

27 Oct. 1932 1.52 bind. est. 12.80

T H E S I S

on

THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC POOR RELIEF ADMINISTRATION  
IN A RURAL COUNTY -- 1858 TO 1930  
(Benton County, Oregon)

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Submitted to the

OREGON STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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In partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the  
Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

by

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July 29, 1932

APPROVED:

Redacted for privacy

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## CHAPTER I

## LOCATION AND EARLY HISTORY OF BENTON COUNTY

What may have been the first County Court record of Benton County, Oregon, pertaining to public poor relief, is found in Journal A, page 65, in the year of 1850. Here we find written:

"Dr. T. J. Right, Medicine and attendance on Mr. Rue."

One might anticipate some such need for relief as stated in the above case, since civil society was too young in this new community to be afflicted with diverse social ills. It had scarcely been organized. The first white settler had arrived less than five years before.

These settlers found what we know as Benton County, Oregon, in possession of the Calapooia Indians. The Calapooias were not in occupancy, however, since for a few horses, clothes, and etc., they had leased the land to the Klickitats. The Indians were numerous, but from all accounts of the pioneers\* were not troublesome. The Calapooias and Klickitats had fought their big fight previous to the arrival of the white man.

The winter of 1845 brought the first white immigrants on claims within the present boundaries of Benton County. The years of 1846 and 1847 saw many additions to their

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\* Fagan, p. 329



ranks. They came by the Barlow Route or up from the south along the Applegate Trail. These immigrants were allured to this region by the equable climate, clear atmosphere, and abundant fresh water. They found vallies with grass waist-high, attesting to the richness of the soil; low rolling hills, grass-covered, suitable for grazing lands; while the hills of the coast range were heavily wooded, except the Yaquina district, which was swept in the dry season of 1844 by a forest fire, leaving charred trunks where once stood a virgin forest. In addition, there was game in abundance, while the streams gave promise of fulfilling the wildest dreams of a fisherman's paradise.

From such a magnificent territory was Benton County created\* in 1847, by the act of the House of Representatives of the Provisional Government, with its southern boundary extending to the California line, and embracing the present counties of Lane, almost wholly; Douglas; Coos; Curry; Josephine; and Jackson. This was reduced in 1851\*\* so that the present southern boundary was established; and again in 1893, when Lincoln County was created to the west. Benton County then assumed its present area of 440,320 acres.

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\* Fagan p. 368

\*\* Fagan p. 333

A year after the arrival of the first settler found the present county seat staked out into town lots. It was created by Mr. J. C. Avery from his small pasture; his claim being located at the junction of the Willamette and Mary's River. The new town was known as Marysville till 1853 when it assumed the name of Corvallis to prevent confusion with Marysville, California. In 1851 the county seat was established, and the machinery of local government was ready for motion. Corvallis was selected as capitol of the Territorial Government in 1855, but her reign was only a few short months. The town of Corvallis was incorporated in 1857.

Rapid as was this development, the political changes of the Oregon Territory would have kept pace, were it not slowed down by the inaction of Congress. The first American government on the Pacific coast was authorized May 2, 1843, at Champoege, and the Organic Laws of Oregon adopted by the people of the Willamette Valley. Here it was Resolved, "That the laws of Iowa -- as laid down in the 'Statute Laws of the Territory of Iowa, enacted at the first session of the Legislative Assembly of said Territory, held at Burlington, A. D. 1838-9, published by authority in Dubuque, Russell and Reeves, printers, 1839;' certified to be a 'correct copy', by Wm. B. Conway, Secretary of Iowa Territory -- be adopted as the laws of this Territory."

A provision was also made, "That where no statute of Iowa Territory applies, the principles of common law and equity shall govern."\*

The struggling settlers of Oregon were disappointed in the slowness of Congress in providing them with a territorial government. Their bill had been held up in the Senate because it forever prohibited the existence of slavery.\*\*

Finally, J. Quinn Thornton, Supreme Judge of the Province, was prevailed upon to make a trip to Washington, D. C., the summer of 1848, as a private delegate. He carried with him a letter from Governor Abernathy to President Polk. After much diplomatic difficulty in which he became entangled and gained the ill-will of President Polk through no fault of his own, Thornton saw the long-desired measure, giving Oregon Territory governmental authority, passed, and Joseph Lane appointed first Governor. But Joseph L. Meek, a later messenger from

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\*Gray, A History of Oregon, p. 357

\*\*Fagan, History of Benton County, p. 164

Louis Southworth was held as a slave by a Benton County resident. He purchased his freedom in 1855 for the sum of \$1000. -- Horner, Oregon History, p. 120 --

Louis Southworth was buried at County expense. -- See County Court claim under file of October, 1918.

Oregon received all the credit, and Thornton experienced considerable trouble in securing enough money for his passage home, although Congress had appropriated \$10,000 for the benefit of the two representatives from the Oregon Territory.

Legislative assemblies were called, the 1854 assembly drafting the first poor law, which was effective without change till the year 1866, when the provision for settlement was amended, having become obsolete.

The convention which framed the state constitution, met at Salem in August, 1857;\* the constitution was submitted to a vote November 9, 1857, and adopted. The act by Congress of February 14, 1859, admitting Oregon into the Union with this constitution was approved, and so ended the Territorial Government. Oregon was now a state.

Important as was this problem of government, there were other integrating forces at work in this community of Benton County. Subscriptions were freely given to build schools, a few being built as early as 1848. By 1870 there were thirty-five school districts, and the average school term had been lengthened to five months. In order to secure the Agricultural College, the Benton County members of the 1868-69 State legislature pledged to purchase

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\*Gen. Laws of Oreg., 1845-64--Deady Code--p.97



a suitable farm for the use of this institution of higher learning.\* In 1871 a tract of 35 acres of land was purchased adjacent to the city of Corvallis at a cost of \$4500. Much of this money was raised by private subscription. The first church in Benton County was organized in a school house (1848), and likewise the County Court had its first meeting in this building in 1850.

Another vital question was that of transportation; the first bridge across Mary's River being built entirely by subscription. Much local aid was also given the two railroads before they were finally completed. Governmental wires were pulled to secure a seaport for Benton County, by opening a strip of land through one of the existing Indian reservations. There was a general feeling that prosperity would again flourish with adequate transportation facilities; the much desired markets would be secured, and home industry be developed accordingly, and the county flooded with new settlers.

These dreamers longed for the "boom" days of the gold rush, when Marysville (Corvallis) was one of the

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\*Fagan, p. 357

principal shipping points for the southern mines.\* Large pack trains were almost daily loading in her midst with flour, bacon, etc.; money was plentiful, and times were lively. The miners would leave their pack-mules and equipment at Marysville, take the river boat and spend the winter in Portland and return again, buying their supplies before they left for the mines in the spring.

Finally, "the mines ceased to draw such large supplies from the Willamette Valley, and improvements came to a stand-still in Corvallis." Farms were mortgaged or neglected in the search for more alluring prospects. "The consequence was that a few capitalists owned section upon section of land."\*\* No doubt it was these same "capitalists" who were most untiring in their efforts to secure improvement in transportation.

The tremendous struggle which was made to secure improved transportation facilities at last was fruitful, but the "good old days" of the early "fifties" have never returned. Benton County is still a rural community.

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\* Fagan, p.334

\*\* Fagan, p.334

The following table taken from Fagan's "History of Benton County" and the "Oregon Blue Book" indicates the growth in population for the years covered in this study:

TABLE I  
POPULATION GROWTH FOR BENTON COUNTY  
1849 to 1930

Year	Population
1849 - - - - -	870
* - - - - -	
1860 - - - - -	3,059
1870 - - - - -	4,569
1880 - - - - -	6,262
1890 - - - - -	8,650
* - - - - -	
1900 - - - - -	6,706
1910 - - - - -	10,663
1920 - - - - -	13,744
1930 - - - - -	16,555

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\*County re-districted; figures not especially valuable for a comparative basis between these years.

## CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF OREGON POOR LAWS --  
1843 to 1930

As was indicated on page 3 of Chapter I of this study, the Statute laws of the Territory of Iowa enacted in 1838-39 were adopted as the laws of Oregon Territory. For a complete understanding as to why the Territory of Iowa statute laws were adopted it is necessary to trace the origin and development of civil law in the Oregon Country.\*

The situation in regard to the development of civil procedure was complicated by the joint occupancy of the Oregon Territory by both the English and Americans. The right of sovereignty being in dispute between the United States and Great Britian, neither country could establish any government. It was only natural under the circumstances that the colonists should take the matter into their own hands. This followed after twenty-eight years of joint occupancy, and the first civil government was enacted. The memorable meeting at Champoeg, May 2, 1843, decided

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\* See detailed narrative of "The Genesis of Political Authority in Oregon" -- Vol. 1, p. 1, Quarterly of Oregon Historical Society.



that eventually the United States should have jurisdiction of this Territory; and appointed a committee of nine to draw up a provisional government, to be submitted to the people at Champoege on July 5, 1843. "This committee is of great importance in the history of civil government in Oregon, because of the responsibility which rested upon it and because of the excellence of its work. Its members were neither learned nor acquainted with the law, but they possessed good judgment and common sense. Their meeting place was an old barn belonging to the Methodist Mission."\*

A compact was drawn up, the articles of which include specified fundamental rights and privileges that should never be denied inhabitants of the Territory, and defined in detail the powers, offices, and methods of administration to be used. In Article 19 is inserted the resolution indicated at the beginning of this chapter, and in Section 2 of Article 12 was stated that "The laws of Iowa Territory shall be the laws of this Territory, in civil, military, and criminal cases; where not otherwise provided for, and where no statute of Iowa applies, the principles of common

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\* Quarterly of O. H. S., Vol. I, p. 35

law and equity shall govern."

Theories as to why the Iowa law was adopted are advanced by F. L. Herriott in his article on "Transplanting Iowa's Laws to Oregon."\* That theory which has the greatest following in this State and which is believed to be backed by the best authority is that the legislative committee adopted the laws of Iowa because the Territorial laws of that State were the only ones available. The second theory advanced is based on the fact that the bill, which was introduced by Senator Linn on December 16, 1841 relative to the Oregon Territory, contained a provision among other things that the civil and criminal laws of Iowa be extended to Oregon. The reason for a Missouri senator proposing the use of the Iowa law is in turn justified by reasons; the more plausible of which seems to be that Iowa was adjacent to the Territory in controversy. Herriott states that it was probable that the bill of Linns was known to the Oregon pioneer by 1843, and that it would only have been the natural and diplomatic thing for the committee to include the Iowa law for adoption since this action would commend itself to the friends of the Territory in the East.

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\*Quarterly of O. H. S., Vol. V, pp. 139-150

Another declaration regarding the Iowa law was made by the legislative assembly of the Provisional government on June 27, 1844 and is found in the laws of 1843-49, p. 100: "All the statute laws of Iowa Territory, passed at the first session of the legislative assembly of said Territory, and not of a local character, and not incompatible with the conditions and circumstances of this country, shall be the laws of this government, unless otherwise modified." When Congress passed the act making Oregon a Territory, Section 14 of this act provided that these same laws of the Provisional Government were to be continued in force until they should be altered or repealed.

The first change of these laws was made when the Legislative Assembly of 1851 declared to be adopted and in force, certain acts of the revised statutes of Iowa Territory, published in 1843. This bill was known as the Chapman Code. Soon after the act was passed, it was regarded by two of the three district judges to be void because it adopted several distinct statutes and therefore it necessarily embraced more than one subject, and hence was void according to the clause of the organic law, which prohibited this. The legislative assembly and the other judge interpreted that this act embraced but one object, that of adopting a code of laws for the

Territory. Benton County was in this judge's district. If the Chapman Code contained any poor laws, then it necessarily follows that Benton County was under the jurisdiction of the Iowa Territory law of 1843 for about two years. This precedes the first pauper case found in the Benton Court journal, however, by about five years.

Due to this confusion of the law, and the need for the same lawyers to use in one district the Iowa Code of 1839, and in the other the Code of 1843, the legislative assembly of 1853 passed an act providing for the election of a committee of three to prepare a draft for a code to be submitted to the legislature. James K. Kelly, a member of this committee, gives an interesting account of the preparation and adoption of the first Code of Oregon in Volume IV, p. 185 of the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society. He says: "We prepared the draft for an entirely new code of statutory laws, with the single exception of the law relating to wills. This had been enacted by the legislative assembly in 1849, at its first session, the main features of it being a transcript from the Missouri statute on the same subject. As this was one of the first acts passed by our own legislation we adopted it in our draft with only a few verbal changes." Among other things it was agreed that each commissioner should take one subject and prepare the draft for an act upon that particular



branch of the law, and James Kelly undertook to prepare the code of civil procedure in actions at law and suits in equity. During the preparation of these drafts frequent consultations were held to discuss and agree upon the proper terminology to be used, or the arrangement of the subject matter in the act. The code was adopted to go into effect May 1, 1854 due to the fact that it had to be printed in New York. Only about two hundred copies ever arrived and they were the ones sent by way of Panama, those being wrecked which were shipped around Cape Horn. This made a second edition necessary, which was ordered by the next legislature and was printed in 1855.

Various citations in the above narrative seem to indicate that the Iowa law was transplanted as a basis for Oregon practice, but that the poor law may be one step farther removed may be gleaned in this quotation from Gillin's "Poor Relief Legislation in Iowa:"\*

"The First Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Iowa passed no general law relative to the relief of the poor, although a bill for such an act was introduced, passed the House, and was sent to the Council,

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\* P. 44

where after considerable consideration it was indefinitely postponed. As a consequence the law of Wisconsin Territory, approved on January 3, 1838, remained in force in the Territory of Iowa. The First Legislative Assembly did, however, pass an act providing that all insane paupers should be entitled to the benefits of the laws of the Territory for the relief of other paupers, and that all officials concerned should govern themselves accordingly.\*

"The first statute relating strictly to the relief of the poor, enacted in the Territory of Iowa, was passed by the Second Legislative Assembly. Introduced into the Council on November 28, 1839, it passed both houses and was signed by Governor Lucas on January 16, 1840. This act was almost a duplicate of the Wisconsin law, approved on January 3, 1838."

So far as could be determined from the discussion given by Dr. Gillin, the Oregon Statute seems to more nearly resemble the Wisconsin Statute of 1838 than the Iowa law of 1840; first, because like the Wisconsin Code it has eleven sections; the Iowa law having but nine, as it omits three and eleven. It is entirely possible, of course, that some features of the Iowa law of 1840

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\* Laws of the Territory of Iowa, 1838-1839, p. 276

were copied; this is not known as only four sections of the Wisconsin law, and three of the Iowa are available for comparison. That the Oregon code of 1854 more closely resembles the Wisconsin law for the first four sections is also determined by a parallel comparison as illustrated on page 47 of Dr. Gillin's text. In the parallel comparison of the Oregon and Wisconsin law which follows, it should be remembered, however, that the original law of 1854 contained the terms "Board of County Commissioners," "Commissioners," etc., but was changed by the compilers of the Deady Code to County Court, so that it might not be confused with Judicial business.

#### A PARALLEL COMPARISON OF THE OREGON AND WISCONSIN STATUTES

##### THE WISCONSIN STATUTE OF JANUARY 3, 1838

SECTION 1. Be it enacted by the council and house of representatives of the territory of Wisconsin, that the Board of county commissioners, of the several counties of this territory, shall be, and they are hereby vested, with entire and exclusive superintendence of the poor in their respective counties.

SECTION 2. Every poor person, who shall be unable to earn a livelihood, in consequence of bodily infirmity, idiocy, lunacy, or other unavoidable cause, shall be supported by the father, grandfather,

##### THE OREGON STATUTE OF JANUARY 23, 1854

SECTION 1. That the County Courts of the several Counties of this State, are hereby vested with entire and exclusive superintendence of the poor in their respective Counties.

SECTION 2. Every poor person who shall be unable to earn a livelihood in consequence of bodily infirmity, idiocy, lunacy or other cause, shall be supported by

mother, grandmother, children, grandchildren, brothers or sisters, of such poor person, if they or either of them be of sufficient ability; and every person who shall fail or refuse to support his or her father, grandfather, mother, grandmother, child or grandchild, sister or brother, when directed by the board of county commissioners of the county where such poor person shall be found, whether such relation reside in the county or not, shall forfeit and pay to the county commissioners, for the use of the poor of their county, the sum of fifteen dollars per month; for which if they or either of them shall fail or refuse so to do, to be recovered in the name of the county commissioners, for the use of the poor as aforesaid, before any justice of the peace, or any court having jurisdiction: provided, that when any person becomes a pauper, from intemperance, or other bad conduct, they shall not be entitled to support from any relation, except parent or child.

SECTION 3. The children shall be the first called on to support their parents, if there be children of sufficient ability. If there be none of sufficient ability the parents of such poor person shall be next called on; and if there be no parents, or children of sufficient ability, the brothers and sisters of such poor person shall be next called on; and if there

the father, mother, children, brothers or sisters of such poor person, if they or either of them be of sufficient ability, and every person who shall fail or refuse to support his or her father, mother, child, sister or brother when directed by the county court of the county where such poor person shall be found, whether such relation reside in the County or not, shall forfeit and pay to the County, for the use of the poor of this County, the sum of \$30 per month, or such other sum as the Court shall find sufficient, to be recovered in the name of the County Court for the use of the poor as aforesaid, before any justice of the peace, or any Court having jurisdiction, provided, that when any person becomes a pauper from intemperance or other bad conduct, he shall not be entitled to any support from any relation except parent or child.

SECTION 3. The children shall first be called upon to support their parents, if there be children of sufficient ability; if there be none, the parents of such poor persons shall be next called on, and if there be no parents or children of sufficient ability, the brothers and sisters shall be next called on; but married



be no brothers or sisters, the grandchildren of such poor person, shall be called on, and then on the grandparents: provided, married females, whilst their husbands live shall not be liable to a suit.

SECTION 4. When any such poor person shall not have any such relatives, in any county in this territory, as are named in the preceding sections, or such relative shall not be of sufficient ability, or shall fail, or refuse, to maintain such pauper, then the said pauper shall receive such relief as his or her case may require out of the county treasury; and the county commissioners may either make contracts for the necessary maintenance of the poor, or appoint such agents as they may deem necessary to oversee and provide for the same. -- Laws of the Territory of Wisconsin, 1837-1838, pp. 178-179.

females, while their husbands live shall not be liable to a suit.

SECTION 4. When any poor person shall not have any such relatives in any county in this state as are named in the preceding section, or such relatives shall not be of sufficient ability, or shall fail or refuse to maintain such paupers, then the said pauper shall receive such relief as the case may require out of the County Treasury, and the County Court may either make a contract for the necessary maintenance of the poor, or appoint such agents as it may deem necessary to oversee and provide for the same. -- General Laws of Oregon, Deady, 1845-1864.

Additional sections of the original Poor Law of 1854 read as follows:

SECTION 5. When any minor shall become, or be likely to become chargeable to the County, either because of being an orphan, or because the parents, or other relations, as aforesaid, are unable or refuse to support such minor, it shall be the duty of the County Court to bind such minor as an apprentice to some respectable house-holder

of the County, by written indenture, which shall bind such minor to serve as an apprentice, and shall in all respects be to the tenor and effect as required in the chapter concerning apprentices.

SECTION 6. When any non-resident, or any other person not coming within the definition of a pauper, shall fall sick in any county of this State, not having money or property to pay, board, nursing, and medical aid, it shall be the duty of the County Court of the proper County, on complaint being made, to give or order to be given such assistance to such poor person as it may deem just and necessary; and if said sick person shall die then the said Court shall give, or order to be given to such person a decent burial, and the said Court shall make such allowance for board, nursing, medical aid or burial expenses, as it shall deem just and equitable, and order the same to be paid out of the County treasury.

SECTION 7. When application is made by any pauper to the County Court in this State, for relief, it shall be necessary for said Court to require of said pauper, satisfactory evidence that he has been a resident of said county for twelve months immediately preceding the day upon which such application was made.

SECTION 8. When, on application made by any pauper to the County Court as aforesaid, it shall appear to the

satisfaction of the said Court that the person so applying for relief has resided in said County agreeable to the provisions of the foregoing section of this chapter, he shall be entitled to all the relief provided by this chapter; but if on the contrary, it shall appear to the satisfaction of said Court that said pauper has not been a resident of said County, agreeable to the provision of section 7 of this chapter, it shall proceed to remove from its County, at the expense of said County, such pauper, to the County where such pauper may have his residence.

SECTION 9. The County Court of any County in this State, may, if it thinks proper, cause to be built or provided in its respective Counties, work houses for the accomodation and employment of such paupers as may from time to time become a County charge; and said work house and paupers shall be under such rules and regulations as said County Court may deem proper and just.

SECTION 10. If any person shall bring and leave any pauper in any County in this State, wherein such pauper is not lawfully settled, knowing him to be a pauper, he shall forfeit and pay the sum of \$100 for every such offense, to be sued for and recovered by and to the use of such County, in a civil action, before any Court having jurisdiction of the same.

SECTION 11. (Provided that this act relative to the support of the poor should take effect from May 1, 1854 -- but this section was eliminated in the Deady Code, according to a footnote containing the information.)

A comparison of the original Poor Law of 1854 with the Oregon Code of 1930, shows the following changes:

SECTION 1. The original law of 1854.

SECTION 2. Changed by Chapter 376 of 1919, which adds a provision for securing pay from the property of deceased persons who have received county aid; and it shall become a valid lien on the realty of the deceased by action of the probate judge.

SECTION 3. Original law of 1854.

SECTION 4. Original law of 1854.

SECTION 5. Original law of 1854.

SECTION 6. Law of 1866, which repeals sections 6, 7 and 8 of the law of 1854. The clause providing for the removal of paupers was eliminated. The new law changes the residence from 12 to 3 months before the pauper is entitled to relief.

SECTION 7. Law of 1866: Pauper not a resident of the county, relief granted shall be refunded by the county of which such pauper is a resident.

SECTION 8. Law of 1866, which provided that the



County should be reimbursed from State Treasury for relief of non-resident repealed by the law of 1921, Chapter 235.

SECTION 9. Original law of 1854.

SECTION 10. Original law of 1854.

Other poor relief legislation was the act which provided for the erection, maintenance, and operation of County hospitals for poor in 1911. Beside this is the legislation for special classes, the law of 1889, providing relief for indigent sailors and soldiers. The law of 1907 provided the Juvenile Court and other regulations in caring for dependent children. Child caring and placing agencies were controlled by the act of 1919. Dependent Mothers' Aid to provide for the support and assistance of the women whose husbands were dead, physically or mentally unable to work, or who were inmates of Oregon institutions, became effective by the law of 1913, the Juvenile Court being designated to have jurisdiction; for the first child under 16, \$10 could be drawn and \$7.50 for each additional child. The law of 1915 limited the allowance to \$40 per family and among other provisions made a three year residence in the state and a one year residence in the county necessary. The law of 1917 repealed the laws of 1913 and 1915 and substituted the one act to prevent confusion, while the law of 1921 increased the amounts to \$15 and \$10, with a limit of \$60 per family.

The act of 1927 made the law more inclusive, husbands in county and federal institutions being added. The law of 1929 increased the amounts to \$20 and \$16, no family to receive more than \$75.

The simplicity of the Oregon law, as compared to that of some other states, is evident from the above summary of legislation. Dr. Gillin characterizes the Wisconsin law from which the Oregon law was taken as being "simple, comprehensive, easily adapted to the changing conditions of a new country. It represents a type on the relief of the poor which is all too rare even at this late date." No attempt is being made to cover the history of development prior to that of the Wisconsin law of 1838,\* except to indicate that it had its background in the laws of the Territory of Michigan, and those of the Northwest Territory.

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\* A study of this is given in "Poor Relief Legislation of Iowa" by Dr. J. L. Gillin.

CHAPTER III  
PIONEER PUBLIC POOR RELIEF ADMINISTRATION  
IN BENTON COUNTY FROM 1858 to 1879

Whether the case cited at the beginning of Chapter I is for the care of poor, criminal, or insane will probably never be known. Some few of the County records are quite as indefinite as this. The journal itself has disappeared from the files; at least it is not available at the present time of writing.

Whatever the above record may have been, the first case which can be definitely identified with public poor relief has a marked similarity. Under the date of April 6, 1858, we read:

"In the matter of Stewart Robertson: It this day having been proven to the satisfaction of the Board that Stewart Robertson had fallen sick in Benton County, and that the said Stewart Robertson is destitute of the necessary means to keep his board, nursing and medical aid; and that Doctors Bagley and Right have rendered medical assistance to said invalid from the first of January last and that A. J. Allison had boarded and nursed said Stewart Robertson since that time. It was ordered by the Board that said persons be allowed and paid as per bills presented, for their services as aforesaid, the following sums to wit: Bagley & Right, \$157.00; A. J. Allison \$152.00."

The second case is given in its entirety and is of interest because of its deviation from the usual practice of the time. Outdoor relief of this nature is very meager indeed, before the year 1880.

April 6, 1858 -- "In the matter of David Hayden: It this day appearing evident to the Board that David Hayden, a resident of Benton County, is unable to earn a livelihood in consequence of bodily infirmity, and that he is destitute of the necessary means to procure his board and medical aid. It was ordered that Doctors Bagley and Right be, and they are hereby appointed to oversee and procure such necessities of life as the said Hayden may need."

July 6, 1858 -- "Ordered by the Court that Dr. Bagley and Right be allowed and paid for medicine and attendance upon David Hayden from the first of April to the 5th of July, 1858, as per bill presented, the sum of \$131.00."

"Ordered by the Board that E. E. Taylor be allowed and paid for beef furnished said Hayden from the 7th of April to the 5th of July the sum of \$51.44; house rent 3 months, \$24.00."

"Ordered by the Board that Stack & Kaufman be allowed and paid for groceries furnished D. Hayden as per bill presented the sum of \$41.12½."

"Ordered by the Board that George W. Hayden be



allowed and paid for attending upon David Hayden the sum of \$75.00."

September 6, 1858 -- "Ordered by the Board that L. W. Doolittle be allowed and paid for groceries furnished said Hayden as per bill presented, the sum of \$9.89."

"Ordered by the Board that Marcus Brownson and Company be allowed and paid for beef furnished said Hayden, as per bill, \$29.15."

"Ordered by the Board that Stock & Kaufman be allowed and paid for groceries furnished said Hayden, as per bill, \$24.63."

"Ordered by the Board that Dr. Bagley & Right be allowed and paid for medical attendance and medicine furnished D. Hayden, the sum of \$105.75."

These two cases comprise the total amount of relief given for the year 1858 as indicated by the court journals.

As seen from the above court orders, outdoor poor relief was of two types, (1) care outside the home or "boarding out"; and (2) relief within the home, which is the generally understood meaning of the term outdoor relief today. Gillin says:\* "Relief of the poor in their

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\* P. 183 - Poor Relief Legislation in Iowa

homes has ever been the method employed in a newly settled country. It requires no preliminary preparation; in the beginning it is only one step removed from mere neighborly assistance; and it is the most economical method."

Previous to 1870 aid may be classed almost exclusively under the headings of (1) care, which includes boarding and nursing; (2) medical attention; and (3) burial.\* By 1871 the expense of medicine is being separated from medical attention, and by 1880, food, dry goods, and rent have been added.

Apparently there was no great demand from the public funds for poor relief previous to the year of 1880. The five years of this period, showing no individual orders given for relief, were the four consecutive years of 1862 to 1864, and the year of 1868. The average number of cases aided each year of this period, excluding the five years for which no records were found, was 3.7 cases; the least number for any year being one, and the greatest, fourteen.

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\* Some \$85 of poor relief listed as "sundries" for this period is believed to have been for food.

More than three-fifths of these cases of persons receiving relief, were for a one year period or less; one-fifth were for two years; and one-tenth were for three years. A single case appears covering a period of seven years, but it is believed that this was for two persons with the same surname, the initials of whom were very similar. According to the records of the applications in the pauper files, one of the recipients is being aided because of serious injuries received when a bridge collapsed, and the other because of age and bodily infirmity.

The general practices in vogue in giving relief seem to have been chiefly of three kinds; one of which consisted in some citizen giving aid, and then sending in a bill for services rendered. Another common practice, was where some citizen or citizens appeared and requested that the Court grant relief to a certain poor person, or the poor person himself appeared before the Board or sent in a written application. The following is a case of the wife of the family making application for family aid:

"In the matter of the family of Amos Herbert, poor and insane person: Upon application of Mrs. Amos Herbert under oath, showing the destitute condition of said family and that they have no means with which to support themselves, and asking for relief. It is ordered by the Court

that there be and is hereby appropriated the sum of fifteen dollars per month, to be expended for necessaries of life by such person as the County Judge may designate, until the further order of the Court." (December 4, 1879)

The insane of the state at this time were cared for at an asylum at East Portland which was established in 1859. Under date of January 1, 1867, is given a commitment for the hospital:

"In the matter of Wm. Griffin, Insane person: At this time R. G. Simmons, deputy sheriff, made return of the delivery of said insane person to Drs. Hawthorne & Loryea, at insane asylum, East Portland. Ordered by the Court that R. G. Simmons be allowed and paid for taking Griffin to Asylum, the sum of \$52.50."

. An entry under date of December 5, 1866 is evidence that the Court did not merely take a passive attitude in caring for the poor; but a provision was made to make their care effective when Court was out of session. This was in accordance with Section 4 of the Poor Act of 1854.

"In the matter of the Poor and Paupers: For the purpose of avoiding the inconvenience and expense of calling special sessions of Court and in order that the poor and paupers may receive proper attention, it is ordered



that T. B. Odeneal\* be and he is hereby authorized to oversee and provide for the poor and paupers of Benton County during the vacation of this Court and to do all acts and things requisite and necessary for maintenance of all such persons as may be entitled to relief out of this County Treasury, his doings to be reported to the Court at each regular term."

Orders like the following, while not numerous, lead one to believe that aid was not being given indiscriminately but that some investigation of applications was being made:

"In the matter of Sarah Mason and family, poor persons: At this time was presented to the Court, statement and affidavit of G. A. Whitney for relief for said poor persons, said statement having been filed Dec. 22, 1877. The Court not being fully satisfied in the premises, ordered that the matter lay over till the next regular term of this Court." (January 9, 1878)

March 6, 1878 -- "Ordered that E. Skipton be instructed to go and examine into the condition of said Sarah Mason and family as to their financial condition

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\* T. B. Odeneal was the County Clerk at this time.

and report to this Court at the next term."

The final disposition of this case is not known, but that relief was denied in some cases is evident, as stated below:

April 9, 1874 -- "In the matter of Adam Bumberger, a poor person: At this time came Adam Bumberger, a poor person, and makes application to the Court for assistance for the reason he has no means of support, and that his arm is paralyzed. It is ordered by the Court that the hearing upon said application be continued until next term."

May 4, 1874 -- "At this time came Adam Bumberger and made application to the Court for relief, after due consideration thereof, the relief prayed for is denied."

Other investigation was being made beside determining if the person fell under the definition of a pauper, according to the laws of the State. There was also the question of determining whether the individual owned property, the placing of responsibility of support on relatives, and the question of settlement. Less than two-fifths of the cases contain this information, since it is believed that the prevailing mode was the placing of claims after aid was already given. The orders granting these claims seldom gave any information; while the formal application for aid more often gave this data

in full.

During this 17 year period of 1853 to 1879, omitting the five years of no records, the following summary is made of the cases having a definite identity:

#### CASES AIDED:

Total number of cases,	48
Individual Persons,	40
Families,	8
(Relief denied, 2)	

#### PROPERTY:

Total times mentioned,	17
Persons having property,	1 (homestead)

#### RESPONSIBILITY OF RELATIVES:

Total times mentioned,	7
Relatives able or willing to support,	1

#### SETTLEMENT:

Total times mentioned,	18
Non-residents,	6

#### DEATHS:

Total number of burials by the County, 18

Settlement was not a vital question in this new country. This was not a dumping-grounds for the unfit as had been the case on the Atlantic Coast; only the hardy pioneer could stand the strenuous journey across the plains. Nearly a quarter of a century elapses before the first case regarding settlement appears on record.

March 7, 1871 -- "In the matter of an application of G. L. Davis, a pauper, for relief; At this time an application was made by G. L. Davis for relief from the County on the grounds that he was a pauper, and it appearing to the satisfaction of the Court that said G. L. Davis has not been a resident of the County for twelve months, immediately preceding this date, but a resident of Lane County, Oregon. It is therefore ordered by the Court that said G. L. Davis be removed to said Lane County at the expense of said Benton County, and that the sheriff be authorized to remove said pauper."

Two other cases are given which portray other methods of practice:

"In the matter of Gilbert Clute, deceased: Ordered by the Court that the clerk of this County make out and send to the County Court of Multnomah a statement of the money expended by Benton County on account of said Gilbert Clute, deceased, and request repayment from Multnomah County." (November 7, 1871).

March 2, 1874 -- "In the matter of George Snyder, a pauper: At this time, it appearing to the Court that G. N. Snyder became a public charge on or about the 27th day of January, 1874, and that he was not a resident of this County, or of this State. It is ordered that a bill of the expenses of the last sickness of said Snyder and



of his funeral expenses be allowed and paid, and that a bill of the same be presented to the Secretary of State for allowance as provided by law."

The general practices of poor relief administration for the period ending with 1879 might well be concluded with a discussion of the methods used by the Board of County Commissioners to effect what they deemed to be economies. While the number of cases requiring relief was not great, prices in general were high, and the revenues of the new County were small, or it would not have been necessary to resort to private subscription for bridges and school-houses as indicated in Chapter I.

The first instance of these practices begins in July 6, 1860, and may have been a case of "The selling out method" as can be judged by these orders:

"Ordered by the Board that Jas. H. Slater be allowed and paid for publishing notice of the letting of Detrick Dukes, \$3.00."

July 6, 1860 -- "Ordered by the Board that the Clerk give notice and let the contract of boarding and taking care of Detrick Dukes to the lowest bidder on the 14th inst."

September 5, 1860 -- "Ordered that Detrick Dukes, a pauper of Benton County, be sold to the lowest responsible bidder for the term of three months, subject

to what labor he may be capable of performing, said Dukes to be sold October 28th, 1860, or as near that time as may by the clerk be deemed judicious."

"Ordered by the Board that Detrick Dukes, a pauper, be sold on Saturday, the 9th day of February, 1861, for the term of five months."

This is the only example of its kind found in the court journals, and under date of July 6, it has the appearance of the "contract method," which was the common form for securing board for individual paupers, as provided for in the Poor Law of 1854.\*

The use of the "contract method" is illustrated in these orders of December 7, 1876, and February 5, 1877:

"In the matter of Benjamin Pearce and wife, poor persons: Ordered that the County Judge contract with some person to keep said poor persons until the next term of this Court, and that the clerk of the Court causes to be published in the Corvallis Gazette a notice that sealed bids will be received at the next term of this Court for keeping said poor persons, that

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\* See Section 4, p. 18 of Chapter II.

is to say, to furnish food, lodging, clothing, and nursing; the contract to be let to the lowest responsible bidder, by the year, or fractional part of a year at the same rate, the Court reserving the right to reject any and all bids, both of said poor persons to be kept together."

"At this time the several bids presented to the Court for keeping paupers were examined by the Court and upon due consideration, thereof, it is ordered by the Court: That Wm. H. Wood be awarded the contract for keeping Paris Richardson and wife and W. S. Schackelford, poor persons, all of them for one year at the price and sum of three hundred and twenty dollars, upon the following conditions, that said Wm. H. Wood as his part will furnish the said Paris Richardson and wife and W. S. Schackelford with lodging, clothing, boarding and necessary nursing--not to include medicine and doctor's bills--for the term of one year from the 8th day of February, 1879, and the County will pay said Wood, therefore, the said sum of \$320.00 in quarterly payments of \$80.00 each, except in case of death of either of said paupers, in which event the pay for said deceased shall stop and said Wm. H. Wood shall receive pay pro-rata for survivor or survivors."

In the last year of this period, December 4, 1879, is found the first contract for medical attendance:

"In the matter of medical attendance and medicines for county poor: It is ordered by the Court that F. A. Johnston be and he is hereby employed to furnish medical attendance and medicines to the County poor for the space of five months at the rate of \$150.00 for the full term of said months, to be paid in monthly installments of \$30.00 each, in accordance with the written contract made with said Johnston now on file in this Court."

No records pertaining to indentures of apprenticeship were found in the County Court Journals before 1880. The verbatim records, see Appendix "A", taken from the Probate files, belong to this period, however; the J. Quinn Thornton mentioned in these cases being the one cited in Chapter I, who made the trip around Cape Horn on his mission to Washington, D. C., in 1848 as a representative of the Provincial Government. Thornton is represented in history as a scholarly gentleman, perhaps a trifle blunt in some respects, but a man of high ideals. While it may seem that he was interested in the exploitation of childhood, according to the cases found in Appendix "A", perhaps he also was fond of children; the probate records show that he and his wife adopt a child a few years following that in the last indenture.



Other miscellaneous cases of interest are those of Stephen Tarbox, who made the trip to the Oregon country in 1843 with Dr. Whitman, and was buried at the expense of Benton County, February 6, 1879; and likewise the case of Ringo, October 7, 1867, prominent in the criminal records of the County. Five years after the death and burial of Ringo, an aged farmer named Ladd was indicted, arrested, and tried for having poisoned him, but evidence was lacking and Ladd was acquitted.

The above concludes what might be regarded as the pioneer period of the history of public poor relief in Benton County.

## CHAPTER IV

## PUBLIC POOR RELIEF PRACTICES FROM 1880 TO 1910

A complete survey is not being made of this period of poor relief history, since beginning with the year 1893 the County Court journals no longer contain definite information as to who or for what each expenditure was made, so far as separate expense items were concerned. To make a case study of this material of the years from 1893 to 1909 at the present time of writing, therefore, would require long hours of search through dust-laden papers, thrown together with books, Court exhibits, and etc., in a dungeon-like room in the Courthouse basement. A new vault has just been completed, however, and no doubt this material will be systematized, filed, and made available for public use.

A case study summary of the 13 year period from 1880 to 1892 gives the following data:

## CASES AIDED:

Total number of cases,	87
Individual persons,	69
Families,	18

## PROPERTY:

Total times mentioned,	27
Persons having property,	2

## RESPONSIBILITY OF RELATIVES:

Total times mentioned,	28
Relatives able or willing to support,	0

## SETTLEMENT:

Total times mentioned,	27
Non-residents,	4

## DEATHS:

Total number of burials by the County, 29.

Complete data on the size of families aided was lacking, the number of children for eight only being available. These vary from one to seven children per family, the average being 4.12.

The nature of property indicated, in the above study, was for real estate which was not available for immediate use. Later records of this period show paupers securing back pensions and, therefore, no longer requiring County aid as is seen under the date of January 10, 1895:

"In the matter of Reuben Impson, a County Charge: It appearing to the Court that Reuben Impson has received back pay on his pension, and is receiving a pension of \$12 per month, and that he has asked the County Court to permit him to leave the County Poor House. It is ordered by the Court that Benton County will not pay said Impson's board from and after January 20, 1895; further ordered that Mrs. David Huggins be notified of such order by the County Clerk."

That relatives of paupers were being checked on in regard to responsibility and that claims were being made

to collect from the estates of deceased persons for aid given, is evident as recorded under dates of January 10, 1895 and August 5, 1896:

"In the matter of William Shipley, a County Charge: It appearing to the Court that William Shipley has two sons living in Benton County, Oregon, who are amply able to support and care for said William Shipley. It is therefore ordered by the Court that Benton County will not pay William Shipley's board from and after January 20, 1895, and it is further ordered that Mrs. David Huggins be notified of such order by the County Clerk."

"In the matter of the County claim against the estate of Elizabeth Emeline Limbaugh: It appearing to the Court that Benton County paid out the sum of \$112.17 in caring for the said Elizabeth Emeline Limbaugh, and the same has not been paid. It is therefore ordered that the Clerk of this Court be and he is hereby instructed and authorized to make out a bill for said case, and present the same to Willis Vidito, administrator of said estate. And upon payment of the same, to give a proper receipt for the said money and deposit the same with the County Treasurer and report the same to the Court."

That the practice of giving aid to the poor and then



putting in a claim to the County for reimbursement was being abused and steps were being taken to curb this method of relief seems evident. Unless there were some unusual reasons for not notifying the Court in advance, claim was denied for this aid. The following claim of June 6, 1880 was allowed as legitimate by the Court:

"In the matter of Henry Curtis, a poor person: It appearing from the affidavit of John Watkins and his petition from several citizens, that Henry Curtis is a resident of Benton County, Oregon, and has been since more than three months past, that he had a leg broken and about three months ago, rendering him helpless and unable to earn his livelihood, and requiring board and constant care and attention for about ten weeks, he had no means whatever, no way of paying for same, no relatives or others in the state of Oregon able or willing to support him and pay said expenses, that he has never paid said John Watkins for said expenses, which are due him, nor any part thereof, nor is he now able to do so. Said Petitioner, J. Watkins, lives at a great distance from the settings of the County Court, and said Curtis required constant attention, had no means of making a formal application to the Court for said poor person to be made a pauper as by law and practice of said Court required. Therefore, ordered that said John Watkins be

allowed and paid for said care, attention, and nursing of said poor person, Henry Curtis, the sum of \$100."

Other instances, which illustrate that the above method of giving aid and then putting in a claim to the Court was not sanctioned, appear from time to time in cases similar to the one stated below:

September 6, 1899 -- "In the matter of the bill of C. Sloper for care of William Keith: This matter coming on now regularly and the Court having fully examined into the same and having found that the care of said William Keith by said C. Sloper was voluntary upon the part of C. Sloper and not by order or request of this Court, it is therefore ordered that said bill be and the same is hereby rejected."

It may be of interest to also note the number of cases aided for each year of this period so far as identity could be established; a few of the orders for items read "paupers," and it was impossible to determine whether they were for new or old cases.

TABLE II

NUMBER OF PAUPER CASES PER YEAR -- 1880 to 1892							
: Year	Cases	Year	Cases	:			:
: 1880	- - - 10	1887	- - - 14	:			:
: 1881	- - - 8	1888	- - - 15	:			:
: 1882	- - - 13	1889	- - - 16	:			:
: 1883	- - - 11	1890	- - - 18	:			:
: 1884	- - - 5	1891	- - - 16	:			:
: 1885	- - - 10	1892	- - - 20	:			:
: 1886	- - - 11	Total-	167	:			:

Of the above cases fifty-four were for a one year period or less; sixteen were for two years; nine for three years; three for five years; and one each of four, six, seven, eight, and thirteen years, respectively. Only five cases were carried over from the previous period of 1858 to 1879.

As the business of the Court increases, in connection with Public Poor Relief, orders "continued for further consideration," also "rejections," "rescinded," etc., become more numerous. From 1880 to 1910, no fewer than seventy of these appear on the Journals, and no doubt there were many others of a similar nature not inscribed on the Court records. Some of these instances may prove of interest.

(1) Conflicts between Counties in regard to settlement.

"In the matter of application of Umatilla County for reimbursement: It is ordered that said application be denied for the reason that A. B. Kiser, to whom assistance was rendered, was not a resident of this County so as to entitle him to County aid." (November 10, 1898.)

Another similar order in regard to this same case which appears October 5, 1899, nearly a year after that given, would indicate that no agreement had yet been reached. At least Benton County was still protesting the case. Under the date of June 9, 1897, we find a different

source of contention:

"In the matter of the bill of Douglas County for funeral of John Sapp, deceased, \$38.70; It is ordered that the same be allowed in the sum of \$5.00, the same being balance due on the funeral expenses. And it is further ordered that on the balance of said bill, be and the same is hereby rejected, for the reason that this County is not responsible for the expense of the coroner's inquest."

(2) Applications of children's homes and other organizations for donations by the County:

June 9, 1898 -- "In the matter of the application of the Ladies' Aid Society of Albany: This matter came on for hearing upon the application of the said Society for assistance to the amount of \$5.00 per month from this County. It is ordered by the Court that said application be and the same is hereby laid over until the July term of this Court."

March 9, 1899 -- "In the matter of the application of Mrs. Haxter for aid for the Florence Crittenton Refuge Home of Portland, Oregon: This matter came on for consideration upon the application of Mrs. Haxter, asking that the County make a donation to said home and the Court having fully considered the matter is of the opinion that it would not be justified in so doing at this time.



It is therefore ordered that said request be denied."

January 6, 1909 -- "In the matter of allowance to the Boys' and Girls' Aid Society: Now at this time it is ordered that the Journal entry heretofore made and entered by this Court granting an allowance of \$8.00 per month to the Boys' and Girls' Aid Society, be and the same is hereby rescinded."

Relief was granted to this institution for the amount of \$250.00 or more, over a ten year period, and charged to the "poor fund." It appears that the County felt under obligations to this Society for the reason "that said Society has from time to time received children from this County, and provided them with homes." It seems that the legislature has as yet not subsidized these institutions, and that the agent of the Society was soliciting and receiving similar aid from other Counties of the State.

Only two instances were discovered of dependent children being sent to the Boys' and Girls' Aid Society, one under date of April 4, 1900, in the County Court journal, the other in the Juvenile Court records for the year of 1908. If there were others they probably come under the delinquent class, rather than that of dependency.

No very definite policy of caring for children seems to have been established previous to 1900, for the reason that only a few of the dependents fell under this heading.

One child was transported to relatives in the state of Washington, and the five or six others were boarded out in families for a short time, but what final provision was made is not known. That "binding out" or apprenticing was still under consideration is found in two instances of the records of the County Court, but that any binding out was actually practiced from 1880 to 1910 cannot be determined, since the Record Book "A" referred to in the Appendix "A" has not been located. In one of the cases citizens sent in an application to have certain children of a pauper apprenticed, the mother being dead; in the other, the father leaves his child with people of Benton County, making no provision for support. These people care for the child for nearly a year, and then petition the Court "to bind said minor as an apprentice to some responsible householder of Benton County, Oregon, according to the statute in such cases made and provided." The Court got in touch with the father in Crook County, and this final disposition of the case was made under date of February 6, 1889:

"In the matter of the petition of M. B. Ketchum to bind an apprentice, John Stroud, a minor, son of Isaac Stroud: (Dismissal): Comes now Isaac Stroud in obedience to citation heretofore issued and agrees to care and support his said son John I. Stroud so that he will not

become a County charge. It appearing to the Court that said Isaac Stroud has paid the costs of said proceedings, it is ordered that said proceedings be at the request of said Isaac Stroud dismissed."

In the strict sense of the word, indoor relief for the poor has never been practical at any time within the boundaries of Benton County, since no poor farm or hospital has ever functioned in that capacity. Accordingly, attention will be turned to a consideration of the new methods found in outdoor relief. As has already been stated, outdoor relief in the home really begins with 1880; and for the thirteen year period for which an analysis is made, \$4,650 was spent for food, nearly \$900 for rent; fuel, \$25. Beside these items, there was over \$300 aid given paupers under the heading of sundries, which is believed to be chiefly food, but it was listed under the miscellaneous column, since it was uncertain. On the other hand, \$10,650 was spent for the boarding out of paupers.

The preceding period almost completed the use of the contract plan in pauper care outside the home, so far as the provision of the individual boarding-out process was concerned; the last case found is under date of October, 1883. Beginning with 1886, however, there is a beginning of the practice of farming out paupers in a

group with Mrs. Eliza Emrick at Alpine. Figures showing the growth in the size of the group are given for the various years:

TABLE III  
INCREASE IN PAUPER GROUP FARMED OUT TO  
MRS. ELIZA EMRICK

Year	Minimum			Maximum		
	Number			Number		
1886	-	-	1	-	-	2
1887	-	-	2	-	-	4
1888	-	-	4	-	-	7
1889	-	-	3	-	-	6
1890	-	-	3	-	-	7
1891	-	-	3	-	-	6
1892	-	-	5	-	-	10

On May 3, 1893 is inscribed in the Court journal, an entry transferring the poor to Mrs. David Huggins of Corvallis by written contract.

"In the matter of the keeping of County poor:  
This matter came on for hearing upon the application of Mrs. David Huggins to keep the County poor. Wherein applicant offers to care for all Paupers that the County Court may send to her residence at \$3 per week each, which shall include rooms, board, and bed, and all other care of invalids as well as all sick patients and furnish all transportation of all Paupers from Corvallis, and after due consideration, It is ordered and adjudged that Mrs. David Huggins be and she is hereby awarded the



contract for keeping the County poor at \$3 per week each, including all nursing and care of invalids and sick patients without extra charge, and also to furnish free transportation of all Paupers from Corvallis to her place of residence and that all of the conditions of the said contract shall be reduced to writing to be signed by the County Judge on behalf of the County and by Mrs. Huggins on her own behalf, and that she take charge of the County poor on the 15th of May, 1893."

As the County Court journals no longer show an itemized record, the amount in total being given, it is not known how many paupers Mrs. Huggins boarded at any one time. Three years after the first contract appears another, May, 1896, which has practically the same wording, with the exception that Mrs. Huggins is to do all washing and mending for the paupers. The contracts of April, 1897 and 1898 are identical with that of May, 1896. It is of interest to note that competition is arising as recorded for May 4, 1898:

"In the matter of the bid of John H. Kamph for care County Poor: It is ordered that the same be and is hereby rejected for the reason that contract was awarded to Mrs. David Huggins at the April term of this Court."

Before the contract of 1899 is made, the Court advertises for bidders for the care and keeping of the

County poor with the following results:

"Bid of Dr. B. F. Russel for care of said persons, per week, \$3.00.

"Bid of John H. Kamf for care of said poor according to contract for three years, \$2.60 per week; for four years, \$2.50.

"Bid of J. L. Huggins for care of said poor according to contract for two years, \$2.45 per week."

As Mrs. J. L. Huggins was the "lowest and best bidder" she received the contract, at the above named price and gives her bond for \$500 as surety. On April 5, 1901, Mrs. J. L. Huggins is given a three-year contract at \$2.65, nothing being said about other bidders. For the year of 1904 Mrs. David Huggins is given a two year contract in which she furnishes everything needed for paupers boarded at \$3 per week with the exception of surgery and funeral expenses; the County making an allowance of \$25 to Mrs. Huggins for funeral expense in case of death of County charge. The contract of August, 1906, accepted the bid of Mrs. David Huggins, but the terms are not stated. For 1907, a one year contract is granted the same party at \$3 per week, and an allowance of \$35 for burial in case of the death of any of the wards. Mrs. Huggins contracts in 1908 to furnish aid to all paupers able to care for themselves at \$3 per week, and \$4 in case of invalids or sickness; The County to furnish clothing, and medical attention,

in case of surgery or serious sickness, the County physician to visit the paupers once a month, and in case of death an allowance of \$35 is made by the County for burial expenses. It is specifically mentioned that she is to furnish beds and bedding and good wholesome food in sufficient quantities to the paupers, and that she is at all times under the direction of the Court. The contract for 1909 is very similar with the exception that Mrs. David Huggins is to receive \$3.50 for those paupers able to care for themselves, and \$4.50 for invalids. This is the last contract found on the Court records pertaining to the County Poor farm or hospital, as it was called, but cases are being admitted to the County hospital as late as May 20, 1914.

It may be difficult to understand why the County did not purchase a poor farm as provided by law, instead of boarding out its paupers. Petitions were being presented to the Court as early as 1897 and 1898 by citizens asking for the purchase of a poor farm, but these were rejected or placed on file for further consideration. On May 21, 1906, however, a County poor farm was purchased:

"This matter coming on for hearing upon the recommendation of the Grand Jury and the Court after careful consideration of the same, finds: That it would

be to the best interest of all concerned that the County Poor be kept at some convenient place within a few miles of the city of Corvallis, thereby enabling the Court to at all times be in touch with the care and treatment of said poor. That in all probability land can be purchased at as low a figure today as at any future time; that it would be to the best interest of the County as well as the said poor, that the County purchase a suitable tract of land so located as to be convenient to Corvallis and suitable for said purpose, and erect, or cause to be erected suitable buildings for the proper care of its poor. That it would not be to the best interest of said County to hire a Superintendent of said farm or to furnish said farm with any tools or machinery of any kind, or to furnish said buildings with furniture of any kind whatsoever, but as having provided said farm with the necessary buildings for the proper care of the inmates thereof, that the County Court let by bid the rental of said farm per year, together with the care of its poor at so much per week. Therefore, after having carefully considered all of said matter, and believing said findings if carried out to be to the best interest of the County as well as the County poor. It is hereby ordered that we purchase from Anna R. Cramptor the following described premises for \$5400." (Description omitted)



The matter of consideration of the newly purchased poor farm came up August 1, 1906, an extract of the order being given:

"On July 11, 1906, the present County Court went out to said farm and made personal examination of the land and its buildings, and among other things to consider its adaptability for the purpose for which it was intended when purchased. Now having fully considered this matter, this Court does not consider it advisable or for the interest of Benton County to expend the County further, an additional amount necessary to erect suitable buildings and make such other improvements as would be necessary to prepare the place for a comfortable home for our County Charges. The Court further considers that a small tract of good land suitable for gardening as better adapted for this purpose; Therefore, it is ordered that the County Judge be and is hereby authorized to receive offers to purchase or to rent said farm and report the same to this Court at its next regular term."

The rest of the story of the poor farm is short; the produce for that year being disposed of, on January 12 of the next year the poor farm was sold at the same price for which the County had paid. The firm making the sale received \$270 commission which nearly absorbed all of the net profits on the produce sold from the

poor farm the preceding autumn.

A table is being presented as the most suitable way of showing medical contracts for doctoring the poor for this period:

TABIE IV

MEDICAL CONTRACTS FOR CARE OF POOR - 1887 to 1909

Date	Compensation	Territory
May 2, 1887	\$100.00 per year	Within limits of Corvallis:
May 9, 1888	88.00 per year	Within limits of Corvallis:
May 8, 1889	147.50 per year	Within limits of Corvallis:
Aug. 7, 1889	185.00 per year	Within limits of Corvallis:
May 7, 1890	99.00 per year	Within limits of Corvallis:
Sept. 3, 1890	150.00 per year	Within limits of Corvallis:
July 5, 1893	11.25 per month	Paupers at County Farm :
Aug. 7, 1893	15.00 per month	Within limits of Corvallis:
Mar. 26, 1894	15.00 per month	County Poor :
July 5, 1895	15.00 per month	County Poor Farm :
May 5, 1897	2.00 per trip	County Sick--Poor Farm as :
		requested :
Aug. 20, 1905		Visit County Hospital once:
		each month :
Jan. 6, 1909		Visit Poor Farm at call of:
		Superintendent :

The reason for two contracts the same year is due in 1889 to the doctor throwing up his contract. The other bids were so low that the contract price was raised to prevent similar action.

Only one class remains to be considered, the indigent soldier and sailor, the act of February 5, 1889 making aid to this group effective. The first record is under date of December 7, 1892, and only nine cases received aid during the period to 1910, the average amount spent being about

\$40 per year. There were a number of rejections, the Court and the Commander of the Post not seeming to agree as to what level of poverty demanded aid. The fact that the names of a number of these soldiers or sailors or their wives appear receiving pauper aid, might indicate that it was easier to secure relief in this class, rather than in the special group to which the law entitled them.

Only a few isolated cases of blind, insane, or feeble-minded appear on record for this period, receiving pauper aid. Fifteen dollars was granted for clothing and railroad fare to the blind school at Salem for a blind boy, and two other cases were boarded out in families. One case of insane, a non-resident, was boarded out, which was contrary to the usual practice. One feeble-minded woman was sent to the County Hospital in care of Mrs. Huggins.

This completes the classes of dependents aided and the methods used during this period of public poor relief. It might be of passing interest to note the case of Mrs. Eliza Emrick, who is receiving County aid August 5, 1897. The paupers were farmed out to Mrs. Emrick at Alpine from 1886 to 1893, and four years afterward she is being granted relief.

"This matter came on for consideration upon the

application of Miss May Warren asking that Mrs. Eliza Emrick be allowed some assistance from the County and it appearing to the satisfaction of the Court that some assistance is necessary, It is ordered that an order be given Mrs. Eliza Emrick on some of the merchants of Corvallis for merchandise, and etc., to the amount of \$10.00."



CHAPTER V  
THE LATER PERIOD OF PUBLIC POOR RELIEF PRACTICES  
1911 to 1930

While many of the later public poor relief practices of Benton County are found to be similar to those of the preceding periods, there are also a number of changes and variations taking place which is evidenced by the character of the Court orders.

Notable among these is the co-operation of the County Court with the local Chapter of the Red Cross in securing the services of a Social Welfare Worker for Benton County, as is indicated in the record of September 16, 1925:

"In the matter of application of Benton County Chapter, Red Cross, for \$300 funds carried in 1925 budget for social welfare worker for Benton County: Now at this time came on to be considered the application of the Benton County Chapter, Red Cross, by Walter H. Kline, of the Executive Committee and A. A. Schramm, Treasurer, that the amount of \$300 carried in the 1925 budget of Benton County for a Social Welfare Worker be appropriated to the Benton County Chapter, Red Cross, And it appearing to the Court that at the time of the approval of the budget for 1925, an item of \$300 was included therein, for the purpose of a Social Welfare

Worker for Benton County, and that no organization was at that time designated to receive said funds and it appearing to the Court that the said Benton County Chapter Red Cross, is the only organized institution carrying on a purely charitable program in our County, and having a paid worker, and is qualified to receive and account for the item above mentioned, and the Court being fully advised, It is ordered that the sum of \$300 be and is hereby appropriated to the Benton County Chapter, Red Cross, and the Clerk of this Court is hereby instructed to draw a warrant on the general fund in the sum of \$300 payable to the Treasurer of Benton County Chapter Red Cross, and chargeable to the item of Welfare Worker carried in the said budget for 1925 of Benton County."

That the County Court and the local chapter of the Red Cross had an agreement, and cooperated in the spending of certain County funds applicable to the support of the poor is also evident from the entry of November 17, 1926:

"In the matter of agreement with Red Cross Chapter on account of County poor fund, year 1926: Whereas, the Benton County Chapter of the Red Cross, in carrying out the objects for which it is organized, particularly in affording relief to needy persons who by reason of their financial condition are entitled to support as County poor from the funds of the County; and Whereas, the

Red Cross is willing to undertake to see to it that any support the County may give will be properly applied to the benefit of such poor persons to the best advantage, Therefore, it is ordered that the sum of \$500 out of the funds of Benton County, applicable to the support of the "County Poor" during the year 1926, be and the same is hereby set aside in a special fund to be expended in cooperation with the Red Cross in the support of persons in Benton County who by reason of their circumstances are entitled to County aid under Chapter XVI of title XXVI of Oregon Laws, That the expenditure of the same shall be made in the following manner: Upon the secretary of the said Red Cross reporting the existence of any such persons to the County Court or any member thereof, and such Court member of such Court concurring with said Secretary in the belief that such person is entitled to County relief, said Secretary and the said Court or member of the County Court as the case may be shall agree on the amount to be expended. Whereupon said Secretary is authorized to incur an expenditure on behalf of such person in a sum not exceeding such amount for the relief as the case may require of such poor person. Upon the presentation to the County Court at its next regular session of the bill conveying such relief, the County Court will authorize the same paid out of the County treasury either directly to the persons

furnishing such relief or to the Red Cross by way of reimbursement for funds that it may have advanced in the securing of such relief. The amount so expended shall be charged against said special funds above mentioned."

A similar entry is found under date of January 5, 1927, which would indicate that this plan was tried again the following year, but after that it was abandoned. The file of claims shows that some portion of the Red Cross expenditures for aid was denied. Whether these were deemed extravagances by the Court, or whether they did not comply with the laws on poor relief is not known, the data in the case being insufficient to determine.

The analysis of the amount and kind of relief given for this later period in the history of public poor relief would lead one to believe that civilization had become a more complex situation in Benton County. The rate of mobility had increased, not only because of improved methods of travel, but also due to the seasonal need of labor. Aid for transients in small amounts is found in the file of claims for the consecutive years of 1924 to 1930, the nature of this relief being meals, a nights lodging, gas, railroad fare, food for families at the auto camp, and etc.

As crime, divorce, desertion, and other causes of the "Broken family" increase, relief for the dependent



members must be provided. The family unit which is completely destroyed requires aid for the dependent children. This group has increased at a tremendous rate since 1910. A study of the dependent children found in the Juvenile Court record since 1908 will be summarized to indicate the number, cause and disposition of this class of dependents. Great care was taken to list only those who appeared under the heading of dependency, yet delinquency seemed to have been a factor in some of the cases. A list of dependent children for each year given in the Juvenile Court Record follows:

TABLE V

## NUMBER OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN CARED FOR--1908-1930

: Year	Number of Children	Year	Number of: Children:	:
: 1908 - - - -	1	1921 - - - -	1	:
: 1911 - - - -	4	1924 - - - -	2	:
: 1912 - - - -	5	1925 - - - -	15	:
: 1913 - - - -	5	1926 - - - -	8	:
: 1914 - - - -	4	1927 - - - -	7	:
: 1915 - - - -	2	1928 - - - -	7	:
: 1917 - - - -	3	1929 - - - -	10	:
: 1919 - - - -	5	1930 - - - -	14	:

A summary of the study of dependent children indicated:

## CHILDREN STUDIED:

Total children studied, - - - - - 93  
 Boys, - - - - - 47  
 Girls, - - - - - 46

## BROKEN FAMILIES:

Total number of broken families, - - 51  
 1 child to family, - - - - - 31  
 2 to 6 children per family - 20

## CAUSES OF THE BROKEN FAMILY:

## Divorce and separations:

Total number, - - - - - 6  
 Divorce, - - - - - 4  
 Separations, - - - - - 2  
 (Remarried, 4)

## Unfit:

Total number, - - - - - 14  
 Mothers, - - - - - 9  
 Fathers, - - - - - 5

## Causes:

Insane Asylum, - - - - 3  
 Penitentiary, - - - - 1  
 Tuberculosis Hospital- 1  
 County Charges, - - - - 1  
 Unfit in character (?) 8

## Dead:

Total number, - - - - - 13  
 Mothers, - - - - - 7  
 Fathers, - - - - - 6

## Deserted or abandoned:

Total number, - - - - - 30  
 Mothers, - - - - - 12  
 Fathers, - - - - - 18

## Cannot provide:

Total number, - - - - - 18  
 Mothers, - - - - - 12  
 Fathers, - - - - - 6

## Drunkards:

Fathers, - - - - - 2

Since there are 83 causes and 51 families, it would indicate that there was more than one cause for the majority

of families.

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF CAUSES FOR BROKEN FAMILY

Cause	Number	Per-centage
Divorce and separation-	6	7.23
Unfit - - - - -	14	16.87
Dead - - - - -	13	15.66
Deserted or abandoned -	30	36.14
Cannot provide- - - - -	18	21.69
Drunkards - - - - -	2	2.41
	<u>83</u>	<u>100.00</u>

It is of interest to note in the above table that desertion appears to be the chief cause of dependent children, the second common cause being the inability of parents to support. The following table gives the original disposition of the 93 cases of dependent children, being taken from the Juvenile Records:

TABLE VII

PLACEMENT OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN - 1908 to 1930

Disposition of Cases	Number of children
Boys' and Girls' Aid Society - - - -	28
W.C.T.U. Farm Home - - - - -	20
Florence Crittendon Home - - - - -	1
Multnomah County Baby Home - - - - -	1
St. Agnes Foundling Asylum - - - - -	1
Albertina Kerr Baby Home - - - - -	2
Waverly Baby Home - - - - -	7
Big Brother Farm - - - - -	1
Christie Home - - - - -	1
Pacific Coast Rescue Society - - - - -	1
Private Homes - - - - -	27
Cases continued for further consideration	3
Total - - -	<u>93</u>

From the above survey it may be seen that a little over two-thirds of the original commitments are to institutions, and the remainder in private homes. Many of these original placements, however, are but temporary arrangements. Of those placed in private homes, seven were with relatives; the aunt being the one aiding in each case. A money allowance was granted by the County in a few cases to aid those caring for dependent children in private homes; some few were boarded out for a short time until permanent disposal of the case was decided upon. Since the state subsidizes private institutions of this nature, those grants by the County seem to be chiefly in the nature of donations. Further aid was given the Boys' and Girls' Aid Society during this period, a portion of the time being charged to the County Poor Fund, but later to the Juvenile Court.

Another provision, primarily for the care of dependent children, was enacted by the 1913 session of the State Legislature in the bill for dependent mothers' aid. During August of the same year the first aid was granted in Benton County under this act. The growth of this phase of poor relief during the years following, together with the amounts spent, is given below:



NUMBER OF CASE

CHART SHOWING  
DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHER'S PENSION CASES  
1913 TO 1931

5  
10  
15  
20  
25  
30  
35  
40  
45  
50  
55  
60  
1913

1918

1923

1928

DURATION IN YEARS AND MONTHS

TABLE VIII  
NUMBER OF MOTHERS' PENSION CASES AND EXPENDITURES  
1913--1931

Year	Number of Dependent Mothers Aided					Amount to the Nearest Dollar
1913	-	-	-	2	-	\$445.00
1914	-	-	-	5	-	1448.00
1915	-	-	-	9	-	2046.00
1916	-	-	-	12	-	3039.00
1917	-	-	-	13	-	3928.00
1918	-	-	-	16	-	4793.00
1919	-	-	-	17	-	4796.00
1920	-	-	-	17	-	4601.00
1921	-	-	-	17	-	4651.00
1922	-	-	-	17	-	4423.00
1923	-	-	-	18	-	4323.00
1924	-	-	-	16	-	3541.00
1925	-	-	-	14	-	2843.00
1926	-	-	-	9	-	2938.00
1927	-	-	-	13	-	3093.00
1928	-	-	-	16	-	3243.00
1929	-	-	-	14	-	3546.00
1930	-	-	-	23	-	4939.00

Chart Number 1, opposite page, is included to show the period of time for which each family received aid from the County for Dependent Mothers' Aid, for the above table.

This original bill (1913) provided for the assistance and support of women who have a child or children under 16 dependent in part or wholly upon their support and whose husbands were dead; inmates of an Oregon state institution; or physically or mentally unable to work. The rate of aid was \$10 for the first child and \$7.50 for each additional

child, the Judge of each County being permitted to give such amount as he deemed suitable. This rate, with a limit of \$40 has been used practically for the entire period of Benton County; two cases in excess of \$40 did appear during the first two years. (Limited by law of 1915 to \$40.)

A survey of these families as shown by the Juvenile Records indicated in only a few instances the reason why relief was being given. For the aid granted to these sixty families, 191 dependent children were being cared for, the average number per family being 3.18.

TABLE IX  
NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY RECEIVING  
DEPENDENT MOTHERS' AID - 1913 to 1930

: Children per							Total number	:
: family							of families	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	1	-	-	-	-	-	11	:
:	2	-	-	-	-	-	15	:
:	3	-	-	-	-	-	14	:
:	4	-	-	-	-	-	6	:
:	5	-	-	-	-	-	5	:
:	6	-	-	-	-	-	5	:
:	7	-	-	-	-	-	3	:
:	8	-	-	-	-	-	1	:
:	Total						60	:

The law requires that this aid be discontinued as each child reaches the age of sixteen, and the pension is reduced accordingly; the mother no longer being entitled to receive aid, when all of her children have reached this age.



Below is a table indicating the causes for discontinuance in the order of their importance. In 38 of the cases aid was permanently withdrawn. One of the causes of temporary withdrawal was for aid being overdrawn; for example, one of the children reaches the age of sixteen and the County fails to reduce the allowance for this amount, and an excess of \$75 to \$100 may accumulate. All aid is then withdrawn until this excess amount is cared for. Another cause is for change of residence; the family occasionally returning to Benton County when it finds that this is the only way to be reinstated.

TABLE X

## CAUSES FOR DEPENDENT MOTHERS' AID WITHDRAWN -- 1913 TO 1930

Cause for withdrawal	Number of Cases
Remarriage of mother - - - - -	11
Moved out of County - - - - -	7
No longer needed - - - - -	6
All children reach the age of 16 - - -	5
Inheritance, or income from property - -	3
Compensation, or Government Pension - -	2
Husband able to provide - - - - -	1
Erroneously granted and withdrawn - - -	1
Extravagance (used money as payment on auto)	1
Mother committed to Insane Asylum - - -	1
Overdrawn - - - - -	2
Causes unknown - - - - -	2
Total - - - - -	42
Temporary withdrawals - - - - -	4
Permanent withdrawals - - - - -	38
Total - - - - -	42



From the above it may be seen that 11 out of the 38 permanently discontinued cases, or 29% are for remarrying; 15% because the aid is no longer needed; while only 13% draw pension as long as they are entitled to receive it. Three children were born after aid was granted the dependent mother for the other children in the family. In two cases the additional \$7.50 was allowed, but in the third case it was denied since Chapter 267, Section 4, provides that "the Court shall not grant assistance for any dependent child who was not alive at the time of commitment of father to some state institution, or who was not born within ten months thereafter, and no child of a father who is mentally or physically unable to work shall be given assistance under this law," unless it likewise is born within the time stated above. The father of the child cited in the above case was committed to the State Tuberculosis Hospital.

In the administration of the dependent mothers' aid, the Judge of the County is to have strict supervision, the mother being required by law to report each month in regard to the spending of the funds. In a few instances a custodian was appointed to care for the spending of the money, or bills were paid direct to the grocer, etc., instead. When the merchant puts in his claim at the end of the month, an itemized list of expenditures is generally

given. Some of these sales tickets or invoices, also those paid out of the poor funds, show an appalling ignorance in regard to food values, as well as other household economies. Thus extravagance and waste often dissipate the funds which might be otherwise used to create a fairly comfortable standard of living. No doubt this same mismanagement is one of the causes for the dependent person requiring aid from the County, instead of being a self-supporting member of society.

Chiefly in connection with outdoor relief from the poor fund, we find evidence that the expenditures are being curbed in certain directions. On a few of the Judge's requisition slips are notations to the merchant indicating that the allowance must be spent in a certain way, one instance of which is given. This is from a requisition filed among claims under date of May 1, 1929:

"No tobacco to be sold on this requisition, also see that flour is sold so that they can make own bread; no bakery bread goes; further see that the requisition is not used for high grade groceries; coffee not over 44¢ per lb., and cheap bacon, and other things in proportion. Send this requisition back."

There is supposed to be a general understanding among merchants that County funds are not to be used for tobacco, but these expenditures still occur. An instance or two

was found where the merchant was denied payment on tobacco purchased by paupers.

In general, the expenditures which were almost exclusively for outdoor relief in the home during this later period, include food, rent, fuel, and money allowance. The form for purchasing of groceries, being that of a requisition, names the grocer from whom the purchase is to be made, and states that this entitles a certain person to five, ten, or twenty dollars worth of supplies. The grocer sends in the requisition together with sales slips or an itemized list of purchases at the end of the month and is reimbursed by the County Clerk on funds from the County Treasury, which are set aside for this purpose.

While the records indicate that the County hospital was still caring for paupers until 1914, no contract is found during this period. The file of claims indicates that from 1911 some three or four cases were being cared for by W. A. Quick, only one remaining in 1914. Beside boarding out paupers with individual families, they are being institutionalized to a certain extent. Chiefly among these classes are those afflicted with disease or bodily infirmity, and the aged. The placement so far as could be determined gives the following distribution:

TABLE XI  
INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF PAUPERS

Institution	Number	Rate of payment
Deaconess Hospital (Salem)	12	\$1.25 per day; \$1.50 later
Marion County Poor Farm	6	\$20 per month
Multnomah County Poor Farm	2	\$30 per month with medical aid
Patton Home	2	\$35 per month with medical aid
Employment Institute for Blind	1	Paid by the State

The later orders of the Court indicate that aid was granted, almost exclusively on the basis of personal applications. Each applicant fills out a form, the same as used by the Judge for dependent mothers; two or three personal references being required for each case. With these as a basis the Court orders give additional data not shown before. Twenty-one orders were found to indicate the age of the pauper granted aid. Twelve of these fall in the age group from 70-80; four from 60-70 years of age; two from 80-90; and one each from the 30-40, 40-50, and 50-60 age groups, respectively.

Other new classes found for the first time in this later period of poor relief, include clothing for the feeble-minded. These expenditures are listed under the poor fund until 1929, when a separate heading is given



expenditures for feeble-minded under the semi-annual reports. For the year of 1930 this item shows an expenditure of more than \$225; the largest number of cases appearing any one year being eight. According to Section 9 of Chapter 54 of the General Laws of Oregon, "if relatives cannot provide such clothing as specified in a list furnished by the Superintendent of the Institution for the Feeble-Minded, it shall be the duty of the County to provide such clothing."

Another group for this period is the care of deformed or crippled children, some half dozen cases being given surgical attention. These are provided for in Chapter 145 of the Session laws of 1917, which state that if the parent cannot furnish such funds required for the hospitalization of the child during period required for a surgical operation it must be paid for by the County.

The contract plan is used for a short period to reduce burial costs, which have generally averaged around \$50. Prices quoted under the date of June, 1913, are \$17.25 for adults and \$8.65 for children. Lots were also purchased in the cemetery for pauper burial to decrease costs.

This chapter will be concluded with a general summary of the cases for each year of this period:

TABLE XII

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAUPER CASES PER YEAR  
FOR THE PERIOD OF 1910-1930

Year	Cases	Year	Cases
1911	19	1921	41
1912	17	1922	34
1913	24	1923	39
1914	20	1924	31
1915	33	1925	45
1916	59	1926	47
1917	32	1927	47
1918	35	1928	48
1919	50	1929	51
1920	32	1930	72
		Total	776

From the above table showing 776 cases for a twenty year period, we find that the average number of cases granted aid per year is 38.8. Some of these cases were carried over a period of from one to sixteen years, as is indicated in Table XIII.

TABLE XIII

NUMBER AND DURATION OF PAUPER CASES REQUIRING RELIEF

1910--1930

Years	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	10	11	12	13	15	16	Total
Cases	310	52	28	15	5	6	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	428

This information was gained by making an alphabetized list for the entire period of those paupers for which actual expenditures were made. It was impossible to tell absolutely whether aid was given for an individual or a family; the figures generally favor the family, since unless reasonably sure of this fact, it was not included as belonging to the family group. An analysis is given for the cases of long duration as to class under which they fall. This was not carried beyond five years since cases are more numerous and not enough is known about many of them to make a classification possible. Of the fifteen found in the 4-year period group, six appear to be for families with dependent children.

TABLE XIV

## CLASSIFICATION OF CASES OF LONG DURATION

Period in:		Aged	Families	
Years	Blind	or Invalid	With Children	Total
16	1			1
15		1		1
13			1	1
12			2	2
11		1	1	2
10		1		1
9		1		1
7		2	1	3
6		1	5	6
5		3	2	5
	1	10	12	23

Further data obtained for this period indicates the

following points:

CASES AIDED:

Total number of cases, - - - - -	428
Individual persons, - - - - -	328
Families, - - - - -	100

PROPERTY:

Total times mentioned, - - - - -	14
Persons having property, - - - - -	5

RESPONSIBILITY OF RELATIVES:

Total times mentioned, - - - - -	20
Relatives able or willing to support, - - - - -	6

SETTLEMENT:

Total times mentioned, - - - - -	37
Non-residents, - - - - -	7

DEATHS:

Total number of burials by the County, 66

Three of the above cases of persons having property were instances of property being assigned to the County in return for assistance to be given; the other two consisting of a homestead, and an equity of questionable value in an automobile.

Of the relatives in Oregon able or willing to aid, only two were obligated; two were aiding altho too distantly removed to come under the Poor Act. The other two not obligated lived outside the State, but promised to care for relatives, provided the County furnished transportation.



Some miscellaneous cases of interest might be noted, one of which is found during the year of 1922; that of a family afflicted with scarlet fever. Although nearly \$1,000 of County money was spent for care, medical attention, and bedding, five members of the family died, the funeral expenses costing the County nearly a quarter of a thousand more. Another, that of an individual case, appears in 1930, of an expenditure of over \$1,050 for the care of a person suffering from erysipelas.

In January of 1915 is an unusual case of an aged man with over \$5,000 in certificates of deposits, and two acres of land being made a County charge, the contract of agreement covering two pages of the Court journal. Another similar case is found May 12, 1922, except the property is \$450 cash; the death of this case followed the agreement eleven days. These cases illustrate the helpless condition of the person who has no family ties, and who has no other affiliations to which he feels that he may turn when he becomes helpless.

On February 4, 1927, there appears a record assigning the claim of Benton County to certain land which had recently been sold. An action was pending in the Circuit Court, the County having attached the land of a certain man as a means of securing payment for the care of his

father. The purchaser of the land paid the Court \$175  
in order to clear the land of this claim.

CHAPTER VI  
TRENDS IN PUBLIC POOR RELIEF ADMINISTRATION  
FROM 1858 TO 1930

Contrary to the history of development of poor relief on the Atlantic sea-board states, which were made the dumping grounds for many of the unfit of Europe, settlement laws have never been a vital issue in the Oregon Territory. That there was a selective process at work to eliminate the chronic sick and dependent poor from the Oregon settlers is made evident by Thomas Condon, veteran pioneer, in a contribution which he makes to the Oregon Historical Society Quarterly.\* The incessant struggle required to make a home and gain a living in a simple environment, accounts for the lack of pauperism; moreover, it was against the traditions of the pioneer that anyone should be habitually dependent. Nowhere has the family proved itself to be such a self-sustaining economic unit as in pioneer life. Peter H. Burnett

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\* O. H. S. Q., Vol. 1, p. 63

Thomas Condon, of geological fame, sailed for the Oregon country in 1852 around Cape Horn; Gaston Centennial History of Oregon, Vol. 4, p. 541.

says, in his "Recollections of a Pioneer;"\* "It was interesting to observe the influence of new circumstances upon human character. Some of the men were idle, worthless young men, too lazy to work at home, and too genteel to steal, while some others were gamblers, and others were reputed thieves. But when they arrived in Oregon they were compelled to work or starve. There was a dire necessity; there were there, no able relatives or indulgent friends upon whom the idle could quarter themselves, and there was little or nothing that the rogues could steal. I never saw so fine a population, as a whole community, as I saw in Oregon most of the time I was there."

The chief determinant in the development of practices in public poor relief in Benton County was that of the law, which was mostly inherited, much dating back to the English poor law of 1601. This, coupled with the demands of the times, gave rise to minor changes in legislation as need arose. Different acts and clauses were added caring for various classes of dependents as growth in population and the complexity of civilization increased. Thus while mostly based on

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\* O. H. S. Q., Vol. 5, pp. 139-150



tradition, some of the change was also of an evolutionary nature.

The County unit system of administration has always prevailed in Oregon. This is a decentralized form of government, but does not provide for the close personal contact which some authorities deem so essential. The County has likewise been the unit for levying taxes. The poor tax is included in the general fund, the basis for the levy being the total expenditure for this purpose during the past year.

The relatives responsible for the support of the poor have always remained the same, the responsibility of the third generation, or the "grandfather clause", being omitted. A change was made in the law in 1919, which made the expenditures of the County a valid lien on the realty of a deceased person, in case the relatives, with the exception of minor children, failed to reimburse the County. The County practice appears to precede the law on this, as is noted on page 41, under date of August 5, 1896.

As was noted in the preceding chapters, the relatives able or willing to support were few. Under these circumstances they are cared for by the County, the law reading that "the Court may either make a contract for the

necessary maintenance, or appoint such agents as it may deem necessary to oversee and provide for the same."

A case of the appointment of an overseer was cited on page 29 under date of December 5, 1866, all other cases being that to provide or care for individuals. The general practice at present is for the judge or a county commissioner to care for all cases. True, in 1926-7, there was an agreement with the Red Cross Chapter in regard to the spending of certain County funds; which if continued might have revolutionized the present mode of administration, but for some reason this was discontinued. This may have been due to jealousy of the county officials, as is cited by Gillin several times in connection with the lack of cooperation in Iowa between the organized charity workers and the township overseers.

The above quoted law also provides for the use of the contract which was used for a variety of purposes, the chronological order of which appear to be:

- 1860-1883--Providing board for individual paupers;
- 1879 and 1887-1909--Medical contracts;
- 1893-1909--Farming out of paupers in groups;
- 1913--Contracts for the burial of paupers;
- 1915-1922--Contracts to care for paupers who have property.

As has been noted previously, the outdoor relief for

Benton County falls into two classes. Most of the above contracts were for the purpose of caring for paupers outside of the home, some others applying to both types of outdoor relief. One or two contracts for the boarding out of individuals, between 1860 and 1883 provided for two or three to a group. In the contracts from 1893 to 1909 the paupers lose their identity, no names being mentioned as in the earlier contracts. It is of interest to note that the contract method of furnishing medical aid seems to be a contemporary development along with the farming out of the poor; only one contract for doctoring the poor falls outside the period of 1887 to 1909. The present method, and that used since this period, of furnishing medical aid by contract, is to permit the family doctor to continue the case. If there is no family doctor and no preference is stated, the County Judge designates the physician for the emergency.

Although the group under Mrs. Huggins was regarded as the poor farm or County hospital, it does not comply with our definition of indoor relief. The nearest that Benton County came to providing some such institution especially for the poor was between the dates of May 21, 1906 and January 12, 1907. This was almost as fleeting as the reign of Corvallis as the seat of the Territorial Government. This purchase of a poor farm by one judge,

and the sale by the next represents a ridiculous situation. Whether the purchase happened previous to an election is not known. The figures for pauper cases for 1911, which is the nearest to this date obtained, indicate that 12 were receiving aid outside the home, and a number of these were only temporary cases. At this time the group was farmed out with W. A. Quick, and averaged about three or four paupers. In 1903 the County physician makes the following recommendation:

"In the matter of allowance of tobacco to County Charges at the poor farm: Now at this time upon information and recommendation of E. Bennett, M. D., County Physician, showing that the County Wards addicted to the use of tobacco should be given a reasonable amount, It is ordered that said wards be allowed and the judge is hereby instructed to order tobacco for said wards, in such amounts as deemed necessary."

The records of 1911 show an expenditure of from \$2 to \$2.50 per month; 1912, \$1.50; and 1913, \$.50, the amount decreasing with the size of the group. The present administration does not favor the purchase of this item, and one or two bills were found where they refused payment for the tobacco listed on grocery bills.

After 1914 the general tendency has been to provide indoor relief for the permanent cases. This is done by



boarding paupers with other County farms, chiefly Multnomah and Marion. Mention was made where two cases were to be cared for by Lane County, and one for Linn but no claims from these institutions were found in the file of claims. Chronic cases of sickness and invalids were cared for by hospitalization at the Deaconess Hospital at Salem. The file of claims for 1931 indicates that there is being re-enacted, this farming out process with Mrs. Ella Reece of 530 N. 11th Street; most of the months of the year showing an average of from three to four County charges.

The first law on settlement was incorporated in the poor act of 1854. This required 12 months of residence, immediately preceding the day upon which application was made. These formal applications for aid were in writing, some of those on file being made by the person himself, others where a citizen or citizens request aid for a poor person. The case given on page 33 is of interest in the respect that it indicates that the person is being removed by the constable which the law indicates shall be done in the Iowa and Wisconsin law, but the Oregon law says that he shall be removed without stating what official is responsible. This case also indicates that the practice of the County is lagging behind that provided in the law. The time for residence

was changed in 1866 to a residence of three months in the County, while the case appears under date of March 7, 1871.

The present law on settlement which was enacted in 1866 does not provide for the removal of paupers, but if the pauper is a resident of some other County, that County is to bear the expense for his care. This law also provided that the state shall refund to the county for non-resident paupers. In each case satisfactory proof was to be made, the bills of expenditure approved by the judge and attested by the clerk being *prima facie* evidence. Gillin says in regard to settlement:\* "English experience had long before shown that the introduction of the law of settlement was a serious blunder. It interfered with that mobility of labor so necessary to economic readjustment, while it did not prevent the vagabondage it was intended to circumvent." He further states that the giving of relief by scientific methods is the mode of attack, rather than the stringent settlement laws which proved a hardship to the honest person seeking work. In this respect, the simplicity of the Oregon settlement law has proven advantageous in administration. The practice of the

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\* Poor Relief Legislation in Iowa, p. 124

State refunding for non-residents was repealed by the 1921 State legislature, which throws added burden on the administration in the local unit.

During the early part of the history of the administration for dependents, we found that the practice of binding out or apprenticing of dependent children was practiced as is evidenced in the cases given in Appendix "A". This Statute still remains on the books, although the Juvenile Court and Dependent Mothers' Aid has become the accepted practice for the care of this class of dependents. The tendency in connection with the law for dependent mothers has been to make the terms more liberal. The law of 1913 defined the persons entitled to this aid, while the law of 1921 made the original act more inclusive; aid now being available if the husband was in a County institution as well as those sentenced by a federal judge of the District of Oregon to a federal institution outside the state, provided that he was a citizen of the United States. Since the administrative practice of the County seems to lag, or need was not so great, no great increase is noted till 1930. The original law of 1913 set the amount for the first child at \$10 and \$7.50 for each additional child under 16; the law of 1915 placing the amount of \$40 as the limit to be given to any one family. The practice of

giving these amounts still holds in the administration of this relief, although the laws of 1921 and 1929 increased these amounts. Where it is necessary to grant more relief, rent or some such item is paid from the County fund and charged under care of the poor rather than to increase the amounts as provided by law. This practice of the Judge is no doubt that of diplomacy, because as it is, when each receives the same amount, they are better satisfied than if some were granted more, as provided by law.

The relief under the act providing for the care of Indigent Sailors and Soldiers is not of great importance. As stated before, there seems to be considerable disagreement between the Judge and the Commander of the Post as to when relief is needed. The only amount which they can count on is the \$25 granted annually for Memorial Day exercises, and this practice has become traditional. Similar to this is the case of the County paying the rental of a hall for the meeting of the Welfare League during the war, and also buying a flag, and charging these items to the poor fund.

No definite provision is given in the law for the administering of outdoor relief outside of the home. No doubt it falls under Section 4 of the Poor Act which says: "Then the said pauper shall receive such relief as the



case may require out of the County Treasury."

As was previously stated, outdoor relief within the family was not common before 1880. It is then believed to have originated in the following order, so far as could be determined by an analysis made of expenditures: Burial, food, medical attention, dry goods (clothing), rent, fuel, and money allowance. The reason that fuel and money allowance appear last is due to the fact that it was possible to secure wood without cost from wooded sections, or waste around saw-mills; while the granting of a money allowance reflects the methods used in granting dependent mothers aid, it being chiefly for those who could not comply under the mothers' pension act, including the mother whose husband had deserted. The greatest amount spent on fuel was during the year of 1930, when \$90 was expended. The first year showing money allowance was 1915, when \$450 was spent. The greatest cost under money allowance was for the year 1925, nearly \$1,200 being granted; while the year of 1930 shows \$340 for this expenditure. The item of rent has shown a tremendous increase in the last three years; in 1930 nearly \$600 is expended for this alone. Dry goods, on the other hand, has shown a tendency to decrease materially due to the fact that the Red Cross is functioning effectively in this field of relief. In 1930, food expenditures are

nearly \$1,300, which is more than double that of any other years, with the exception of 1919 and 1921. The miscellaneous expense column, while not large at any time, includes the expense item of transportation. This is for railroad tickets, there being a tendency to transport paupers, even when residents, if relatives can be found to care for them. The railroad company occasionally cooperates in furnishing an adult ticket at half fare, which saves materially on County funds. Beside this, local moving is included, as well as ambulance service. The other miscellaneous items are too scattered to warrant attention.

The following table is compiled to make possible a comparison of the three periods. Attention is called especially to the increase in the average number of cases per year, and the shift in ratio between the families and individuals aided. A discussion of this is given in a later chapter.

TABLE NO. XV  
COMPARATIVE DATA FOR THE THREE PERIODS  
OF POOR RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

	Early	Middle	Later
Number of years in each period -	17	13	20
Average number of cases per year	3.7	12.8	38.8
CASES AIDED:			
Total number of cases - - - -	48	87	428
Individual persons - - - - -	40	69	328
Families (indicated as such)-	8	18	100
PROPERTY:			
Total times mentioned - - - -	17	27	14
Persons having property - - -	1	2	5
RESPONSIBILITY OF RELATIVES:			
Total times mentioned - - - -	7	28	20
Relatives able or willing to support - - - - -	0	0	5
SETTLEMENT:			
Total times mentioned - - - -	18	27	37
Non-residents - - - - -	6	4	7
DEATHS:			
Total number of burials by the County - - - - -	18	29	66

It may be seen from the above that the ratio of deaths to total paupers aided in the early period is about 1 to 2.7; the middle period being 1 to 3, while that of the later period is 1 to 6.5. It might be concluded that aid was being granted on more liberal terms, if Robert Hunter's book on "Poverty" were used as a basis. Whether there is any scientific basis for the conclusion that the number of pauper burials is an index of the needs of the poor aided is not known. Hunter believes that there

is sufficient stigma attached to a burial in "Potter's Field" to make people generally willing to sacrifice other things to avoid this disgrace, if possible.



## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A study of the practices in poor relief administration and likewise that of legislation indicates that both have their background in tradition, with adjustments in a minor degree to the local needs of the State and the County. The laws and practices which we have today, descended to Benton County chiefly from the English poor law of 1601 to the original Colonies on the Atlantic. The Northwest Territory seems to have drawn her laws partly from Pennsylvania, and later ones from Ohio; in turn these laws were inherited by the Territory of Michigan, who passed them on to Wisconsin. The Wisconsin statute laws of poor relief for the year of 1838 were adopted in Iowa in 1838-9, and the Iowa laws of that year were incorporated in the Oregon compact voted on and adopted in 1843. The law of Oregon is essentially that of Wisconsin so far as the poor law is concerned, since it was unaffected by Iowa legislation previous to adoption. These laws are advantageous in their simplicity and adaptability, six of the original nine remaining are as enacted in 1854; one being repealed in 1921. This, together with the laws on settlement in 1866, beside the legislation for special classes, in general comprises the body of the Oregon statute laws

for dependents. The legislation for special classes, such as dependent mothers, juvenile courts, indigent sailors and soldiers, etc., was not peculiar to Oregon but was also being enacted in other states. Of these original sections, number five, which pertains to the binding out of children as apprentices, should be repealed, since it is both vicious as well as obsolete. The present method of caring for dependent children through the juvenile courts and the commitment to childrens' homes, which in turn have the facilities of child placing and investigation, and the use of dependent mothers' aid, when the home surroundings are suitable, is both more adequate and desirable.

The study of dependent mothers revealed the fact that the size of a majority of the families receiving relief was small, while those continuing on the list until the last child reaches the age of 16 are only about 13%; the principal cause of withdrawal being that of the mother remarrying. The number of families in this group receiving aid shows a marked increase in the year 1930, which may be due partly to the law being made more inclusive as well as the imperative need as a result of unemployment conditions. The amounts given in the law of 1913 are still being used as the basis for granting relief.

In the care of dependent children it was found that nearly two-thirds of the original placements of children were in institutions. The chief causes of this dependency were desertion and lack of ability to provide. These reflect the increase in the economic pressure of maintaining an adequate standard of living. By correcting these causes, the number of dependent children could be decreased more than 50%. That desertion especially is being treated with uncalled for leniency is indicated by the fact that no case was found of an attempt to trace the guilty party and cause his return that he might be made to provide for the dependent members. This leniency only encourages others to abscond.

The present decentralized plan of poor relief administration in Benton County is commendable, but with certain modifications might prove more effective. In the first place, the State should have a well-defined social program for dependents and require reports giving definite data from each County. Thus the State could act as a clearing house for comparative figures, and be in a position to make recommendations. As it is no one knows the expenditures of the State, or whether one County is handling the situation better than any other County, and the total amount expended. Benton County spent in 1930 more than \$14,000, as indicated by

the total sum of expenditures for dependents on the two semi-annual reports. Being of a small area, and of a rural character it probably would serve admirably as a unit of comparison for the State, without the danger of overstating. Since there are 36 counties, this would mean that more than half a million dollars were spent on poor relief in Oregon for 1930.

There seems to be no definite law which can be formulated for the expending of money for dependents, as may be checked on by referring to Appendix "B". For example, in 1916 it took \$3585 to care for 59 persons when in 1917 the cost was \$3859 for 32. Again in 1930 the sum of \$8876 is expended to care for 72 persons, while less than half that amount is used to care for 51 in 1929. It would seem reasonable to suppose that the relation between the number of persons aided and the amount spent might show a more definite relation in the mothers' pension cases where the amount given each is more nearly standardized, and in general this is true, an exception showing a marked difference being noted in 1925 and 1926. This is caused by the fact that a number of cases last for only a fraction of a year.

Another desirable change, especially for the County of large area and population, would be that of subdivision according to precincts, or some other suitable



boundaries; requiring some public-spirited person to act as overseer for the poor, make the reports and levy the taxes on the property of his district required to carry on the work for the next year. These ideas, with the organization of an unsalaried board of charities to supervise the work of the County, and certain well defined checks not indicated, comprise the Indiana plan of administration, which has proved revolutionary in that State in the correction of many defects, beside the saving in financial expenditures.

So far as Benton County is individually concerned, it has the present facilities at hand to adequately effect the giving of relief on a scientific basis, without additional financial expense or of waiting for State legislation for remedial measures. The County is small and at present has a full time health nurse and a Red Cross Secretary, who has had training in social welfare work and the case-work method of procedure. Instead of investigating only the references given, as appears to be the chief method at present, or that of the Judge or County Commissioners visiting the home when the urgency of the case demands, it not only seems more advantageous as well as desirable to have the case thoroughly investigated at the beginning, and likewise to follow it up with adequate supervision. In this way

rehabilitation might be effected, and dependency forestalled by preventive measures. Especially is there a need that the spending of the allowance of money be supervised in the mothers' pension cases, as well as for those paupers receiving requisitions for food. The three greatest sources of waste are those of buying staple goods in small quantities; the use of package and highly refined goods in place of bulk goods and those requiring preparations before using, and the purchase from neighborhood stores, instead of securing the goods at the source of supply where prices are best. Ignorance of food values also prevents the purchaser from securing his "money's worth." It would indeed be a shock to some of our good citizens interested in tax reductions, to see the frequency of cake, cookies, candy bars, and other items classed as luxuries on many of the lists of goods purchased. The misplaced faith in patent medicines is another source of waste; the money requisitioned for food, often being diverted for this purpose. Some of the more glaring instances of extravagance include: A coaster wagon, \$9.50; bath robe, \$7.50; freckle cream; rent for a family at \$25 per month; money requisitioned for food spent on a coffee percolater, dishpan, and other items of a good price; and an order for \$3.00 including \$1.68 of personal

cash spent entirely for raisins, dates, walnuts, puffed rice, popcorn, sugar, cocoa, and vanilla. Even though the latter case occurred around Christmas time, it doesn't take this much sometimes to make others feel that the Judge's role is that of Santa Claus. An instance of this was found on file where an old lady, with three grown children, who had been reading the papers about others receiving widows' pensions, wrote the Judge asking what he could do for her. The inconsistency of this waste on the one hand and the niggardly attitude evident on the other is characteristic of much of the entire period of poor relief administration; such methods not being compatible with fruitful results. No doubt it contributes in a measure to the growing increase in pauperism.

That pauperism is on the increase in Benton County may be verified by making a comparison of the average number of pauper cases for each of the three periods of the comparative table found on page 91 of this study, with that of the table of population on page 8. This increase cannot be explained by the growth in population alone since between the early and middle period, population only about doubles, while the increase in the average number of paupers more than trebles. This

difference of a ratio of about 2 to 3 for increase of population to paupers is again evident in comparing the figures for the middle with the later period, while a comparison of the early and later period gives the rather startling ratio of 5 to 10. This in general does not take into consideration those cared for under the special classes, the main groups of which consist of dependent children and dependent mothers, which is common only to this later period. Including these two groups alone would raise the average of the last period some 15 or more per year, making it about 54 in place of 38.8 as shown in Table XV. True, there are some few names appearing under two classifications, but it is believed that some 3 or 4 per year would be a liberal allowance. Neither does the above comparison take into consideration that for each family aided there are several persons receiving relief. The increase in the number of families per period over that of the individual persons also makes an interesting comparison, in spite of the fact that this data could not be absolutely determined for any period. The ratio in the early period of 40 to 8 gives 5 to 1; the middle period shows 69 individuals to 18 families, or a ratio of about 4 to 1; while the later period indicates 328 individuals to 100 families, which is a little over



3 to 1.

From these comparisons, together with a knowledge of the early history of Benton County as told by Fagan, and personal observations covering the later period, the author concludes that this difference in ratio between growth in population and dependency is in part due to the increase of economic pressure in the gaining of a livelihood. As the pressure increases the family experiences an added burden in providing an adequate standard of living; the old adage of two living as cheaply as one applying more nearly to that of pioneer times. The family appears to be more nearly self-sustaining than the individual during this period, a little neighborly assistance often being all that was required in many cases, to tide the family over in case of an emergency, while it was necessary to board out the individual.

The first marked increase in pauper relief is noted in the late seventies, which is about the time, according to Fagan, when the free land was gone. Good land demanded a price of some \$20 per acre, and the poor land to be had would scarcely eke out a living. The next increase of note appears during 1915, and especially in 1916, when a total of 59 cases appear; two other years approaching this number are 1919 with 50 cases and 1929 with 51 cases. It is only surpassed by the year of 1930, when 72 cases

were relieved. Speaking of wages and prices, Gillin says, "The greatest divergence was in 1917," and between the years of 1914 and 1919 there was this tendency of wages to lag behind retail prices.\* While 1919 is also included in this interval, the return of the World War veteran and the assuming of a place in industry might eliminate certain others making their wants more imperative. The acute nature of the unemployment situation in turn would partly account for the increases shown for the years of 1929 and 1930.

To remedy this economic situation will not only require careful social legislation, but also a modification of many of our present views. The present depression would prove a blessing in disguise were it possible to emerge from it with a well developed social consciousness.

Public poor relief consisted of two kinds, outdoor and indoor relief; all indoor relief being provided in institutions outside the County. The outdoor relief outside the home consisted of boarding and farming out paupers in individual families. Provision for these were often by contract, the chief medical contracts falling at the same time that paupers were farmed out in groups. Outdoor relief inside the home consisted of burial, food, medical attention, clothing and money allowance. This is,

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\* Poverty and Dependency, p. 88

so far as could be determined, the order in which they originated; one to several of these items being provided for each applicant.

There is nothing of a startling nature in the Court records to indicate that the chief cause of pauperism is due to hereditary mental defect as concluded by Kelso. That mental defect is hereditary so far as feeble-mindedness is concerned is evident since only two or three isolated cases appear, the rest having two or more to the family. The new law which provides that each county must bear the burden of expense of feeble-minded or the insane provided the parents cannot do so may write a new story in the Court Journal. Immediate steps should be taken to eliminate this group with the present generation, which will require more effective legislation.

Beside the need for a change in the nature of poor relief administration and the present urgent demand for effective social legislation, our educational system should eliminate some of the traditional courses and substitute for them subject-matter of a more vital nature. One of the most hopeless sides of rehabilitation in social service work is the lack of a foundation on which to build. How wasteful a system, which waits till middle life to teach a trade, or to teach a mother the value of foods when there is an immediate need for conserving

funds; or for treating a child suffering from the effects of malnutrition. Yet we find in an emergency program where a curtailment is necessary due to a lack of funds that many schools are eliminating the very courses which are most helpful. Plato, in laying his plans for the ideal in his Republic, gave first place to a system of education to accomplish this ideal. Likewise, can we use our schools of today as the most effective means of eliminating the undesirable to raise the whole general level of life so that much of the poverty is removed. Only by eliminating the chief cause of pauperism, which is poverty, can we effect a cure.

In conclusion the author wishes to state that so far as could be determined, many of the most flagrant evils as pictured by other writers seem to be at a minimum in the history of Benton County poor relief; this is in no small measure due to the wise administration by many of the County Judges and also the rural nature of the County. On the other hand the cold impersonal reading of material contained in the court records fails to disclose much of the pathos. It is to be regretted that the policy of withholding relief as long as possible was followed. The high mortality rate of the pauper mother in child-bearing is one illustration of the waste in life which resulted.



Whether the conditions of the County poor house in Oregon are as deplorable as those depicted of other states is not known. If a change were made for the more humane conditions possible in a district or State hospital or home for the aged, Benton County is fortunate in the respect that it would not necessitate the discarding of expensive machinery.

Unless some reform in the administration of public poor relief in Benton County is effected in the near future, the present conditions of increasing demands will simply be met by making it continually more difficult to secure aid from the County. The short-sighted aim in view is that of a financial saving, but no matter how great the saving, the money spent is worse than wasted if it increases pauperism, when it is possible by the right methods to rehabilitate.

## APPENDIX "A"

FILE NO. 133: PETITION GRANTED JOHN COPELAND  
AND APPOINTED GUARDIAN

To the Honorable J. B. Bagly, Probate Judge for the  
County of Benton, and State of Oregon.

Your petitioner, John C. Copeland, a resident of the  
said county of Benton respectfully represents that Clara,  
Francis Aaron, and Laura Sayers, minor children of  
Peter D. Sayers have been abandoned by the said  
Peter D. Sayers, and thus left without any protection  
or guardian. He therefore prays that you appoint a  
guardian for the said children, and as in duty bound  
will ever pray.

Aug. 3rd, 1864

John C Coplin

(Recorded in Probate Journal I, p. 251.

- - - - -

Guardian abandoned children, P. D. Sayers:

Infant -- Indenture, John Copeland to Abel Hurlburt --

Filed Aug. 23, A. D., 1864 -- Approved Sept. 5, 1864.

I. B. Bayley, Judge. Recorded Sept. 6th, 1864 on page  
13 of Record Book A of apprentice Indentures of Benton  
Co., Ogn.\*

B. W. Wilson,

County Clerk.

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\*This Journal not on file in the County Clerk's office.

JOURNAL I -- p. 252

State of Oregon, County of Benton: ss

This Indenture Witnesseth: That John C. Copeland of the Co. of Benton and State of Oregon, Guardian of the abandoned children of Peter D. Sayers has this day put and bound Francis Aaron Sayers aged 9 years on the 4th day of Aug., A. D., 1864, unto Abel Hurlburt of the County of Benton and State of Oregon, until the said Francis Aaron Sayers is of the age of 14 years and the said Abel Hurlburt agrees to take good care of the above mentioned Infant, and shall clothe and provide for said Infant in sickness and in health and supply him with suitable food and clothing and to cause said infant to be instructed to read and write and in the general rules of Arithmetic, but nothing in this instrument shall prevent the said Abel Hurlburt from giving said Infant all the further advantages of education he may wish to, and at the time when said Francis Aaron Sayers shall arrive at the age of 14 years, said Abel Hurlburt shall give said Infant a good suit of clothes and \$10 in money, and for the care and expense of providing for said Infant, said Hurlburt shall receive the services of said Infant until he shall arrive at the age of 14 years as before set forth, but shall in no manner overwork or misuse said Infant, but shall in all things treat said Infant as a child of such age should be treated.

In witness whereof the parties aforesaid have hereunto set their hands and seals this 23d day of August, A. D., 1864.

Signed sealed and	)	John C. Coplin (Seal)
	)	
delivered in presence of	)	Abel Hurlburt (Seal)
	)	
John Burnett. B. W. Wilson)		

PROBATE JOURNAL I -- p. 268

PETITION FOR RELEASE OF INDENTURES, FILED Feb. 7, 1865 --

B. W. WILSON, CLERK

To the Hon. County Court of Benton Co., Oregon: We the undersigned respectfully petition the Court for an order releasing Abel Hurlburt from all and every of his obligations incurred under and by virtue of the Indentures of Apprenticeship of Francis Aaron Sayers believing it will be for the best interest of all concerned and as in duty bound will ever pray.

John Coplin, Guardian of  
the abandoned children.

P. D. Sayers. Abel Hurlburt

PROBATE RECORD "A" -- Dec. 1, 1850 to Sept. 1857. Page 37

Heir of Jesse Wright (Deceased):

Now at this day came Thornton Wright a minor, aged 13 years, having no father, and J. Quinn Thornton. And it appearing that the said minor has no guardian, but it also appearing that his mother consents to his being bound to the said J. Quinn Thornton until he is 21 years of age for



the terms mentioned in a certain indenture of apprenticeship of this day entered into by and between the said parties, and approved by me. The Court orders that the said boy be bound and that he is hereby bound as aforesaid -- and the Court adjourned till the second Monday, Oct., 1853.

A. N. Locke,  
Judge of Probate.

P. 102: Sept. 4, 1855:

Jas. D. Thornton, ward) (J. Quinn Thornton, Master

This day personally appeared J. Quinn Thornton, master, and A. J. Than, attorney for ward, and rendered up the indentures of Jas. D. Thornton as ward bound to said J. Quinn Thornton.

-v - v-

Having in vacation approved the indentures of Thornton Wright as binding himself to J. Q. Thornton till he should come to the age of twenty-one, therefore the Court approved the said indentures.

FILE NO. 38:

THORNTON WRIGHT -- and indenture until Aug. 30, 1861 --  
J. Quinn Thornton.

This indenture witnesseth:

That Thornton Wright of the county of Benton, in the Territory of Oregon, aged 15 years, on the 30th day of Aug., 1855, by and with the consent and approbation of the probate Judge of said Co., certified in writing, and signed by the

said probate Judge on each part of this indenture, the said Thornton Wright having no parent competent to act, and no guardian, hath voluntarily and of his own free will and accord, put and bound himself to J. Quinn Thornton of the said County to work and labor in about and upon the farm of the said J. Quinn Thornton and to learn the art of farming, to serve from the date hereof, until the said Thornton Wright shall be twenty-one years of age that is to say until the 30th day of August in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one, during all which time the said Thornton Wright shall serve the said J. Quinn Thornton faithfully, honestly and industriously, all lawful commands everywhere readily obey; and protect and preserve at all times the goods and property of the said J. Quinn Thornton, and not suffer or allow any to be injured or wasted--He shall not buy, sell or traffic with his own goods, or the goods of others, nor be absent from the said J. Quinn Thornton, Sr., day or night without leave; but in all things behave himself faithfully and with a view to the interests and lawful commands and wishes of the said J. Quinn Thornton during the said time that is to say until the 30th day of Aug. in the year of our Lord, one thousand sixty-one, aforesaid. And the said J. Quinn Thornton shall clothe and provide the said Thornton Wright until the expiration of the said time, in sickness and in health, and supply him with suitable food, and shall instruct him

or cause him within the said term to be instructed in reading, writing and arithmetic as far as to the Double Rule of Three and also in English Grammar; and at the expiration of the said term, if the said Thornton Wright shall faithfully serve as aforesaid shall give him a new Bible, a new suit of broad cloth clothes, a new suit of clothes suitable for laboring in; a horse, saddle and bridle, worth in the whole one hundred dollars and one hundred dollars in cash.

And for the true performance of all and singular the covenants and agreement aforesaid, the said parties bind themselves, each unto the other, firmly by these presents.

In witness whereof the parties aforesaid have hereunto set their hands and seals to this instrument and to its counterpart the 4th day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five.

Signed, sealed, and delivered	)	His	
in the presence of A. M. Locke,	)	Thornton	X Wright
Probate Judge, Benton County,	)	Mark	(Seal)
Oregon Territory.	)	J. Quinn Thornton	(Seal)

Oregon Territory	)	
	)	SS
Benton County	)	

I, A. N. Locke, the Probate Judge, within and for the County of Benton in Oregon Territory, where the above named Thornton Wright and J. Quinn Thornton, reside, do hereby certify that it appears to me by the oath of the said

Thornton Wright that he has no parent competent to act for him, and that he has no guardian---And I do further certify that I as probate Judge as aforesaid do approve of and hereby consent to the said Thornton Wright binding himself as in the foregoing indenture.

In testimony, whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name and placed the seal of my said office hereunto this 4th day of Sept., A. D., 1855.

A. N. Locke, Probate  
Judge within and for the  
County of Benton in  
Oregon Territory.

FILE NO. 37:

JAMES D. THORNTON--INDENTURE OF APPRENTICESHIP TO  
J. QUINN THORNTON

Note: (File contained both contracts, one bearing this addition: "Canceled by mutual agreement between the parties" but no date)

This indenture witnesseth: That Jas. D. Thornton of the County of Benton, in the territory of Oregon, aged 16 years on the 6th day of June next, by and with the consent of the probate Judge of said county, certified in writing, and signed by the said probate Judge on each part of this indenture, the said Jas. D. Thornton having no parents, and no guardian, hath voluntarily and of his own free will and accord, put and bound himself to J. Quinn Thornton as



a work hand upon and about a farm to serve from this date until the said Jas. D. Thornton shall have attained the age of twenty-one years which will be on the 6th day of June in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty, during all which time the said Jas. D. Thornton shall serve the said J. Quinn Thornton, faithfully, honestly and industriously; his secrets keep, and lawful commands everywhere readily obey; at all times protect and preserve the goods and property of the said J. Q. Thornton, and not suffer or allow any to be injured or wasted. He shall not buy, sell, or traffic, with his own goods, or the goods of others, nor be absent from the said J. Q. Thornton's service, day or night without leave; but in all things behave himself faithfully and with a view to the interests and lawful commands and wishes of the said J. Q. Thornton, during the said time until the 6th day of June, one thousand eight hundred and sixty, aforesaid. And the said J. Quinn Thornton shall clothe and provide Jas. D. Thornton in sickness and in health and supply him with suitable food and clothing; and shall use and employ his endeavors to teach or cause the said Jas. D. Thornton within the said term, to be instructed to read and write, and in the general rules of Arithmetic, and in also so much of the grammar of the English language as shall enable the said Jas. D. Thornton by a reasonable degree of diligence and study, and within a reasonable time after the expiration

of the said term of service to speak and write the said language correctly; and at the end of the said term give the said Jas. D. Thornton a new Bible and Five Hundred Dollars.

And for the true performance of all and singular covenants and agreements aforesaid, the said parties bind themselves, each unto the other, firmly by these presents.

In witness, whereof, the parties aforesaid have hereunto set their hands and seals to this instrument and to its counterpart the 16th day of March in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and fifty five.

Signed, sealed, and delivered in	)	His
the presence of A. N. Locke, Probate	)	James D. X Thornton
Judge within and for the County of	)	Mark (Seal)
Benton in Oregon Territory.	)	J. Quinn Thornton (Seal)

I the undersigned Probate Judge of Benton County, Oregon Territory, where the above named James D. Thornton resides, do certify that the said James D. Thornton has no parent living, and that he has no guardian, and that the said Judge do consent that the said James D. Thornton may bind himself in and by the said indenture, March 16th, A. D., 1855.

A. N. Locke, Probate Judge  
within the County of  
Benton in Oregon Territory.

FILE NO. 90 $\frac{1}{2}$ :

Catharine Davis and)	
J. Q. Thornton )	Indenture until March, A. D., 1862.

This indenture witnesseth: That Catharine Davis of the County of Benton in the Territory of Oregon, aged 11 years about the 1st of March, A. D., 1855 by and with the consent and approbation of the Probate Judge of said County, certified in writing, and signed by the said Probate Judge on each part of this Indenture, the said Catharine Davis having no parent competent to act, and no guardian, hath voluntarily and of her own free will and accord, put and bound herself to J. Quinn Thornton of the said county to work and labor in and about the house and premises of the said J. Q. Thornton, to serve from the date hereof until the said Catharine Davis shall be 18 years old, that is to say, until March 1st, A. D., 1862, during all which time the said Catharine Davis shall serve the said J. Q. Thornton faithfully, honestly, and industriously; all lawful commands everywhere readily obey; and protect and preserve at all times the goods and property of the said J. Quinn Thornton and not suffer or allow any to be injured or wasted. She shall not buy, sell or traffic with her own goods, or with the goods of others, nor be absent from the said J. Quinn Thornton's service, day or night without leave; but in all things behave herself faithfully and with a view to the interests and lawful

commands and wishes of the said J. Quinn Thornton during the said time that is to say until March the 1st in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two aforesaid. And the said J. Q. Thornton shall clothe and provide for the said Catharine Davis until the expiration of the said time in sickness and in health and supply her with suitable food; and shall instruct her or cause her to be instructed within the said time in reading, writing and the general rules of arithmetic; and at the expiration of the said time give her a new Bible, three new suits of clothes; one bed of wool or feathers as may be most convenient to the said J. Quinn Thornton, together with suitable bolster, pillows, blankets and sheets, and two cows and calves.

And for the true performance of all and singular of the covenants and agreements aforesaid, the said partners bind themselves, each unto the other, firmly by these presents.

In witness, whereof, the parties aforesaid have hereunto set their hands and seals to this instrument and to its counterpart the 4th day of Sept., A. D., 1855.

Signed, sealed and delivered	)	Her
	)	
In the presence of A. N. Locke,	)	Catherine X Davis (Seal)
	)	
Probate Judge of Benton County	)	Mark
	)	
in Oregon Territory	)	J. Quinn Thornton (Seal)



Oregon Territory)  
 Benton County      }SS

Be it remembered that I, A. N. Locke, the Probate Judge of Benton County in Oregon Territory, wherein the above named Catherine Davis and J. Quinn Thornton reside, do hereby certify that it appears to me by the oath of the said Catherine Davis that she has no parent competent to act for her, and no guardian. And I do further certify that as Probate Judge as aforesaid I do approve of and do hereby consent to the said Catherine Davis binding herself as in the foregoing indenture. In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name this 4th day of September, A. D., 1855.

A. N. Locke, Probate Judge,  
 within and for the County  
 of Benton in Oregon Territory

FILE NO. 90 $\frac{1}{2}$ :

APPLICATION TO PROBATE COURT OF JAMES TAYLOR; REMOVAL  
 OF J. QUINN THORNTON, GUARDIAN, OF CATHERINE DAVIS --

FILED Nov. 22, 1859.

T. B. Odeneal, Clerk.

(Complaint by Jas. Taylor for removal of J. Quinn Thornton because "Catherine has been chastised by said Thornton and by members of said Thornton's family in a harsh and cruel and unusual manner, with a cow-hide.")

Prays that Thornton be cited to appear before Probate Court.)

Sheriff's notice served to (	(Catherine Davis	Fee \$2.20
	(J. Quinn Thornton	2.60

(Only evidence is letter by J. Quinn Thornton stating that Taylor's complaint is untrue -- Filed Dec. 6, 1859.)

## APPENDIX "B"

## ANNUAL COST OF PAUPERS AND SPECIAL CLASSES OF DEPENDENTS

1858--1930

: Year :	: PAUPERS :		: WIDOWS' :	: INDIGENT :	: SAILORS & :	: FEEBLE- :
:	: PENSION :		: SOLDIERS :	: MINDED :	:	:
:	: No. :	: Amt. to :	: No. :	: Amount :	: Amount :	: Clothing :
:	:	: Nearest :	:	:	:	:
:	:	: Dollar :	:	:	:	:
:1858 :	: 2 :	: \$ (801) :	:	:	:	:
:1859 :	: 2 :	: (499) :	:	:	:	:
:1860 :	: 2 :	: (216) :	:	:	:	:
:1861 :	: 1 :	: (316) :	:	:	:	:
:1865 :	: - :	: 79 :	:	:	:	:
:1866 :	: 3 :	: (283) :	:	:	:	:
:1867 :	: 2 :	: 351* :	:	:	:	:
:1868 :	: - :	: 95* :	:	:	:	:
:1869 :	: 2 :	: 373** :	:	:	:	:
:1870 :	: 1 :	: 157* :	:	:	:	:
:1871 :	: 5 :	: (169) :	:	:	:	:
:1872 :	: 1 :	: 332* :	:	:	:	:
:1873 :	: 3 :	: 504* :	:	:	:	:
:1874 :	: 3 :	: 253* :	:	:	:	:
:1875 :	: 9 :	: 855 :	:	:	:	:
:1876 :	: 4 :	: 1055 :	:	:	:	:
:1877 :	: 6 :	: 927 :	:	:	:	:
:1878 :	: 3 :	: 1011 :	:	:	:	:
:1879 :	: 14 :	: 946 :	:	:	:	:
:1880 :	: 10 :	: 1697 :	:	:	:	:
:1881 :	: 8 :	: 1336 :	:	:	:	:
:1882 :	: 13 :	: 1387 :	:	:	:	:
:1883 :	: 11 :	: 1631 :	:	:	:	:
:1884 :	: 5 :	: 953 :	:	:	:	:
:1885 :	: 10 :	: 564 :	:	:	:	:
:1886 :	: 11 :	: 811 :	:	:	:	:
:1887 :	: 14 :	: 1581 :	:	:	:	:
:1888 :	: 15 :	: 2386 :	:	:	:	:
:1889 :	: 16 :	: 2028 :	:	:	:	:
:1890 :	: 18 :	: 2574 :	:	:	:	:
:1891 :	: 16 :	: 2089 :	:	:	:	:
:1892 :	: 20 :	: 2046 :	:	:	:	:
:1893 :	:	: 1810 :	:	:	:	:
:1894 :	:	: 1879 :	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:

Year	PAUPERS	WIDOWS' PENSION	INDIGENT SAILORS & SOLDIERS	FEEBLE-MINDED
	No. ! Amt. to Nearest Dollar	No. ! Amount	Amount	Clothing
1895	\$ 2048	\$	\$	\$
1896	1791		41	
1897	2623			
1898	2502			
1899	2034			
1900	1595			
1901	1568			
1902	1326		373	
1903	1959		15	
1904	1933		42	
1905	1835		21	
1906	2544		40	
1907	1419		40	
1908	1435		22	
1909	1768		25	
1910	2147		113	
1911	19 1530		172	
1912	17 1190		128	
1913	24 1832	2 445	216	
1914	20 1409	5 1448	60	
1915	33 4582***	9 2046	10	
1916	59 3585	12 3039	45	
1917	32 3859	13 3928	183	
1918	35 3465	16 4793	20	
1919	50 4184	17 4796		
1920	32 4005	17 4601	25	
1921	41 5249	17 4651	25	
1922	34 4369	17 4423	110	
1923	39 4896	18 4323	25	
1924	31 4231	16 3541	100	
1925	45 5163	14 2843	100	
1926	47 4610	9 2938	560	
1927	47 5753	13 3093	253	
1928	48 6337	16 3243	10	
1929	51 4323	14 3546	113	117
1930	72 8876	23 4939	65	227

NOTE: The figures given in this table are taken from the Court Exhibits and Semi-annual Reports. Where an amount is enclosed in parenthesis the figures were taken from the



analysis of expenditures compiled by the author; no figures being found in the exhibits for these years.

\* Amount includes expenditures for insane.

\*\* Amount includes coroner's inquest.

\*\*\* Dates for Semi-annual Reports changed by law (1915) from April and September to June and December; as a consequence expenditures for 1915 may include more than one year.