

TURNING POINT

Little Things—Like a Muddy Road, an Oratorical Contest and a \$10 Job—Were Stepping-Stones to High Government Posts

When they offered him the chairman-ship of the money-losing Pawnee County Fair, the young country lawyer thought he was on the right road to success. He charged into his duties like a lion, determined to give Pawnee County the biggest fair Nebraska had ever seen.

He got the U. S. Cavalry to put on a show, hired animal acts, even lady aerialists. He was all set—and then it rained.

It rained so hard the roads were a quagmire. When he got out of his jalopy to tack the posters to the poles he was ankle deep in mud. The roads became impassable, and the farmers couldn't come to the fair.

That dripping fiasco was what put the young lawyer, Kenneth Wherry, in politics. On the platform of better roads he ran for the state legislature and was elected. He went on from there to become United States Senator.

"I guess," the Senator told *The American Weekly* recently, "that if it hadn't rained and if I had gotten over the roads, I wouldn't be here today. Odd how little things shape your career."

In a small community in Utah, Reva Beck, tall, stately, with flaming red hair, was asked by a desperate theatrical troupe to fill in for an ill player. The high school girl played the role with artistry. The town was pleased and Reva's future seemed assured. She majored in dramatics at college and, with a successful professional appearance to her credit, Reva thought nothing of entering the college oratorical contest.

Suddenly then Reva realized that this time she had to write her own lines, not just memorize somebody else's. She prepared her talk, choosing temperance as her subject and won. Strangely she found more thrill in having created the subject matter than in delivering the speech so well.

Reva Beck changed her direction from dramatics to public service. She went to law school, graduated, married, and eventually became judge of traffic court in Salt Lake City. She was especially praised for her work with juvenile delinquents and alcoholics.

From there Mrs. Reva Beck Bosone went on to become a member of Congress from Utah.

Twenty years ago Mrs. Margaret Chase Smith was treasurer of a woolen mill in Skowhegan, Me., and rather proud of her success.

Her employer asked her to do him a favor. He was backing Wallace White for Senator—would she help him put White over? Mrs. Smith agreed

just to be accommodating. From that start in politics she went on to succeed Senator White and is now the only woman U. S. Senator.

The turning point in the life of Joseph W. Martin, Jr., minority leader of the House of Representatives, came at the age of 16, he recounted recently. At that time he had the choice of being sent to college with all expenses paid by a group of townspeople or of going to work as a cub reporter at \$10 a week. He thought of his hard-working father, his seven brothers and sisters, and he chose work. In five years, he owned the paper and went into politics. He has been a Congressman since 1924.

Over 50 years ago a 12-year old boy in Texas heard that a nationally-famous orator was to speak at the nearest town. The boy had no chance of going. One of 11 children of a poor farmer, he had to work on the farm.

When the day came, however, so did a down-pour. Work on the farm was impossible and his parents permitted him to ride 12 miles through the rain to hear the politician.

Young Sam Rayburn, spellbound, decided that one day he would enter politics. Today he is Speaker of the House of Representatives.

In contrast to Rayburn, Richard W. Hoffman was a wealthy and established Chicago businessman when his turning point came. A group of neighbors asked him to help in the job of cleaning up the local school system. He was elected to the school board, became its chairman and then found out the deep satisfaction of public service.

He, too, became a member of the House of Representatives.

When J. Howard McGrath was five years old he heard someone say that a good lawyer could be anything he wanted to be. He doesn't remember who said those words, but he never forgot their import. He became an attorney, then Governor of Rhode Island and eventually Attorney-General of the United States.

One of his employes, when a small boy, wanted to be a minister. The boy had to go to work to aid in the support of his mother. The job he found just happened to be in the Library of Congress and the boy became interested in law. He worked his way through law school and got a job with the Department of Justice. Today J. Edgar Hoover is head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Another man who had to change his mind because of finances is John W. Snyder, Secretary of the Treasury. Young Snyder wanted to be an electrical engineer, but had to go to work in his uncle's bank. He found he liked banking and stuck with it.