

SR 155 Oral History Interview with Charles Sprague

by Robert Bruce

Living History Series

1962 July 18



THE OREGON
HISTORICAL
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Compiled by Unknown & Sarah Stroman

Reel 1

1962 July 18

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Introduction	Robert Bruce of the Capitol News Bureau of Salem, Oregon, introduces his guest, former Oregon Governor Charles A. Sprague.			
00:00:29	Family history and early life	Sprague was born in Lawrence, Kansas, in 1887, and grew up in Columbus Junction, Iowa, where his father bought and shipped grain, eggs, and livestock. He worked for his father and on farms in the area.	Childhood	Family life	Farm life
00:02:51	Education and early career	Sprague attended the college at Monmouth, Illinois. He interrupted his college education to take a job as a principal of a four room Iowa school. After earning his degree in 1910, he came to Waitsburg, Washington, as superintendent of schools.	Education	Education--Administrators	
00:06:07	Technological progress	Sprague recalls his first time seeing an automobile and airplane. He reflects upon the technological advancements of the early 20th century.	Technology		
00:07:45	The newspaper business	Asked how he became interested in newspapers, Sprague recalls watching his hometown paper being printed. He was editor of his college paper and had done some reporting before buying the weekly paper in Ritzville, Washington, in 1915. He then came to Corvallis, Oregon, in 1925 as part-owner and business manager of the <i>Gazette Times</i> . He bought a majority interest in the Statesman Publishing Company in Salem in 1929. He talks briefly the history of the <i>Statesman</i> as well as the editorial practices of the era.	Careers--Journalism	News media	Statesman Pub. Co.
00:12:38	The labor movement in Salem, Oregon	Sprague says the labor wars were the outstanding news events of the 1930s. He mentions the fire that destroyed the West Salem Box Factory and the "goon wars."	Labor movement	Labor unions	
00:16:04	Early interest in politics	Sprague discusses his early interest in politics and the "Iowa idea." He also talks about his affiliation with the Republican Party. He talks about the first presidential election he voted in, in 1912.	Political awareness	Political involvement	Republicans
00:18:43	Governor Charles A. Sprague and World War II	Sprague served as Oregon Governor from 1938 to 1943. He discusses his experience as governor during the early part of World War II.	Careers--Political	Governors	World War II

00:20:53	Landmark legislation	Asked about landmark legislation passed during his administration, Sprague discusses the establishment of the state forestry system. He describes the merits of the legislation, including the requirement for loggers to re-seed the forests, and reforestation efforts for burned areas, particularly the areas affected by the repeated Tillamook Burns.	Forestry	Laws and legislation	Logging
00:24:55	Amending the Oregon constitution Part I	Sprague begins to describe the issues with the existing Oregon constitution. The tape ends, and the discussion is continued on Reel 2.	Laws and legislation		

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Amending the Oregon consitution Part II	Sprague discusses the issues with the Oregon consitution and describes the changes that had recently been proposed.	Constitutional amendments	Constitutional law	Laws and legislation
00:04:07	Amending the Oregon consitution Part III	Sprague describes difference between convening consitutional convention, as had been done in many other states, and the constitutional revision committee that was formed in Oregon. He gives his opinion on the results of that committee.	Constitutional amendments	Constitutional law	Laws and legislation
00:07:10	Sprague's involvement with the United Nations	Sprague was appointed to the United States delegation to the United Nations in 1952. He discusses his experiences in the sessions of the U.N. in New York that year and addresses some common criticisms of the organizations.	International law	United Nations	
00:11:39	Kids these days	Robert Bruce asks Sprague his opinion on the moral fiber of the current generation. Sprague declines to take the bait. He instead frames the changes in American culture as a positive sign of progress.	Intergenerational relations		