any recreation area is available at the office of Supervisor J. R. Bruckart in the postoffice building at Vancouver or from the district ranger in the separate areas.

These are your playgrounds. The rangers will welcome you.

Three Photographs

(1) Two men and a woman standing looking out over a lake.

Caption: ONE OF MANY. One of many lakes opened up by the new road to the Bird creek meadows on the southeast slope of Mount Adams. (Photo courtesy U.S. forest service.)

(2) A view of Mount Adams and some surrounding area covered with a great deal of snow.

Caption: MOUNT ADAMS. New and distinctive view of mighty Mount Adams taken from The Bumper, a small mountain near the route

Road Gouged Through RockPage SevenCaption: MOUNT ADAMS (Continued)

traversed by the new forest road from Twin Buttes to the Cispus country, soon to be opened to travel. (Photo courtesy U.S. forest service.)

- (3) A view of some very rugged, heavily forested and snow-covered country.

Caption: GOAT ROCK RANGE. These jagged mountains, comprising a crest of the Cascade range about half way between Mount Adams and Mount Rainier, have been practically inaccessible. They will be five miles by trail from the new road.

One Map

Caption: NEW ROAD LOCATION. Route pursued by the Flying Trapeze. Starting from Vancouver, leave the Evergreen highway two miles beyond Stevenson, thence through Carson over the mountain to Peterson ranger station, through the Mount Adams huckleberry heaven to Twin Buttes. Here the new road takes off around the foot of the mountain, through virgin forest and lake country to connect with the forest road from Randle. The Flying Trapeze, however, continued around the foot of the mountain through the Yakima Indian reservation, to Glenwood and on to White Salmon and the Evergreen highway.