

Comrade Johns

Oregon's Socialist Presidential Candidate

by Nate Pedersen and Jeffrey Johnson

VISITORS TO DRAKE PARK, the central park in Bend, Oregon, would be forgiven for not noticing a small rock memorial, tucked back from the walkway on a gentle ridge overlooking the Deschutes River from its eastern shore. The unassuming structure is worn from the passage of time. A photograph that once graced its bronze plaque has long since been scratched away, but the words below remain legible:

Frank T. Johns — Social Labor Party candidate for the Presidency of the United States finished his address near this memorial then responded to a call for help from two boys who had fallen into the river from the footbridge upstream. Here Frank T. Johns made the supreme sacrifice on the 20th day of May 1928. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13–14

The young presidential candidate, representing an obscure branch of socialism, died in a failed effort to save a drowning boy in the cold

waters. While Johns's political party, the Socialist Labor Party (SLP) — a distinct and separate entity from the better-known Socialist Party of America (SPA) — is little more than a footnote in American political history, the man died a hero and was posthumously awarded the Carnegie Medal. Johns lived his life, and died his death, in ways that physically enacted the values of self-sacrifice and brotherhood held dear by left-wing revolutionaries of the 1920s.

Because Johns's popularity amongst the SLP was buoyed by good looks, youth, sincerity, and a special sense of humanist values, his personal potential for political success was high. He was known as an intelligent and engaging speaker, able to wear down opponents' arguments with logic and persistence. Johns earned a reputation as a kind and thoughtful family man, often praised for his loyalty to his wife and young children. He was equally dedicated to the Socialist Labor Party and its cause. In the manner of idealists

FRANK T. JOHNS
 Socialist Labor Party Candidate for President of the United States
 Will deliver an address
AT JONES PARK, CANTON
 MOOSE HALL IN CASE OF RAIN
FRIDAY, AUGUST 22
AT 8:00 P. M.

The Public is urged to attend this meeting and hear the principles of the Socialist Labor Party explained

Residents of Canton, Illinois, were invited to attend an August 22, 1924, address given by Frank T. Johns, a young presidential candidate representing the Socialist Labor Party (SLP).

and revolutionaries, Johns was politically unbending. But his particular brand of socialism — reliant on the arcane and revolutionary concept of Industrial Unionism — was never palatable to more than a tiny section of the electorate. Thus, Johns was a politician with high promise but low returns, and he failed to receive substantial electoral support during his short political career.

Johns's personal and political lives can be assembled primarily from newspaper accounts in *The Weekly*

People, the *Oregonian*, and the *Bend Bulletin*, and from family memories and memorabilia. Regrettably, evidence from the Oregon branch of the SLP is scant. We hope telling Johns's story opens several avenues for new research and invites not only interest in his biography but also the broader Oregon political and SLP contexts.

The SLP was the first socialist party in the United States. Founded in 1877 with a significant number of German immigrants leading the way, the party began life as the Working-

Are You a Reader of the Weekly People?

YOU ARE DEPENDENT

upon the capitalist class for a chance to earn a living as long as you allow that class to retain its autocratic hold on industry. If you would attain

THE RIGHT TO WORK

you must organize with the rest of the working class on proper lines. What kind of organization is needed, and what tactics should be pursued to end the serf-like conditions in the shops and industrial plants of the United States is pointed out and explained in

THE WEEKLY PEOPLE

45 ROSE STREET

NEW YORK CITY

The Weekly People, being the Party-owned mouthpiece of the Socialist Labor Party of America, aims at industrial democracy through the integral industrial union and revolutionary working class political action. It is a complete Socialist weekly paper, and sells at \$1.00 a year, 50 cents for six months, 25 cents for three months. A trial subscription of seven weeks may be had for 15 cents. Send for a free sample copy.

This advertisement for the The Weekly People appeared in Daniel De Leon's 1915 publication titled As to Politics: A Discussion Upon the Relative Importance of Political Action and of Class-Conscious Economic Action, and the Urgent Necessity of Both. De Leon was influential in transforming the SLP, believing that workers must organize and rebuild politics from the bottom.

man's Party. The group's primary principle was a belief in "socialist industrial unionism," the idea that society could be utterly transformed through the political action of an organized, unionized working class. Unbending Marxists, mostly new American immigrants from Germany and Scandinavian nations, populated the SLP, and the young party had few sympathies for more tempered approaches to socialism. Their goal was the complete removal of the political state in America, to be replaced with the Socialist Industrial Republic. Instead of congressional districts sending elected representatives to Washington, organized industrial unions — representing all walks of working life — would send representatives to a new legislative body. Workers, they proposed, would directly control the means of production of industry for the sake of economic security. In the party's eyes, there would be no more war, no more hunger, no more poverty. "In place of the capitalist system the Socialist Labor Party aims to substitute a system of social ownership of the means of production, industrially administered by the workers, who assume control and direction as well as operation of their industrial affairs," announced the SLP's National Platform in 1924.¹

The SLP gained considerable traction nationally in the late nineteenth century. At the national convention in 1896, the SLP boasted sections (local clubs) spanning twenty-five states, although none in the Pacific Northwest. In coming years, however,

nearby Washington led the way in SLP organizing, with members holding their first convention and running their first candidates in 1898.²

In 1911, while Johns worked as a mail carrier, the upstart party's radical message resonated with him, so much so that he felt compelled to spread the word, at great professional risk, to his mail customers. By 1915, when Johns joined the SLP, it was still very much under the spell of one man: Daniel De Leon. De Leon, the consummate face of the dogmatic SLP, immigrated to America from Curacao and joined the party in 1890, transforming it into a strictly Marxist organization. Like Karl Marx, De Leon firmly believed that the liberation of the working class must come from the hands of the workers themselves. So the working class, he believed, must act, organize, and ultimately overthrow the political state and rebuild it from the bottom. De Leon's exacting Marxist philosophy left little room for moderate ideological positions, eventually causing a political rift within the SLP that led to far-reaching defections of major party factions, including German-Americans, Jewish immigrants, and trade unionists. Those party elements went on to merge with the Socialist Democratic Party and form the Socialist Party of America (SPA) at the so-called 1901 "Unity Convention" in Indianapolis. The SPA also could not entirely escape conceptual disagreements (it was divided, too, both regionally and nationally, among radical "Reds" and more moderate "Yellows"), but nevertheless offered a more palatable alternative for the working class.³

The SPA ultimately enjoyed considerably more electoral success than the more dogmatic SLP, and it would soon be led by Eugene V. Debs, the most prominent voice of twentieth-century American socialism. The SPA in Oregon and elsewhere achieved what the earlier socialist organizations such as the SLP, Social Democratic Party, and International Working Men's Association all hoped for: a radical political voice in the contest between capital and labor.⁴ Amid this festering political activity and party volatility, the hope of an organized industrial work force overthrowing the representative democracy in America appeared to Johns as a distinct possibility and led him down a path of political activity that culminated in his nomination for the presidency.

Johns's life as a SLP candidate, carpenter, itinerant workingman, husband, and father offers a tantalizing glimpse into the political and socioeconomic forces at work in early twentieth century Portland and the Pacific Northwest. The complexities of reform and revolution in the region in turn reflect the larger reform movements sweeping the nation through the 1920s. His life, cut all too short by a heroic effort, also reflects the realities of political campaigns, left-wing revolutionary thought, and working-class reform movements of the early twentieth century.

FRANK T. JOHNS was born to Isaac and Susan Johns on February 23, 1889, in Sunbury, Pennsylvania, a small town

in the middle of the state. Johns and his family lived in Pennsylvania for the first fifteen years of his life while his father worked local industrial jobs. The call of the open West — and the dwindling opportunities to obtain free land — drew the Johns family to Spokane, Washington, in 1904. Yet they were too late. The homesteading land in the Spokane area was already gone, and Frank's father was forced to return to industrial life.

Johns graduated from high school in Spokane in 1910. His father, still itching to have land of his own, then moved the family, including Frank, to Roseburg, Oregon, where he bought a ranch and attempted to carve out a living as a farmer. The ranch, however, was a failure, falling victim to poor soil and the Johns family's lack of farming know-how.

Johns, now twenty-two years old, returned to Spokane in 1911. He found odd jobs as a carpenter, and then took a civil service exam, which he passed. The Spokane post office soon hired Johns as a mail carrier. That year, Johns married a local woman, Ruth Aurora Noble, by his own account "on nothing," meaning they had no money to speak of.⁵

Ruth was born in Colfax, Washington, on May 4, 1888, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A.O. Noble, who were regarded as "pioneer residents of that state." Her father was a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church, a profession he began later in life after working in education. Frank and Ruth married in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.⁶ Four years

later, they had the first of three children, Margaret, born on March 7, 1915.

That same year, at age twenty-five, Johns met a fellow postal worker who would have a profound influence on the rest of his life: Upton A. Upton. Upton was a prominent member of the SLP, a far-left party founded on Marxist ideals of socialist industrial unionism, heavily influenced by Daniel De Leon and other like-minded and committed Marxists. Upton recruited Johns to the party in 1915.

Johns was immediately taken with the politics of the SLP, which for him offered a solution to the capitalist oppression he perceived in both his own shifting careers and his father's failed industrial experiences. He began to voraciously read party pamphlets as he completed his postal carrier routes, learning about the principles of socialist industrial unionism while delivering the mail.

Johns quickly began to proselytize the message during his delivery route by slipping De Leon's pamphlets in with batches of letters, a perilous venture indeed, should his managers hear of the act.⁷ With all the zeal of a youthful convert, Johns began espousing party principles to his fellow



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-DIG-aggban-37587

Frank T. Johns, pictured here in the mid 1920s, joined the Socialist Labor Party in 1915 when he worked as a mail carrier in Spokane, Washington.

employees in the break room. Johns's outspoken political views put him at odds with his bosses at the Spokane Post Office, and he quickly became a "marked man."⁸ The post office fired Johns in January 1918 when he distributed to houses along his route a chain letter by Scott Nearing, an American radical economist and activist.⁹ The recently fired Johns moved to Portland, Oregon, with his young family that had grown to include a son, Philip. Johns made the first of many appearances in the *Oregonian* when his small

advertisement appeared in the January 4 issue, seeking a three-bedroom, furnished apartment for a married man in exchange for janitorial work.¹⁰

Johns spent the next two years working intermittently as a carpenter in the Foundation shipyards.¹¹ He was part of a large migration of workers to Portland during World War I that doubled the number of shipyard workers in the city. By the end of the war, Portland had 28,000 shipyard workers and another 5,000 workers producing materials for the yards.¹² He later wrote that during his time at the shipyards, he “received a liberal education in the conduct of industry and an experience, which made too clear the application of Socialist Industrial Unionism in every branch of industrial life.”¹³ It is difficult to imagine a better time and place for Johns to receive that education. In September 1917, just three months before he arrived in Portland, the entire West Coast shipbuilding industry shut down in an enormous strike involving 40,000 workers in San Francisco, Seattle, and Portland. In Portland, 5,000 members of American Federation of Labor (AFL) sent a radical resolution to Washington, D.C., asking for worker ownership of the shipyards. They pledged to “place competent shipbuilders in the management of these several yards to superintend and direct” and to run the shipyards “free of all profits and cost, except the necessary wages of the men and the cost of the material.”¹⁴ While the federal government rejected this far-reaching proposal, the communi-

zation prompted some semi-panicked federal intervention, including federal oversight of local shipbuilding efforts. The unions gradually and begrudgingly accepted this federal interloping, but often threatened to reject it and used it as a launching pad for longer-term gains.¹⁵

Amid the festering labor turmoil, Johns continued to work in the shipyards, leading to a very heady education in what he described as “the conduct of industry.”¹⁶ The AFL proposal to run the shipyards essentially free of capitalism must have been a strong example to Johns of the creative possibilities for a Socialist Industrial Republic with large-scale unions serving as important political entities — a basic tenant of his Socialist Labor Party’s leanings.

By 1920, the Johns family had swelled to five members with the birth of a second daughter, Mildred. The family appeared in the census as residing at 854 Savier Street in Portland, sharing a house with the extended Johns family, including his parents, Isaac and Susan, and two sisters, Martha and Nellie. Both Frank and Ruth were thirty years old in 1920, with three young children: Margaret (age 5), Philip (age 3), and Mildred (age 2 months).¹⁷

After his shipbuilding stint, Johns began to work as a freelance carpenter, taking work where he could find it around Portland. In the eyes of his party brethren, Johns’s role as a carpenter came to define him. One of the few surviving photographs of Johns depicts him cutting a wood

plank with a saw. The caption reads, "Frank T. Johns, Workingman."¹⁸

Johns used his free time between carpentry jobs to spearhead efforts to put the SLP on the ballot in Oregon. He led a petition drive that collected 8,688 signatures of voters supporting the addition of the SLP to the ballot in 1920. The number of signatures was more than the required 5 percent of the total vote cast in the previous election (in this case, the 1918 election). Nevertheless Oregon's Attorney General, T.K. Brown, issued an opinion to the Secretary of State that the name "Socialist Labor Party" was "in conflict with the title of the present socialist party and cannot be used."¹⁹

Brown, of course, referred to the Socialist Party of Eugene Debs that earned national headlines on the strength and passion of its perennial presidential candidate. After all, Debs secured over 900,000 votes during his 1912 and 1920 campaigns, leading many in the SPA to maintain the belief that a political breakthrough was imminent. Yet Brown's commentary also revealed the persistent identity crisis for the SLP in its efforts to separate itself from their larger and more electorally popular political comrades.²⁰

Four days later, the SLP was placed on the ballot as the "Industrial Labor



This photograph, later titled by The Weekly People "Frank T. Johns, Workingman," first appeared in The New York World on October 22, 1924, and is one of few surviving photographs of Johns working as a carpenter.

Party." Johns, as chairman of the state committee of the new party, could now call a state convention and nominate candidates for office.²¹ The Industrial Labor Party held its state convention in Portland on August 21 and 31. Delegates selected the party's slate of candidates for the 1920 election from around the state, including Johns's socialist mentor, Upton A. Upton, at that time from Estacada, for Secretary of State and Johns as Representative from congressional District 3.²²

The SLP, under the guise of the Industrial Labor Party, was one of five parties on the ballot in Oregon in 1920, competing for votes with the Republicans, Democrats, the Prohibition Party, and the SPA.²³ When polls closed on November 2, Johns had received 3,252 votes in his bid for Oregon's third congressional district. He was defeated by both major parties, with Clifton McArthur, the incumbent Republican, handily winning the election with 37,884 votes.²⁴ Oregon's 1920 presidential electoral votes went to Warren Harding, who won 60 percent of Oregon's popular vote. Debs, famously running as an incarcerated prisoner, earned slightly over 4 percent with 9,801 votes.²⁵

The Industrial Labor Party was also not successful in earning the requisite 5 percent of the total vote in the 1920 election, so it had to again petition the Secretary of State in 1922 to be added to the ballot. Once more, Johns led the effort, submitting 3,925 signatures in support of his party's initiative. In 1922, the Industrial Labor Party was again placed on the Oregon ballot in four races, including Johns as the candidate for Congress from Oregon's third congressional district.²⁶

During the 1922 race, Johns held two public debates with representatives of the Oregon Single Tax League.²⁷ The Single Tax League continued to call for an Oregon constitutional amendment to authorize a single land tax in lieu of all other state taxes. Under the single-tax idea, the state would allocate any unearned

increases on property value to fund the government with the intent to distribute wealth tied to land ownership. Both debates centered on the single-tax idea and its potential ramifications for organized labor. While many Oregon workers embraced the single-tax idea, Johns and the Industrial Labor Party were opposed to the concept because it fell short of the party's strict socialist principles. Some Oregon socialists acknowledged that overturning private property ownership was a good start, but many Oregon socialists opposed the single tax idea for not being radical enough. While certainly progressive, the single tax would not contribute to the Industrial Labor Party's ultimate goal of worker-owned means of production.²⁸

The 1922 single-tax ballot measure, known as "Measure 3," was defeated at the polls on November 7. Johns did not fare any better. The candidate only received 2,239 votes on Election Day, losing the race heavily to Democratic, Republican, and Independent candidates. The Democrat, Elton Watkins, defeated the Republican incumbent with 36,690 votes.²⁹

Despite running unsuccessful political campaigns, Johns was gaining party visibility and spending considerable time building and organizing the local Portland branch of the SLP, in direct competition with the local SPA, which was much better established in the city. Will Daly, a secret member of the SPA, had been elected to the city council in 1911. An enormously influential man, Daly

was also the head of the city printer's union, the Oregon State Federation of Labor, and Portland's Central Labor Council.³⁰ Close ties between socialism and labor in the early twentieth century reveals the difficulty Johns faced in creating a competing socialist party in Oregon. The Socialist Party was already deeply entrenched in the labor movement, and it was those same workers who Johns most needed to convince to switch party allegiance to the SLP.

By 1924, however, the SLP had offices up and down the West Coast: in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, and Portland. The Portland office was in the Worcester Building, since destroyed, between Southwest Pine and Oak streets, south of West Burnside Street. Their reading room was always open to visitors. The Portland "Section," as the SLP referred to its offices, held meetings every Saturday night at 7:30 p.m. The focus of each meeting shifted throughout the month: first Saturday — business meeting; second Saturday — study class; third Saturday — open forum; fourth Saturday — study class; fifth Saturday — social gathering.³¹ Another center of SLP action in Portland was the central public library at 801 Southwest Tenth Avenue, today the Central Branch of Multnomah County Library. There, the SLP held events and lectures from prominent visiting labor leaders. The SLP often reserved a meeting space at the library. A story about an SLP event at the central library appeared in a 1924 article in *The Weekly People*

that proudly proclaimed: "On Sunday, March 18, Section Portland, Oregon, dealt a telling blow to the decadent capitalist system when it commemorated the fifty-seventh anniversary of the Paris Commune." The event was held in Hall A of the Central Library; the paper described the room as "comfortably filled with a typical working class audience."³² Johns was present at many of those meetings.

During the mid 1920s, Johns lived with his family at 735 East Fortieth Street in Portland. One of the great tragedies of his personal life occurred early in 1924 when his son Philip, then age seven, died during a diphtheria outbreak. Later commentators noted that Johns was a devoted and doting family man, and was never quite the same again after the loss.³³

By that time, Johns had become a regular contributor to the SLP's national newspaper, *The Weekly People*, submitting articles and editorials. Published in New York City and distributed nationally at SLP offices, the newspaper was the official organ of the party. Johns's name became a familiar byline to SLP readers around the country. In the issue for the week of April 26, 1924, for example, Johns submitted a scathing critique of a speech by William S. U'Ren at a meeting of the Local 226, Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of Portland. U'Ren, a prominent figure in Oregon reform politics — and a strong advocate of the single tax — had a significant list of Populist accomplishments to his credit by 1924, including leading successful drives to make Oregon the first state to popu-



Frank T. Johns is pictured in this photograph in about 1926 on an outing with family and friends. Included in the photograph are Frank's mother, two sisters, and two daughters. Frank's mentor in Socialist Labor Party politics, Upton A. Upton, is also pictured along with his wife. Standing from left to right are: Mr. Johnson and his son, Frank Johns, Upton A. Upton, Mildred Johns (Frank's daughter), Susan Johns (Frank's mother), Margaret Johns (Frank's oldest daughter), and Mrs. Upton. Seated from left to right are: Martha Johns (Frank's sister), and Nellie Johns (Frank's sister).

larly elect U.S. senators, and the first state to hold a presidential primary.³⁴ U'Ren was "the most robust national symbol of populist democracy during the first decades of the twentieth century."³⁵

But Johns, who called U'Ren a "shyster lawyer" in his essay, refused to celebrate U'Ren's record of reform. U'Ren appeared at the meeting (attended by between "four and five hundred" people) to detail "a new measure" he planned to sponsor and place on the

ballot during the next election cycle. The initiative was to replace the two-house political system in Oregon with a legislature made up of sixty delegates elected from an "occupational rather than political constituency." This measure would have appeared to be in keeping with SLP ideology, but Johns, frustrated with the "weakness of his quack reform" felt that U'Ren fell short in his revolutionary commitment. U'Ren, for Johns and others, was a reformer rather than a revolutionary,

a damning critique from the far left. Johns concluded his editorial with a flourish: "Thus we see, that while the workers are looking for Industrialism they are still ensnared by the glittering promises and meaningless phrases of the reformer, and we know that as long as this is the case, there is no hope for the revolution."³⁶

The image that emerges from Johns's writing for *The Weekly People* is of a well-informed, uncompromising, and intelligent revolutionary utterly committed to his role as an SLP leader and to the principles and policies of the party. He was methodical in his writing, addressing each point in its turn and building a carefully reasoned argument piece by careful piece. Not surprisingly, Johns built a tidy reputation among his fellow comrades of the Oregon SLP during the period between 1920 and 1924. As a result, his peers elected him to travel to New York City as Oregon's delegate to the 1924 SLP National Convention. Because Johns had organized the Portland section of the SLP, its primary office in Oregon, and spearheaded SLP ballot initiatives, party loyalists almost uniformly saw him as their regional leader. Johns also had the continued vocal support of his mentor, Upton, still a prominent SLP voice in the Pacific Northwest. The proceedings of the 1924 National Convention revealed Johns's party prominence: "In this young state, we have two sections, one at Astoria and one at Portland. . . . Much good work has been done in the State of Oregon, particular credit being due to Comrade Johns

of Portland for his indefatigable and able efforts."³⁷

Johns arrived at the National Convention on May 10, 1924, as the Oregon delegate, and in a rapid and unexpected development, emerged from it as the presidential candidate for the SLP. It was a surprising turn of events, particularly because Verne Reynolds, a Baltimore pipe fitter and SLP die-hard, was expected to earn the nomination once more, having run a reasonably successful campaign in 1920. But the convention delegates elected Reynolds as their vice president nominee instead. Johns offered several marketable assets for the party: youth, good looks, a reputation as a family man, and bona fide working-class credentials. Johns had also impressed his national SLP comrades with his intelligence, sincerity, and deep understanding of party principles. At 3:40 p.m. on May 10, Johns, the former postal worker and industrial journeyman, unanimously received the presidential nomination.³⁸

It was a strong ticket from the SLP. It was a youthful ticket as well: Johns was just 200 days past the minimum required age of thirty-five years, and Reynolds a scant five years older at forty. In the political narrative, Reynolds was cast as the fiery agitator and Johns as the bridge builder. A party commentator wrote of the pairing: "It is difficult to imagine two men on the surface more unlike, in essentials more similar than Johns and Reynolds. Both possess the same courage, the same unbounded, unswerving and at the same time well balanced enthusi-

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

MASS MEETING



FRANK T. JOHNS

Candidate for President

JOHN C. BUTTERWORTH

Candidate for U.S. Senate

FROM NEW JERSEY

— AND —

W. WOODHOUSE

WILL SPEAK AT

Workmen's Circle Hall

COR. MONTGOMERY and BARCLAY STS.

Saturday, October 18th

8 P. M.

All Wage earners are requested to attend.

ADMISSION FREE. QUESTIONS INVITED



This 1924 handbill advertising a Socialist Labor Party (SLP) meeting was posted during Frank T. Johns's presidential election run. Also speaking at the meeting was John C. Butterworth, perennial SLP candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey from 1924 through 1944, and William Woodhouse, eventual SLP candidate for Governor of Ohio in 1932 and active party member in both Pennsylvania and Ohio.

asm, and the same faith, the faith in the working class to accomplish its own and final emancipation from the thralldom of the ages. But in methods Johns, though he burns with no lesser zeal, is less the fiery agitator. Johns is a teacher. Johns is a builder. Reynolds, by contrast, was the fiery agitator, the fighter.”³⁹

Johns wrote a passionate letter of acceptance that *The Weekly People* published the next week:

The issue is clear and distinct, and all the efforts of the two old parties to waive it aside are of no avail. The question before society at the coming election is Shall capitalism, which means a continued and intensified exploitation of the working class, be allowed to exist, which implies a continuance of its ill effects — wars, unemployment, poverty, sickness, and premature death — or, Shall capitalism be replaced by a new and modern Socialist system of production that shall assure to the workers the full product of their toil, thereby freeing them from want and, what is still worse, fear of want? Capitalism stands for a continuation of “Freedom of Competition” with all of the waste of human labor and natural resources this implies. Socialism is synonymous with collective ownership, operation and control by the workers of the means of production and distribution, not only eliminating the waste of present capitalism, but resulting in setting free all the potential productive forces that lie dormant within the present framework of society for the benefit of the whole human race.⁴⁰

The *Oregonian* reported on Johns’s nomination, interviewing him briefly for the May 13, 1924, issue. “I am a real representative of the working class because I earn my living by my actual manual labor,” Johns said. “I believe in the use of the ballot, but, if

the will of the people who are workers cannot prevail, then let us apply force. By force I do not mean physical force, such as shooting or mob attacks, but rather the use of industrial pressure by means of one big union.”⁴¹ The *Oregonian* also carried the reaction of Ruth Johns on May 14 in an article with the jubilant headline “Johns’ Wife Elated!” She received the first news of her husband’s candidacy from the *Oregonian* and was reportedly excited by the possibility of being the first lady of the land.⁴²

The political field was typical of the period, with numerous active parties. Johns and Reynolds faced President Calvin Coolidge, a Republican seeking re-election, and Representative John Davis, a Democrat from West Virginia. The other viable political parties in 1924 included the Progressive Party, a newly formed party built from the remnants of the Progressive and Bull Moose elements of the Republican Party that was freshly united under the fiery charisma of their presidential candidate, Wisconsin Sen. Robert M. LaFollette. Other contenders included the Communist Party candidate William Z. Foster and Prohibition Party nominee Herman P. Faris.

Noticeably absent was the SPA, which had been led by Debs into electoral battle for the previous five presidential elections. During this period, amid a crowded political field in the early 1920s (the Non-Partisan League, the Farmer-Labor Party, and the new Communist Party of America among them) and the political consequences of “radicalism” during

the Red Scare, the SPA fell on hard times. Debs, nearing the end of his life, declined to seek the presidential ticket, and the Socialist Party threw its weight behind LaFollette and the Progressives instead. They believed not only that the Progressives had a reasonable chance at electoral success but also that they would implement enough Progressive social policies to appease socialist principles.

The SLP, however, held a different view. Most SLP literature produced during the 1924 campaign casts the entire election as a fight between LaFollette and Johns. The question at hand was whether American society and government should be gradually reformed (the Progressive view) or dramatically toppled and rebuilt (the SLP view). Johns repeatedly challenged LaFollette to a public debate, but the fiery redheaded senator rebuffed the requests.⁴³

In support of their campaign, both Johns and Reynolds spent much of 1924 on the road, taking trains back and forth across the country and giving speeches in labor halls, on street corners, and in city parks. The two candidates split up to cover more territory. For his part, Johns travelled 5,500 miles between July and October 1924. He began on the West Coast and worked his way east to the Rust Belt and New England. Johns's political tour seems to have purposefully ignored the areas lost to the SLP vote: the Upper Midwest, which was firmly LaFollette country, and the South, firmly Davis country.

Oregon newspapers, obviously interested that a local man had obtained the presidential nomination for a national political party, ran several profiles of Johns and his campaign. The *Oregonian* assessed: "Mr. Johns is a man of engaging personality and a firm handclasp. The lasting impression which he leaves with an interviewer is that of absolute sincerity."⁴⁴ The *Oregon Daily Journal* similarly offered its assessment of the candidate and campaign: "Johns feels the responsibility of his position as candidate for the highest office in the nation, not because he believes it is even vaguely possible for him to be elected, but because the movement which he represents is not generally understood, and as a result the duty of placing the Party's campaign in the proper light falls upon the shoulders of its leading candidate."⁴⁵

Johns's campaign speeches reiterated the moral imperative at stake and the costs of not adopting socialism. On the stump, Johns seemed to correctly sense the second coming of a global conflict on the scale of the First World War, and he believed the ideals of the SLP could prevent America from being dragged into another world war. Johns expressed this view in an article published in *The Weekly People* on August 30, 1924:

That the American working class will again be led to the slaughter . . . follows as certainly as night follows day. Is it possible that the American worker will permit such a catastrophe to overtake him, after once experiencing the horrors and tortures of war? That will all depend upon the Socialist

across the Upper Midwest and West and grabbing all eight electoral votes from his home state of Wisconsin. The SLP was on the ticket in twenty states and earned 28,633 votes, or 0.1 percent of the popular vote. While the numbers were of course dismally low for any sort of national competition, the SLP was happy with the results, having been on more state ballots than ever before and having attracted more coverage from the “capitalist newspapers” than in previous campaigns.

In Oregon, remarkably, Johns received only 917 votes. When Johns ran for Oregon’s third congressional district in 1920, he had received 3,252 votes. His presidential run garnered him 72 percent fewer votes than in a statewide race, a shockingly low number. Ultimately, Oregon’s five electoral votes in 1924 went to Calvin Coolidge, who won 142,579 votes. Second place in Oregon went to LaFollette, who beat out John Davis by just shy of 1,000 votes. The progressive element in Oregon strongly supported LaFollette, leaving Johns almost exclusively with votes from SLP activists and party members. Beyond party loyalists, the progressive vote in Oregon went largely to LaFollette.⁴⁹

Johns returned home to Portland, where he went back to work as a carpenter and continued to be active in local and national SLP politics, providing regular public lectures in and around Portland. He also organized a new section of the SLP in Bend, Oregon.⁵⁰

In 1928, the SLP, pleased with the results of the 1924 presidential campaign, were in no hurry to alter

the ticket. The party’s candidates had toured the country in 1924, giving countless speeches from coast to coast and hosting radio interviews whenever possible, all bringing further party visibility. SLP members, then, recognized that the Johns and Reynolds ticket, their most successful yet, had “brought the names of Johns and Reynolds to the attention of millions of readers.”⁵¹ Both were again nominated to the presidential ticket at the SLP’s National Convention in New York City in 1928. Johns accepted the nomination and “expressed but one regret . . . it would deprive him of the loving companionship of his family.”⁵²

The 1928 campaign found Johns running against Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover from the Republican Party and Gov. Al Smith of New York from the Democratic Party. As the Progressive Party had dissolved in the wake of LaFollette’s 1924 campaign, the SPA, which had supported LaFollette in 1924, entered the fray once again in 1928. Their great leader, Eugene Debs, had died earlier in the year, so the socialists nominated his political heir: Norman Thomas.

“Comrade Johns,” as he was known to fellow party members, was thirty-nine years old. He had returned to Oregon from the SLP’s National Convention in New York City the previous week, when he made his first, and final, stop on the tour in Bend, Oregon. Johns arrived by train on the afternoon of May 19 accompanied by local party member Oliver Stromquist. After staying the night in a local hotel, *The Bulletin* reported that

Johns was the guest of a “local family” for dinner on Sunday afternoon.⁵³ That evening, Sunday, May 20, he walked to Drake Park, a large, graceful area that lines the Deschutes River near downtown Bend and began the last speech of his life. Johns mounted the bandstand near the park’s center to face an assembled crowd consisting mostly of lumber mill workers and their families. He planned to return to Portland by an evening train after his speech.⁵⁴

Readers of *The Bend Bulletin* were greeted with the following story on Monday, May 21, 1928:

Portland Man Offers Life in Effort to Save Bend Boy; Both Sink in Icy Deschutes

The body of Frank T. Johns of Portland, the Socialist Labor candidate for president of the United States who lost his life Sunday evening while attempting to save Jack Rhodes, 10 year old son of Mr and Mrs J. C. Rhodes of this city, from drowning, was taken from the Deschutes river opposite Drake park at 8:45 o'clock this morning. The body of Jack was taken from the Deschutes at 9:50 last night, one hour and 50 minutes after Johns and the lad disappeared in the current of the main channel.⁵⁵

Shortly after Johns began his speech about the SLP and its principles, he was interrupted by sudden cries for help emanating from the river. He leaped from the bandstand and ran to the river’s edge, where he saw a young boy struggling against the icy spring current in the middle of the Deschutes River. Johns quickly removed his overcoat and dove into the water, swimming toward the boy.⁵⁶

The struggling boy was Jack C. Rhodes, an eleven-year-old resident

of Bend. Rhodes lived with his family on the opposite shore of the Deschutes River, directly across from the bandstand in Drake Park at 611 Drake Road. Rhodes had been fishing for trout with friends from the wooden footbridge that crosses the Deschutes at the park. When his fishing line caught on the bridge’s support beams he bent over the handrails in an attempt to free it but lost his footing and fell into the river. Rhodes’s friends attempted to lower their fishing poles to help Jack back up to the bridge, but the poles could not support the weight and fell apart. Floundering against the current and crying out for help, Rhodes was swept downriver.⁵⁷

Johns swam toward Rhodes from the eastern shore, while several bystanders on the western shore, alerted to the situation by cries for help from Rhodes’s mother who witnessed the accident from the backyard of their home, also began swimming toward Rhodes. One of the swimmers was Jack’s sister, Betty, who soon had to turn back from the cold. Another swimmer, whose name was unrecorded, was called back to shore when observers saw that Johns had almost reached the boy from the other side. This unnamed swimmer barely made it back before collapsing from the exhaustion of the struggle.⁵⁸

Johns, meanwhile, continued swimming toward Rhodes, calling out for the assistance of a boat several times before he finally reached Rhodes in the middle of the river. Johns attempted to encourage Rhodes and push the boy toward the shore. Johns, already exhausted

from the effort, swam with Rhodes to within ten feet of the shore before he succumbed to fatigue and sank beneath the surface. Johns resurfaced a final time and in a last supreme effort gave Rhodes a strong push toward the western bank before sinking again below the current of the icy Deschutes.⁵⁹ (Later reports revealed that an injured knee hampered Johns's efforts and a physician had specifically warned him against swimming earlier that year.)⁶⁰

Rhodes continued to swim toward shore before he too was overcome by the cold and the struggle. He sank below the surface and was carried away by the current. Boats and grappling hooks were shortly dispatched. Rescue efforts continued until the small hours of the morning, but to no avail. Both Johns and Rhodes had drowned. Rhodes's body was recovered later that evening; they found Johns's body the following morning.⁶¹

The Niswonger Funeral Home in Bend prepared the body and sent it by train back to Portland for burial. Bend organized a funeral procession that accompanied Johns's body from the funeral home to the train depot. The *Bend Bulletin* reported: "Because the entire city is moved by the heroic act of the Portland man, it is expected that the honorary escort will include people from all walks of life — mill officials, and employees, local business and professional men and representatives of the city and civic organizations."⁶² The *Bend Bulletin* also immediately announced that the Kiwanis Club of Bend was raising money to pass to

Johns's widow, Ruth. The club raised over \$700 for Johns's young family, which was eventually used to make a final payment on the Johns family home in Portland. Ruth wrote a touching letter to the citizens of Bend, which the *Bulletin* ran on its front page:

To the citizens of Bend, who have been so thoughtful and kind in memory of our beloved Frank T. Johns; Please accept our heartfelt gratitude for your sympathy in our hour of sorrow. May we publicly express our sympathy to those whose loss was as great as our own and our regrets that we were not able to be present at the service in Bend, which was so great a tribute. Final arrangements in Portland will be at Central Library hall, Tenth and Yamhill streets, Saturday at 2 p.m.⁶³

In a thoughtful request, Johns's fellow Comrade Stromquist asked that the funeral service be held at the public library. He said of the unusual appeal "the library is a temple of knowledge; it was to this place that Comrade Johns often came not only in his capacity of a teacher of science in the lecture rooms, but to seek knowledge. I can think of no place so appropriate to bury him from."⁶⁴ The public library agreed to the request, allowing use of one of its halls for the funeral. Party members, friends, and family all filled the room. At the front of the auditorium, floral tributes abounded, and centered over the casket hung a life-size portrait of Johns. He was buried in the Rose City cemetery, where a Methodist pastor conducted his final rites.⁶⁵

Nationally, the news hit the SLP hard. For weeks afterward, memorials flooded into the offices of *The Weekly People* from around the country. "Now

Johns has left us — left under circumstances so heroic, so humane, and so dramatic that, however much we may futilely rebel at the combination of events that conspired to snatch him away, we still dare not regret the event itself,” wrote a contributor to one such memorial. “To wish that Frank had in that moment done otherwise than he did would be to wish he had been another than he was. Being the Johns we knew, fearless, noble, unselfish, and self-sacrificing for humanity’s sake to the very depth of his being, he could not have done otherwise. He is one of whom we may say he loved both wisely and well, for he was humanity’s lover.”⁶⁶

In the wake of Johns’s death, Verne Reynolds, the SLP’s vice presidential nominee, accepted the presidential nomination. The campaign stumbled through to its conclusion in November when Reynolds earned 21,590 votes, about 7,000 fewer than Johns received in 1924, or 0.05 percent of the total popular vote. Hoover sailed to an easy victory.

Meanwhile, the *Bend Bulletin* and John C. Rhodes, father of Jack C. Rhodes, the boy who drowned, spearheaded an effort to post-

BRAVE DEEDS BRING CARNEGIE CITATIONS

COW SELLING APPROVED
BANKERS GET POINTERS ON FARM MANAGEMENT.
 Exportation of Dairy Stock Found Profitable Business for Oregon Breeders.

OREGON STATE COLLEGE, Corvallis, Jan. 23.—(Special.)—Export of dairy cows from Oregon, if unhindered, is not a menace to the opportunity for the dairy industry in the state, bankers from many sections were told here today in second annual agricultural course, which opened this eve under the joint auspices of the Oregon Bankers' association and the state extension service.

Having 2-year-old cows for a California or old sections gives our dairymen an excellent opportunity for an additional cash crop, P. M. Brandt, head of the dairy department.

"The demand is steady, practically unlimited at present, which will return a good profit Oregon will establish a reputation for free from both tuberculous contagion abortion, the future possibilities of this one angle of the dairy are great."

More than 40 bankers were here for the opening meetings three days ago. Today's program consisted of a considerable part of the dairy industry of the state, tomorrow the sheep industry will receive special attention. A dairy judging contest closed today, while tomorrow the bankers will receive a lecture on the economic angle of dairy.

WIDOW OF HERO HELPED
CARNEGIE AWARD GOES TO MRS. FRANK T. JOHNS.
 Official Action in Donating Fund to Carpenter's Family Comes

Frank T. Johns (above, right), Portland carpenter and farmer-labor political leader, who gave his life last summer trying to save a boy from the Deschutes river at Bend. As a result of his heroic his widow and children—Mildred, 8 and Margaret, 13 (below), will receive \$80 a month. On the left, above, is Frances Gorthy of Roseburg, Or., who receives a Carnegie bronze medal for helping to rescue an 11-year-old girl from the Umpqua.

W. E. Goodwin, sales and advertising manager of the newly formed company, will leave for the east within a few days to appoint dealers and sales representatives in the new territory.

ENGINEER WILL SPEAK

This article appeared in the January 24, 1929, Morning Oregonian, announcing the news of the Carnegie Award given to Johns’s surviving family. The award included an \$80 per month endowment. Photos depicting Frank T. Johns (upper right) and his widow and two surviving children (lower left photograph, Ruth on left, Mildred, age nine, on right, and Margaret, age thirteen, in the center).



Frank T. Johns's elaborate funerary display was likely located in a meeting room in the central branch of Multnomah County Library where his funeral occurred.

humously award Johns the Carnegie Medal for heroism.⁶⁷ Rather ironically, considering Johns's political leanings, the award was founded by steel magnate Andrew Carnegie in the hopes of recognizing "individuals in the United States and Canada who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree saving or attempting to save the lives of others."⁶⁸ The award effort made front-page headlines in the *Oregonian*, recounting Rhodes's quest, particularly the financial need of the Johns family. "This man Johns proved himself to be a hero if there ever was one," Rhodes pleaded in his communication with the Carnegie Award Commission.⁶⁹

In January 1929, the Johns family received the medal and its much-needed \$80 per month endowment, an act that again made front-page headlines in the *Oregonian*. "I'm very glad for the children's sake," said Ruth Johns, "the award will help them greatly in getting their education."⁷⁰ The familial recovery faded, however. Ruth Johns, who never fully regained health from a serious attack of pneumonia in 1926, died several years later on March 7, 1933, from a weakened heart. She was only forty-four years old.⁷¹

In April 1970, Bend labor leaders led by Myrl Hoover and the Allied Christian Foundation, erected a commemorative plaque on a short

pillar built of native rock in Drake Park near the site of the drowning.⁷² Ironically, considering Johns's staunch opposition to major political parties, the Democratic nominee for Oregon's governorship, Robert W. Straub (and future thirty-first Governor of Oregon), spoke at the memorial's dedication on July 4.⁷³ The establishment of the marker fulfilled a wish fervently expressed forty years earlier in Johns's funerary oration offered by Comrade W. Knudsen of San Francisco: "Let us hope that the not far distant future sees towering on the banks of the icy Deschutes River a granite pillar showing the spot where our comrade performed his heroic act and gave up his life for another, and let us see there outstanding in brilliant letters:

Frank T. Johns

Faithful husband and father

In whom the proletariat lost a brilliant leader

The Socialist Labor Party its chosen standard-bearer

*And in whom Mankind lost a REAL MAN.*⁷⁴

The pillar still stands today, looking out over the Deschutes River, paying silent tribute to the socialist politician.

Johns's life, however short, was remarkably committed to the politi-

cal ideals of the SLP. The sincerity with which his party approached its platform, and the SLP's expanded role in the partisan discourse of the day, offers a glimpse of the political culture of early-twentieth-century Oregon. At the time, radical ideas were more willingly tolerated, and political parties considered on the fringe by today's standards were given ample opportunity to contribute their voices to democratic debate. Socialism in the century's first two decades was a viable political philosophy, and Johns, despite attracting a small portion of the overall electorate, demonstrated socialism's political place. The 1920s in Oregon was a time of political and social exploration with a bubbling milieu of new and revolutionary ideas competing for attention. Party politics mattered in a way they might not today. The fact that these ideas, revolutionary as they were, were culturally treated with authenticity reveals the idealism and optimism of the era, and Frank T. Johns was a symbol of such virtues. Johns's dedication to his party principles, combined with his overarching sense of humanity, offers documentation of the brief but important SLP moment both nationally and in Oregon.

NOTES

1. "National Platform Socialist Labor Party," *The Weekly People*, May 31, 1924, 1.

2. Jeffrey A. Johnson, *They Are All Red Out Here: Socialist Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1895–1925* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 25.

3. Johnson, *They Are All Red*, 54.

4. See Jack Ross, *The Socialist Party of America: A Complete History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015); and David Shannon, *The Socialist Party of America: A History* (Macmillan, 1955).

5. Quoted in "Johns and Reynolds," *The Weekly People*, May 17, 1924, 1.
6. "Ruth Noble Johns," *Oregonian*, March 11, 1933, 14.
7. "Johns and Reynolds," *The Weekly People*, May 17, 1924, 1.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. "Married Man Wants to Let a 3-Bedroom Furnished Apartment in Exchange for Janitorial Work," *Oregonian*, January 4, 1918, 17.
11. "Johns' Wife is Elated!" *Oregonian*, May 24, 1924, 8.
12. Adam Jonathan Hodges, "World War I and Local Change in America: Federal War Production and Class Relations in Portland, Oregon" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2002), 3.
13. Quoted in "Johns and Reynolds," *The Weekly People*, May 17, 1924, 1.
14. Hodges, "World War I and Local Change in America," 118–19.
15. *Ibid.*
16. "Frank T. Johns." *The Weekly People*, June 2, 1928, 1.
17. United States Census Bureau, United States Census of Population, 1920.
18. The photograph with "Frank T. Johns, Workingman" caption appeared in *The Weekly People*, June 2, 1928, p. 4. The photograph also appeared in *The Weekly People* on November 1, 1924, p. 6, with a caption that attributed the photo originally to *The New York World*, October 22, 1924.
19. "Socialists Want Name," *Oregonian*, August 4, 1920, 14.
20. Johnson, *They Are All Red*, 114–15; and Nick Salvatore, *Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 325.
21. "New Party Recognized," *Oregonian*, August 8, 1920, 6.
22. "Oregon Has New Party," *Oregonian*, September 5, 1920, 16.
23. "5 Parties to be on State Ballot," *Oregonian*, September 24, 1920, 8.
24. The Democratic candidate that year was Dr. Esther Pohl Lovejoy, a prominent figure in women's political history in Oregon. Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives, *Statistics of the Congressional and Presidential Election of November 2, 1920*, http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/electionInfo/1920election.pdf (accessed September 14, 2015).
25. *Ibid.*
26. "Labor Party is Revived," *Oregonian*, August 27, 1922, 14; "New Candidates File" *Oregonian*, September 14, 1922, 11.
27. "City News in Brief: Single Tax to be Debated," *Oregonian*, November 3, 1922, 11; "Debate is Announced," *Oregonian*, November 4, 1922, 12.
28. Robert D. Johnston, "Single Tax," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, http://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/single_tax/#.Vkz7OL_sdKk (accessed November 11, 2015); and Lawrence M. Lipin, *Workers and the Wild: Conservation, Consumerism, and Labor in Oregon, 1910–30* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 23.
29. "Official Majority of Pierce 34,237," *Oregonian*, November 24, 1922, 14.
30. Hodges, "World War I and Local Change in America," 30–31.
31. "S.L.P. Local Meetings," *The Weekly People*, February 11, 1928, 6.
32. "Portland, Ore., Commune Celebration," *The Weekly People*, April 21, 1924.
33. "Frank T. Johns," *The Weekly People*, June 2, 1928, 4.
34. Oregon Legislative Records Guide, "The 'Oregon System' of Direct Legislation" www.arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/records/legislative/recordsguides/legislative_guide/History.html#Oregon System (accessed November 2, 2015).
35. Robert D. Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003), 127.
36. Frank T. Johns, "Reform Straws Show How the Revolutionary Wind Blows," *The Weekly People*, April 26, 1924.
37. *Sixteenth National Convention. Socialist Labor Party, May 10–13, 1924. Minutes, Reports, Resolutions, Platform, etc.*

- (New York: National Executive Committee, Socialist Labor Party, 1924), Johns Family Collection, Deschutes County Historical Society, Bend, Oregon.
38. Ibid.
 39. Ibid.
 40. "Letter of Acceptance by Frank T. Johns," *The Weekly People*, May 24, 1924, 1.
 41. "Nominee is Carpenter," *Oregonian*, May 13, 1924, 2.
 42. "Johns' Wife is Elated!" *Oregonian*, May 14, 1924, 8.
 43. From Johns's debate challenge printed in *The Weekly People*: "Resolved, That there can be no progress in the onward march of the human race unless there is a revolutionary change in the prevailing system of production or in any other way that may mutually be agreed upon," "Revolution vs. Progressivism," *The Weekly People*, September 20, 1924, 1.
 44. "F.T. Johns to Stump for U.S. Presidency," *Oregonian*, May 29 1924, 4.
 45. "Nominee Johns, Socialist, Plans Active Campaign," *Oregon Daily Journal*, date unknown, but excerpted in "Johns in His Home State," *The Weekly People*, July 5, 1924.
 46. Frank T. Johns, "War and Capitalism Go Together," *The Weekly People*, August 30, 1924.
 47. "John's Cooper Union Speech," *The Weekly People*, November 1, 1924, 6.
 48. "Socialist Labor Party at Cooper Union," *The Weekly People*, November 1, 1924.
 49. Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives, "Statistics of the Congressional and Presidential Election of November 2, 1920," http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/electionInfo/1920election.pdf (accessed November 6, 2015); Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives, "Statistics of the Congressional and Presidential Election of November 4, 1924," <http://history.house.gov/Institution/Election-Statistics/1924election> (accessed November 6, 2015).
 50. We have found no further references to this Section of the SLP. "Johns and Reynolds," *The Weekly People*, May 19, 1928, 1.
 51. Ibid.
 52. "Frank T. Johns," *The Weekly People*, June 2, 1928, 1.
 53. "Portland Man Offers Life in Effort to Save Bend Boy; Both Sink in Icy Deschutes," *Bend Bulletin*, May 21, 1928, 1.
 54. Ibid.
 55. Ibid.
 56. Ibid.
 57. Ibid.
 58. Ibid.
 59. Ibid.
 60. "Frank T. Johns," *Oregonian*, May 23, 1928, 16.
 61. "Portland Man Offers Life in Effort to Save Bend Boy; Both Sink in Icy Deschutes," *Bend Bulletin*, May 21, 1928, 1.
 62. "City to Honor Frank T. Johns," *Bend Bulletin*, May 22, 1928, 1.
 63. "Move Started to Aid Family of Man Lost in Bend River," *Bend Bulletin*, June 20, 1928, 1; "Bend Citizens Receive Thanks of Mrs Johns," *Bend Bulletin*, May 24, 1928, 1.
 64. "Frank T. Johns's Funeral. The Funeral as Described by Upton A. Upton," *The Weekly People*, June 9, 1928, 1.
 65. "Labor Leader Honored." *Oregonian*, May 27, 1928, 9.
 66. "Frank T. Johns," *The Weekly People*, June 2, 1928, 4.
 67. "Move Started to Aid Family of Man Lost in Bend River," *Bend Bulletin*, June 20, 1928, 1.
 68. Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, <http://www.carnegiehero.org> (accessed September 14, 2015).
 69. "Carnegie Gift Asked to Aid Johns Family," *Oregonian*, June 20, 1928, 1; "Carnegie Pension Deserved," *Oregonian*, June 21, 1928, 10.
 70. "Widow of Hero Gets Timely Aid," *Oregonian*, January 24, 1929, 1.
 71. "Ruth Noble Johns," *Oregonian*, March 11, 1933, 14.
 72. "Plaque Placed in Drake Park Honoring Drowning Victim," *Bend Bulletin*, April 7, 1970, 2.
 73. "Mirror Pond Drowning to Be Recalled at Commemorative Plaque Dedication," *Bend Bulletin*, July 1, 1970, 2.
 74. "Frank T. Johns's Funeral," *The Weekly People*, June 9, 1928, 1.