

Board Considers Road Matters

MEETS A DELEGATION OF SETTLERS

Ask to Have Road Down Benewah Creek Built Consider Many Bills

The board of county commissioners is in session this week, this being the regular January session of the board. As bills are allowed only once in three months, there are a large number to come before the board to be acted upon at this session and the greater part of the first few days of the session will be taken up with them.

Outside of the bills the principal thing that took up the attention of the board Monday was the appearance of a delegation of ranchers of the Benewah road district who came before them to discuss road matters. There is some money in the funds of the road district and the delegation asked that the greater part of it be used in building a road from the St. Maries-Treffery road down Benewah creek to Silvertips landing.

The old Kootenai county board laid out this road and in 1914 did some work on it, building about one mile of the total three miles. The settlers also did some donation work but as their object was to get a way out they were not particular about following the right of way laid out. The road that was built by the county has not been used or worked and in many places the bank has fallen in and it will require considerable work to put it in good condition again. This, with the clearing out and building of the new road, will take all the money that can be spared.

The members of the delegation which appeared before the commissioners were nearly all from Treffery and beyond. They do not live along the proposed road but above it, but were anxious to have the road built in order to furnish an outlet to the landing on the river. Besides being of benefit to the settlers above, it will be of still greater benefit to those lying between the Treffery road and the river as it will give them an outlet to the city. As it is now, most of these settlers either have to pack their supplies in from the landing or from the Treffery road.

The board took no action on the matter at the time but as it appears to be almost the unanimous wish of the people that the road be built, the board will probably use the money for that purpose. The main reason why the people in the upper end of Benewah valley are so anxious to have the road built during the coming summer is that it will furnish them a means of getting their timber out to the lake.

Regular Meeting Of School Board

The board of education held its regular monthly meeting last evening, all the members being present with the exception of J. E. Landeryou. Bills to the amount of \$644.36 were audited and warrants ordered drawn.

The building committee reported that the fire escapes for the two buildings were being put up but that owing to delays in securing material the contractors had been unable to complete the work during the vacation as had been hoped for. However, the work is so far along that the schools will not be discommoded to any great extent.

Superintendent Lukens made his regular monthly report, which showed 559 pupils on the rolls. The average attendance for the month of December was 523, the

lowest of any month since school opened. This was due to a prevalence of La Grippe in the city, a large number being absent on that account. He reported 101 cases of tardiness during the month. By far the greater part of these were in the high school. There were only 9 cases in the Lincoln school building, an extraordinarily good showing for that school.

Superintendent Lukens further reported that following out the instructions of the board he had procured and installed an oil stove at the Lincoln building to heat lunches and the domestic science department would begin serving hot lunches to the pupils who come from a distance, Wednesday. He said that these lunches would be self-sustaining and would cost the district nothing.

Secretary E. M. Davis reported that complaints had been made to him that a son of James McMillan, residing at the mouth of Cherry creek, is not attending school. Superintendent Lukens was instructed to get into communication with the boy's parents and inform them of the law in the case, which provides that the matter can be taken up in the probate court under the truant law.

F. E. Hemenway Leases Creamery

At a meeting of the directors of the St. Maries Creamery company, held Friday evening, an agreement was entered into with F. E. Hemenway, by which he leased the creamery for a period of five years. He takes possession January 15, and will make arrangements for starting the creamery at once. He has had considerable experience in the dairy business in the east, before coming here, and expects to give the business his personal attention.

Mr. Hemenway has plenty of capital to run the business and proposes to inaugurate the system of paying for his cream every Monday morning. In the past the patrons of the creamery have been obliged to wait for their money until the company could realize on the sale of butter and this has caused a certain amount of dissatisfaction and caused a falling off in the patrons.

Is Putting In Logging Camp

Oliver Mattison, one of the leading ranchers of the St. Maries valley, was in the city Saturday and Sunday. In addition to a fine ranch on Carpenter creek, south of Fernwood, Mr. Mattison owns quite a quantity of timber land which he is planning on logging this winter and he was in the city to purchase horses. He has contracted to sell his logs to the St. Maries Lumber company, who will take all he puts in. The amount which he will cut is not fixed and depends entirely upon weather conditions.

C. E. Jones, of Seattle, brother of J. E. and G. L. Jones, has purchased the barber shop of P. Valente, located in the Lumbermen's bank building, and took possession Monday. Mr. Valente expects to move to Spokane with his family.

SLIDING IN THE BALKANS.



Kootenai County Officer Short

SUIT IS BROUGHT FOR \$25,000.00

Action Against J. W. Smith, Ex-Assessor and Tax Collector and His Bondsmen

A suit was filed in the district court at Coeur d'Alene Friday, which, if successful, will be of interest to the taxpayers of this county as well as Kootenai county. The title of the case is the State of Idaho and Kootenai county against J. W. Smith and The Fidelity and Deposit company of Maryland. Smith was formerly assessor and tax collector of Kootenai county and the Fidelity and Deposit company furnished his bonds.

Smith served from January 11, 1909, to January 11, 1911. The company was on his bond for \$20,000 as tax collector and \$5000 as assessor. The suit is for \$25,000.00 and interest at 7 per cent from January 11, 1911 and is to recover an alleged shortage due the county from Smith.

Expert accountants have been at work on Smith's books for several months and reports of a shortage have been prevalent. Some time ago one of the accountants stated at a chamber of commerce meeting at Coeur d'Alene that certain records of the county had been tampered with and a portion of the books cut out and destroyed. This caused quite a sensation at the time and although he mentioned no names or the date of the book it leaked out that it was the assessor's book and that Smith was the official referred to.

Among irregularities alleged are the following: Property not assessed, although listed upon the tax rolls; property upon which only 10 to 90 per cent of the taxes have been collected; property assessed but paying no taxes; taxes collected but not turned in. In connection with this it is said the officials are now in possession of receipts issued for taxes which were never entered upon the books.

Owing to the destruction of the records the accountants have had a great deal of difficulty in tracing the records and many taxpayers in this county have received letters asking for a copy of their tax receipts covering

that period. The accountants state that it will take at least six weeks longer to complete their work and that the shortage will exceed the amount of the bonds.

The reason for commencing the action before the accountants had completed their work was because if the authorities had waited until the investigation had been completed, the action would have been outlaid. It is said that Friday was the last day that the action could be filed and that if the authorities had waited until the next day it would have been outlaid. J. H. Peterson, attorney general of the state, and N. D. Wernette, prosecuting attorney of Kootenai county, filed the papers.

The taxpayers of this county are interested in the outcome of the suit for the reason that the alleged defalcation occurred before the division of the county and if there is a recovery this county is entitled to its pro rata share as a part of the assets of the county.

Smith formerly owned a ranch east of Rathdrum. Later he resided in Rathdrum and for several years was a member of the village board of trustees. Later he moved to California and now is supposed to reside in the vicinity of Los Angeles.

U. of I. Glee Club To Appear Here Soon

Announcement is made that the University of Idaho Glee Club will appear in this city at the High School auditorium on January 22nd. There are twenty-five members of the Glee Club and they present a varied program consisting of solo, quartette and chorus work, which is said to be excellent. It will be remembered that the program presented by the same organization in this city last year was very good and, judging from the newspaper comment, the club is maintaining the same high standard this year.

Think Olson Was Murdered

FIND BLOOD STAINS ON MATTRESS

Officers are Searching for Fred Clancy, Who Had Charge of the Ranch

There are no new developments in the matter of the disappearance of Oscar Olson. No further trace of him has been discovered and the opinion has become more fixed among relatives and friends that he has been foully dealt with.

The general belief is that he has been killed and his body hid. There is no means of knowing where this was done or where to search for the remains. A thorough search will be made around his ranch and in that neighborhood but his friends have little hope of finding any trace of him there as he was not seen in that vicinity, so far as is known, after he left for this city to attend district court.

Suspicion points strongly to Fred Clancy, the man whom he left in charge of his ranch, as being the party who made away with Olson. Not only did he disappear immediately after he failed to get a \$120.00 check, purporting to be signed by Olson, cashed, but further investigation shows that prior to that time he succeeded in cashing four checks purporting to be signed by Olson, amounting in all to between three and four hundred dollars. Friends of Olson who were well acquainted with his handwriting, who have seen these checks, are of the opinion that Olson's signature to them was forged. This is also the conclusion of an expert to whom the checks were submitted.

This fact, coupled with his disappearance immediately after his failure to get the last check cashed, makes a strong circumstantial case against Clancy. The case against him is so strong that Sheriff Leaf is taking steps to try and apprehend him and went to Spokane Saturday to try and get some trace of him.

Clancy is a comparative stranger in this vicinity and very little is known of him, or where he had previously resided. He came to Olson's last fall and according to the story he told, was from British Columbia, where he had been engaged in prospecting, and this is all that appears to be known of him.

Besides trying to locate and arrest Clancy, a thorough search of the Olson ranch and vicinity will be made to try and find the body and this seems about all that can be done in the matter as all efforts to get any trace of Olson after he was seen in this city have failed.

Sheriff Leaf returned last evening from his visit to the Olson ranch, and although he did not find the body he discovered evidence that convinced him that not only Olson had been murdered but that the deed had been committed at the ranch.

The bedding from one of the beds had all been removed, leaving only the mattress and upon turning this over he found a large blood stain upon it. He believes that Olson was killed while asleep and that the body was afterwards disposed of in some manner. A search of the house revealed the fact that Olson's papers, including the deed to the ranch, had disappeared.

Another thing that points almost conclusively to the fact that something has happened to Olson is the fact that his taxes were allowed to go delinquent, something he had never permitted to happen before. He is known to have had plenty of money with which to pay the taxes and there is no reason why he should allow them to become delinquent.

From the additional facts gathered by the sheriff, it appears that the man Clancy is the guilty party and Deputy Sheriff Toohy is absent now seeking some trace of him. Mrs. Olson, mother of the missing man, has arrived from Seattle and is almost prostrated with grief.

Red Men Elect Officers and Banquet

The election of the officers, or as it is termed in the lodge "the raising of chiefs," was made quite an event in the Redmen's lodge Monday evening. The following were the chiefs raised: Leon Golar was chosen as Prophet; Roy Lane, Sachem; John Cliff, Senior Sagamore; O. Gallin Junior Sagamore; J. A. Flynn, director of the degree team.

After the election the members adjourned to the Royal cafe, where a banquet was served. All present report an exceedingly enjoyable time.

Makes Plea For Charles George

Boise, Idaho, Jan. 9.—A human life hung in the balance of the pardon board's deliberations yesterday for a stubborn plea was made to secure commutation of the death sentence for Charles George, a Bulgarian, who for more than a year has been in solitary confinement in the state penitentiary, having secured a stay of execution pending the outcome of an appeal from the judgment to the supreme court.

Should the board interfere with the case while pending before the last court of resort in this state?

That was one of the most serious questions which confronted that body.

Even if it did, would it not be working an injustice to George in that on review the court might reverse the judgment on error and give him a new trial?

Many questions like this arose. The board was urged to act for humanitarianism if for nothing else. Then there arose in the argument of J. B. Eldridge, appearing voluntarily on behalf of George, the question of the sufficiency of the evidence. It was largely circumstantial. Even Herbert Wing, assistant attorney general, flatly stated to the board that after carefully reviewing the record there was a reasonable doubt in his mind as to whether or not George was guilty of premeditated murder. He declared that from what he knew of the case, that were he directed by the attorney general to defend the verdict before the supreme court and the question of his position depended on his assent, he would have to refuse. The court took the case under advisement.

George is the man who was convicted at Wallace of having killed one Christoff on Big Creek about a year ago. The body of Christoff was found in one of Branson's abandoned warehouses badly bruised and with a rope around his neck. George was arrested while trying to cash a check belonging to the dead man.

B. D. Griffith of Emida was a business visitor in this city Monday.