

Blasting of Haystack Rock brings men chilly interval

Cannon Beach residents were startled Tuesday morning shortly before 9 a. m. by what sounded like a sonic boom. Actually it was Ralph Reed, teacher of pyrotechnics at the Oregon State university, blasting Haystack Rock. He and his helper, C. B. Stauffacher, were engaged by the bureau of sport fisheries and wildlife to knock the ledge off Haystack. Since last April, twenty-eight similar islands from Tillamook Head down to Brookings were transferred from the bureau of land management to the bureau of sport fisheries and wildlife. This is all a part of the national wildlife refuge system, which has refuges located in 49 of the 50 states.

Richard S. Rodgers, refuge manager, who came down for the blasting, stated that the ledge was being removed primarily to keep prospective climbers from getting hurt by discouraging them from trying to get up the rock. Also important to the bureau is to keep away climbers who disturb the thousands of birds that choose this as their nesting place.

Rodgers arrived for the blasting at 7 a. m. from his home in Corvallis. The dynamite experts, however, were delayed by the fog and did not arrive from their Eugene headquarters until 8:15 a. m. The first blast that rocked the town was heard at 8:45 a. m. John West, city marshal, was on the beach most of the day, during morning hours by choice but in the afternoon by necessity. It seems the blasters got so engaged in their rock-shattering work that no one noticed that the tide was coming in. Suddenly it dawned on Rodgers. He tried to wade out to warn the men, because he could not be heard above the surf. However it was then chest-high in places and he had to turn back. This was shortly after noon.

After some deliberation it was decided there was nothing to do but to let the two men, Reed and Stauffacher, sit it out. Marshal West considered a rescue by boat but it was deemed unwise because of the heavy winds and rough surf. He sat in his patrol car most of the time with binoculars, watching the men in distress waving their arms and shouting "come and get us." A helicopter rescue was virtually impossible, because the men were low and in a rocky area of the monolith. Some thought at

least the 'copter could drop the men a lunch.

West had to stay right there because the station wagon carrying the dynamite was parked on the beach, half full of the original eight cases of explosive. The car was unlocked but could not be moved because, of course, the men out on the rock had the necessary keys.

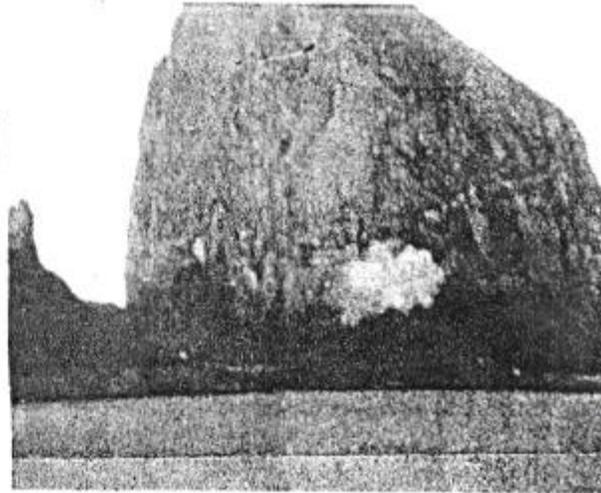
Finally at 5:30 p. m. the men were able to wade ashore. Needless to say, they were weak and hungry but not too much the worse for their stay on the rock. After a meal they went back to work and rocked the town with two more blasts. When asked if the job was done, they regretfully said no. The last two blasts just didn't do what they were supposed to. So, they will be returning in about two or three weeks to further smooth out the wall. When the work is done, those in charge hope that it will be impossible to scale Haystack without ropes and full mountain gear.

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OCTOBER 10 - 1968

Cannon Beach, Arch Cape, Tolovana Park

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Haystack Rock will be more difficult for the novice mountain climber as a result of the blast, shown in this picture, that knocked off the lower end of the ledge by which most climbers started up the rock. The ledge was dynamited Tuesday morning by U. S. bureau of sports fisheries and wildlife personnel. Last spring, Haystack Rock, as well as several others along the Oregon coast, was declared a wildlife refuge and made "off limits" to all humans, except those with special permits, to protect the thousands of seafowl who nest on it.