

It would probably have been more timely if we'd printed this week's "Man About . . ." biography along with the story of the \$805,000 school-bond issue. Credit for the election victory goes, of course, to dozens of individuals and organizations—but certainly no one name would be any higher on the list than that of Grant Ambrose. With Harry Lenton, he was spark-plug of the Citizen's Committee that was in there pitching until the final returns were in.

Grant started his pitching-for –Idaho September 5, 1915. He was born in Mackay—in central Idaho, about 25 miles north of Arco—the son of Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis Ambrose.

Foretelling the pattern of "like father, like son," the senior Mr. Ambrose was an attorney. He was also active in politics, and for several terms was state senator for Custer County.

Grant has two brothers—Denny and Phillip. Phillips is the dean of men at the New Mexico State College. He's married, and has a six-year-old daughter, Carol. Denny is an accountant, and starting this week will share offices with Grant in Meridian.

Grant attended the first seven grades at Mackay, and then completed the eighth grade and his first high school year at Bozeman, Montana. The Montana move came because his brother, Denny, was aiming for the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis—which required a little wider high school background than that offered at Mackay. The boys' mother solved the problem by getting a teaching fellowship at the Montana State College in Bozeman—and enrolling Grant, Phil and Denny in the larger high school there.

Denny got his Annapolis appointment after a year at Bozeman, and went on to the academy. Grant and Phil and their mother returned to Mackay.

Grant's high school activity included what was to become his major hobby—dramatics. He played a leading role in another field, too—being elected class president in his senior year.

That was 1933, and plans called for Grant to graduate in June, then to enter college that fall. But, if you remember the depression year of 1933, you know that any plans involving money were subject to abrupt change. For one thing, the Mackay bank shut its doors. The school officials decided they better rush graduation a little, while the teachers still had something left from their previous month's pay-check. So Grant and his fellow-students were ushered out into the bleak world in March, 1933.

Grant's college plans were changed by the same things that had advanced the graduation—no money. So, instead of just waiting around to start his college work for a sheepskin, Grant started working on the real thing. He became a shepherd. The pay wasn't too much for herding the woolies around on Willow Creek Summit--\$30 a month. But he got a bonus that was important in those lean days. Along with the buck a day, the big-hearted boss threw in "all the Bull Durham you can smoke".

Another good point about the job was that there weren't any places to spend your money on Willow Creek summit, so even on the small pay Grant saved enough to enroll at Idaho State College in Pocatello—then known as the Southern Branch of the University of Idaho.

It was quite a step, from the small Mackay high school to the college campus, but Grant took it in stride. In fact, by 1934, he'd made enough of a name for himself to be elected president of the college student body.

The next fall, he transferred to the University of Idaho, graduating as a pre-law student. He got his B.S. degree in 1935: and his law degree in 1939. His first job in the legal field was as attorney for the Dept. of Public Welfare for the State of Idaho. At that time, the department had jurisdiction over all state hospitals, public health services, and public welfare. It was then headed by William Child, who is currently commissioner of public assistance for Idaho.

By then, it was becoming pretty plain that the U.S. was going to join the other nations in tangling with the Axis, so Grant entered the United States Navy in March, 1941, with the rank of ensign. He trained at the Naval Supply Corps school at Philadelphia until July, 1941 then was shipped to Bermuda as assistant supply officer.

Head supply officer at the Bermuda base was a Captain Nowinski. To a young ensign, a captain's rating puts him practically out of mortal reach. But, in Grant's case, Captain Nowinski was more than out-ranked right in his own office—by his civilian secretary.

She was Winifred Smyth, whose father, N.A. Smyth, was then a New York attorney. But, on June 26, 1942, she became Mrs. Grant Ambrose, in a full scale military wedding at Christ's Church in Bermuda. Brief honeymoons were the rule in those war years, usually ending with the bridegroom being shipped off across the sea. This time, it was the bride who was shipped two weeks after the wedding—because of a military rule against service personnel having dependents on the island. Winifred returned to New York. She was a graduate of Smith, with a year at the Sorbonne, and her proficiency in French landed her a job as secretary to an importer in New York.

After two years in Bermuda, Grant, now a full lieutenant, was transferred to the Navy Supply Corps school at Harvard—where the Navy had taken over the graduate school of business. There he was on the faculty, instructing Navy personnel in logistics and supply. A fellow teacher was his brother, Denny, who had advanced to the rank of lieutenant commander.

Fortunately, there was no stateside rule against dependents, so Winifred came from New York and the Ambroses set up housekeeping in an apartment at Boston.

Their first child—Judith—was born in Boston, June 15, 1944. Judy, now in the eighth grade of Meridian junior high school. is president of the school's Y-Teens, reporter for Girl Scout Troop No. 2, president of the intermediate MYF at the Methodist church, and a pianist-member of Job's Daughters.

From the school, Grant shipped to China—assigned to General Chenault's famous 14<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force, which became internationally known as "The Flying Tigers". There was a nick-name, too, for Navy guys doing the ground liason work in China that Grant was doing—"Rice Paddy Navy".

Grant's specific job was as officer in charge of the naval supply depot at the China end of Burma Road. Headquarters were at Chungkin, but he was stationed at Junming, where his unit had three activities.

First, they serviced a "weather-net". The Pacific fleet had learned that their weather began in Asia; so the weather net gathered reports from the Gobi desert,

Manchuria, and other outposts, and forwarded daily details to Admiral Nimitz' headquarters at Guam.

Second, Grant's unit supplied equipment for Chinese guerilla fighters who were being trained by sailors and marines.

Third, the unit supplied cloak-and-dagger personnel who were busily committing sabotage and espionage behind enemy lines. Grant's part of this chore included flights to make air-drops to the spies and saboteurs.

When the war ended, Grant returned to the States, and was discharged at Seattle in April, 1946, with the rank of lieutenant-commander.

In the meantime, Mrs. Ambrose and Judy had been living in Mackay with Grant's parents—so his first civilian stop was there, to gather up his family. They came back to Boise, where Grant was appointed deputy prosecutor by James W. Blaine, then prosecuting attorney for Ada county. Grant was also associated with Mr. Blaine in private law practice.

The Ambrose's' second daughter—Polly—was born October 20, 1947. Polly is now in the fourth grade at Meridian elementary, and belongs to Brownie Troop No. 10

In 1947, Grant was one of a group which decided Boise was big enough to support its own little theatre group. The group figured the best way to start a theatre was to put on a show. Grant was elected the Little Theatre's first chairman, and they started planning a production.

Roger Mendenhall, Boise theater owner, went along with the idea and said they could use the Pinney Theatre. There was only one sticker—a \$400 rental fee.

Grant and another little theatre enthusiast, Hugh Hough, solved that by signing a note for the rent. Thus started the Boise Little Theatre. It got off to a good start, too. A matinee and evening performance of "Arsenic and Old Lace" brought in enough to pay the rent and leave \$50 cash in the kitty.

With that encouragement, the group leased a barracks-type theatre building at Gowen Field and began a regular schedule of productions. In May, 1956, a tragic fire brought two deaths and complete destruction of the building. Emerging from the tragedy, the group staged a successful campaign to build their own theatre—now a beautiful, modern structure at 100 Fort Street in Boise. The Little Theatre schedules five regular productions a year. Now in rehearsal is "The Royal Family", to be presented the latter part of January. Grant is now a member of the board of directors, an office he has held for several terms.

The third Ambrose daughter, Nancy, was born July 19, 1949. Now a Meridian third-grader, Nancy belongs to Brownie Troop No. 4.

Grant's father had moved his law practice from Mackay to Meridian—making a combination home-and-office at the same location where Grant now has his law offices. The senior Mr. Ambrose passed away the summer of 1959. (Grant's mother, Mrs. Amy C. Ambrose, still lives in Meridian.)

Beth, the Ambrose's' fourth daughter, was born August 29, 1952. Beth is now one of the pre-schoolers attending Mrs. Sheltons's kindergarten in Meridian.

For the next two years, Grant doubled upon his law routine—maintaining his Boise practice, and also keeping the Meridian office going. Then, in 1954, he made his choice of the two.

The choice, was Meridian—and the family moved to their present home, a mile north of Meridian.

In addition to his private practice, Grant was named city attorney for Meridian, an office he still holds.

He and his family are members of the Methodist church in Meridian. Grant holds membership in three lawyers groups—the Idaho Bar Association, Third District Bar Association, and the American Bar Association.

He also is a member of the Meridian Chamber of Commerce, the Jaycee's Booster Club, the American Legion. and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

For several years he was an active worker for the Ada County Republican—serving four terms as secretary for that group. In 1948, he was a delegate to the national convention in Philadelphia, when Thomas Dewey was made the Republican candidate for the presidency.

The Ambrose girls grew to a quintet with the birth of Wendy last summer—July 29, 1957. Still too young for school. kindergarten or the Brownies, Wendy is the only one in the family with just one job—being a baby.

Law practice and spare time farming on his three-acre home place keeps the schedule pretty well filled, but Grant always find time to take an active part in civic affairs.

An outstanding example of that was mentioned at the start of this biography. Grant did a yeoman's job in behalf of the school-building program—giving his time, thought, and hours and hours of effort to attending meetings, planning and carrying out campaigns. and tirelessly working for the needed schools.

Grant says that part of the secret of finding time for extra projects is to have a good “right hand” in your office—a role held for the past five years by his secretary, Kathryn McPeak.

Grant and his wife work together on another major community project. They're chairmen for the Girl Scouts' camp at McCall, which last year was attended by 300 girls. The assignment included hiring the staff, opening the camp each year and generally supervising its operation.

In addition. Mrs. Ambrose is leader of a Brownie troop, president of the Boise Junior League, active in PTA work, plus all the chores that go with being the mother of five growing girls.

We wanted to choose a special person to salute in our “Man About Meridian” for this Christmas issue. We wanted it to be someone who has taken a real part in working for the present good of our community, and for the future of our children.

Reading the community record he and his family have built, you know why we chose Grant Ambrose.