

BARROWS LETTER IS FORGERY SAYS WRITING EXPERT

Famous Epistle to Land Commissioner Was the Work of E. F. Parker, Carlson States — Board Drops Investigation

Terminating the hearings of the state land department on receiving word from Milton Carlson, handwriting expert, to the effect that the famous Barrows letter was a forgery, the state land board yesterday dropped the investigation that was the sensation of a month ago.

The motion to drop the proceedings was made by Attorney General Wiley E. Jones, who, it is understood, was one of the three original members of the board who sought to oust W. A.

Moeur, land commissioner, on the ground that the condition of his health did not permit him to give needed attention to his office.

While the Barrows letter, which Carlson says was written by A. F. Parker, was an issue of the case, it was at times lost sight of during the hearing when charges and counter charges provided entertainment to the public which crowded the court room to hear the fun.

All Cut and Dried

The meeting was of a different character yesterday. It was all cut and dried, due to a 35-minute session of the board in the office of Acting Governor Mit Simms before he called the meeting formally to order. Except for the board members, reporters and a few attaches of the land department, no one was present. Several attempts were made to hold the meeting on Tuesday as announced for the regular meeting, but the session was postponed until yesterday.

Although the board regards the investigation as closed, it was admitted that Gov. Thomas E. Campbell on his return from the East could re-open the hearing if he should care to do so. The fact that Governor Campbell is alleged to have been in possession of Carlson's analysis before his departure to the Republican convention and did not give it out, is believed to have had its influence with other members in agreeing that the matter be dropped.

The letter signed S. G. Barrows, which was written on stationery of

the Mansion hotel in Benson and post-marked from this city, was received by Governor Campbell. It was addressed to him, the enclosure being directed to W. A. Moeur and to the effect that the writer hoped that the land department would not see fit to increase the price of his lease under the reappraisalment in view of the original cost including the \$500 mailed Mr. Moeur.

Moves End of Investigation

Attorney General Jones held that this letter was a forgery and intended as an attack upon the land commissioner, by wrongful and fallacious means meriting condemnation, in making the motion which was carried unanimously. In presenting the motion Mr. Jones stated that he referred to the investigation as a "so-called public hearing" in view of the fact that there were no charges pending. His motion was as follows:

"As a part of the so-called public hearing conducted before the land department, a report, which we accept as true, has been received from the handwriting expert, Mr. Carlson, to the effect that the letter purporting to have been written by one Barrows, is fraudulent and fictitious, and an attempted imposition upon the land department, and intended as an attack upon the land commissioner by wrongful and fallacious means, all of which merits our condemnation in unmeasured terms, which we hereby unqualifiedly express. Also, nothing having been presented at said hearing but what was known by us heretofore, and there being no charges or motions pending before this body, it is ordered that said public hearings do terminate and our time be given to important business calling for the attention of the department."

The motion followed the reading of the report of Carlson, which was embodied in the minutes of the meeting and attention was called to the date of the meeting which was given as June 1. The report was based largely on the Barrows letter, which was read at the investigation and which Parker is said to have written. The letter as given out follows:

Report of Expert
Hon. Thomas E. Campbell,
Governor of Arizona,
Phoenix, Arizona.

Sir:
As per your request dated May 26, 1920, I have examined and compared the various documents contained in registered package No. 28082 designated as follows:

Exhibit No. 1. (Filed by Land Dept. Witness S. G. Barrow, 5, 10, 20, E. V. Powers, reporter.) The same being a letter dated: "Mar. 1st, 1920." Addressed: "Mr. W. A. Moeur, c/o State Land Dept., Phoenix, Ariz." consisting of 14 lines of blue typewriting, and bearing the questioned signature: "S. G. Barrow."

Exhibit No. 4. (Filed 5, 17, 29, with memo, as Ex. 1.) The same consisting of 4 envelopes containing cancelled

checks bearing the signature: "S. G. Barrow," as the maker, and with exhibit No. 5. (Filed 5, 17, 20, with

memo, as Ex. 1.) The same consisting of 1 envelope containing cancelled checks bearing the signature: "S. G. Barrow," as the maker, and with exhibit No. 6. (Filed 5, 17, 20, with

forsement on back of each of the name: "A. F. Parker."

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