

Meters Begin Service

Dec. 4, 1939

There was little excuse for double parking in Eugene's business district Monday as parking meters went into effect and motorists began to dig down into their jeans for nickels or pennies. Parking space was available everywhere.

Some motorists didn't dig down. Others parked in two spaces. Some put the coins in the wrong meters. A few put their money in and stayed "just a minute too long."

More than 100 of these violators received tickets from the three police officers assigned to patrol the parking meter district. Out of this total approximately 50 came into police court. Twenty were assessed \$1 fines. The remainder, majority of whom were from out of town, were excused.

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Treasurer A. E. Hulegaard and two assistants collected from the Miller meters early Monday morning. The tedious task of breaking the seals on the 145 coin boxes, counting the coins and recording the meter readings, the number of pennies and nickels was completed Monday afternoon. A total of \$11.22 and 8 slugs was collected.

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Downtown Eugene got its first parking meters in 1939, six years before this picture was made. View looks north on Oak

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Police headquarters and the recorder's office were busy all morning with calls and "tagged" parkers.

Police requested parkers to place their cars in only one space, according to the white lines on the street. The meter stands at the front wheel of the car when it is properly parked, they pointed out.

One motorist came in to protest about getting a ticket. He put in a coin all right, but in the meter for the space behind the one he occupied.

In the early morning one driver parked on Willamette street long enough to run into a restaurant to find out if the meters were working. He found out. A tag was on his car when he returned to really park it.

An interested bystander commented: "They ought to wait until 9:30 a.m. each day to put the meters to work, thus allowing downtown business men to get all their business done before the shoppers arrive."


A cheerful man from the country drove up with a car and trailer. He occupied two spaces and promptly deposited pennies in two meters. "We like the meters," he commented.

Somehow, glass in two Miller meters was cracked. Another Miller machine was noticed with paper appearing in the coin window.

A restaurant proprietor on a side street stepped out Monday morning, surveyed his all-but-empty street and muttered, "I hope the city starves to death." Another restaurant owner wasn't sure what the machines would do to his business, but he said that a Portland man reported restaurant owners in that city were pleased with the devices.

Representatives of the parking meter companies said that the empty streets were a natural condition. "People shy away from using meters at first, but they will get used to them," they said.

The first dollars were paid in for violating the parking meter ordinance by Louis Russell, 741-Fifteenth avenue east, and Carl Webster, 721 Seventeenth avenue east.



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