

SEN. MITCHELL AND BINGER HERRMAN ARE NOW INDICTED

Federal Grand Jury Indicts Senator and Congressman for Complicity in Land Fraud Conspiracy. Sorenson also Indicted.

Oregonian

The Federal grand jury fulfilled the expectations of the public yesterday afternoon at 3:30 when it returned indictments against Senator Mitchell, Binger Hermann and George Sorenson. Mitchell and Hermann were indicted jointly and are charged with having conspired with all of the defendants heretofore indicted to defraud the Government out of land situated in township 11 south, range 7 east.

Sorenson is indicted for having offered a bribe of \$5000 to District Attorney Hall on March 28 last, when the indictment against the conspirators who were convicted in the recent trial was pending in the Federal Court.

THE ALLEGED CONSPIRACY

The story of the connection of Senator Mitchell and Representative Hermann with the conspiracy dates back to the time of the Pater-Mays letter and shows that 11 of the conspirators were and are mixed and entangled in the web of guilt, if the allegations of the indictments and the testimony upon which they seem to have been returned is to be taken as true.

The story shows that Pater, and Mitchell and Hermann were well acquainted that Pater, was an ardent supporter of Mitchell in the Senatorial campaign of 1901, and that all of them were personally acquainted and have been for years.

In 1902, so the story runs, Pater went to Washington on business connected with the lands of 11-7, in which

he was at that time interested. The lands were held up in the General Land Office and Pater thought that it would be of benefit to himself and his fellows to go to Washington and see what could be done to expedite them to patent.

PUTER GOES TO WASHINGTON

Before he left Portland, it is said, he went to F P Mays, and secured from him a letter to Senator Mitchell, though in fact he was well known to the Senator. Arriving at Washington the land speculator went to the office of Senator Mitchell and conferred with him in regard to having his claims taken from the suspended list and put through to patent as soon as possible. He told the Senator, it is said, that he had already sunk a large amount of money in the claims, and that Emma L. Watson, a hard working and honest girl, had also invested in them at his suggestion. It was necessary for him to have some influence with the Commissioner to secure favorable recognition of his claims and he therefore would like to have the help of Senator Mitchell. He promised to make it right with the Senator in event that he would give to Pater his will and assistance.

Mr Pater then went to see Binger Hermann and talked the matter over with him. Hermann did not see that anything could be done to the lands unless some action should be taken which would make the transaction of record in the office.

Pater then got into a back, so it is

said and went to the hotel of Senator Mitchell, the D. way House, and told him of the conversation with Commissioner Hermann. The famous Pater-Watson affidavits were then made in the hotel of the Senator, and it is said that Senator Mitchell dictated the papers to his own stenographer and had them delivered to Mr Pater as soon as finished. The affidavits which told of the settlement of the land and of its cultivation and of the character of the persons making the filings were then sent to Mr Hermann who took them under consideration.

HEPMAHNN EXPEDITES CLAIMS

On March 6, 1902, the story continues, Mr Hermann wrote a letter to Senator Mitchell stating that he had expedited the claims as per his request. This is the letter which was introduced in the first trial here and over the identification of which both Senator Mitchell and Mr Hermann had so much trouble. It is the same letter to identify which Commissioner W A Richards made his trip to Portland from Washington.

In this letter Mr Hermann stated that he had expedited the claims and that the clerk of the proper division would take them under his consideration and make an examination of them. This was done and on the following day the clerk recommended that they be returned to the local Land Office at Oregon City for further proof and investigation. The clerk recommended that entries seemed to be fraudulent and not according to law. These were the Davis lands, in which W H Davis, of Albany was interested with a number of other men in and around Albany.

Loomis had in the meantime reported against the claims or part of them, but after this report D W Tarpley went to Davis and got him to raise \$300 each from 14 men in order to secure a favorable report from Loomis who had been told to make a further report.

LOOMIS PAID FOR REPORT

Davis raised \$1390 of the amount which was divided between Tarpley and Loomis. When Loomis received this money he wrote a personal letter to Hermann asking that something be done to expedite the claims or at least to their favorable consideration.

George K Ogden who was the clerk handling the business taking all into consideration, prepared a report and sent it to Hermann especially calling

attention to the Loomis and Davis letters asking that the lands be considered but admitting that the laws had not been observed. This report was dated on March 7, but on March 6 Mr Hermann had ordered the claims expedited, so it is said. When he saw the report made by Ogden, however, he hesitated and when Pater came to see him told Pater that he thought the matter looked pretty bad and that he was afraid the claims would have to go back to the Oregon office for further investigation.

Mr Pater by this time was in about \$6000 on the deal and when he was told this went back to Senator Mitchell it was up to him to help influence Hermann to put the lands through without sending them back to Oregon. He told the Senator that if the claims went back to Oregon they would be lost to him and all the money he had put into them would be gone.

PUTER SAYS HE PAID MITCHELL

At this time, it is said, Mr Pater laid down two \$1000 bills on the table in front of the Senator and told him to take them and see what he could do to help the lands through to patent. The Senator, the story has it, did not wish to take all of the money and pushed one of the bills back, but Pater insisted that \$2000 was not too much to pay for the service and the money was taken by the Senator. When Pater left, so it is said, Senator Mitchell followed him to the door and told him that he would do the best he could for him.

The next day, Pater went to Hermann and asked him how things looked and Mr Hermann told him that he thought upon reconsideration it would be possible to put the lands through. He asked Mr. Pater to come back in the afternoon and said that he had turned the matter over to W A Richards, his assistant.

Pater went to Mitchell, it is said, and got him to take him to Richards and introduce him. The Senator introduced him as one of the best men of Oregon, perfectly reliable and upright.

LANDS PASS TO PATENT

Mr. Pater and Mr. Richards had an extended conference. The latter knew nothing of the Davis and Loomis letters and could only judge from what he saw in the affidavits and proofs of final settlement which he had before him. Influenced, therefore, by these and by the recommendation of Senator Mitchell and Mr Hermann he allowed the lands to go to patent. He also read the Loomis and Ormsby reports which made a fair case for the homesteaders and all considered saw no reason why the lands could not be passed, especially as he was influenced by sympathy for the hardships undergone by Emma L. Watson and Maud Witt in their efforts to gain a claim upon which to make a home, as shown by the talk of Pater and the reports of Loomis and Ormsby.

This completes in part and roughly the story of the alleged connection of Senator Mitchell and Mr. Hermann with the conspiracy.

session, notwithstanding that, I am willing to return to Portland any time the prosecution officers assure me an immediate trial."

Senator Mitchell denounced the indictment as a conspiracy and said the principal conspirators were Secretary of the Interior Hitchcock and Special Prosecutor Haney.

GRANGE HALL LITERARY SOCIETY

The Grange Hall Literary Society met Friday evening and a good jolly time was had. The following literary program was rendered:

Vocal Solo.....Mrs Lena Jasper
Recitation.....Bernard Snow
Inst. Music.....Spencer Bros
Recitation.....Ella Snow
Vocal Solo.....J H Fleir
Recitation.....Earl Hughes

The question debated was resolved. That women should have the right of suffrage. Affirmative W E Jasper, Bernard Snow, Mrs B Snow, James Benson. Negative Chas Hoffman, Wm Sherwood, E D Jasper. This debate from beginning to end was chock full of good wholesome fun. Delicate jokes and subtle commentaries enlivened the whole contention.

Mrs Bernard Snow made the star speech of the evening. She brought out in an earnest and eloquent manner the rights and duties of woman.

The question for discussion next Friday is Resolved—That the general government should carry through the mail, parcels not exceeding twenty-five pounds in weight for one cent per pound. Affirmative J W McAlister, Joseph Baker, E D Jasper. Negative W B Jasper, Bernard Snow, Chas. Hoffman.

As far as completed the following is the program for next Friday:

Inst. Music.....Bessie Gekeler
Recitation.....Joe Golden
Recitation.....Ruth Houghes
Recitation.....Alice Snow
Recitation.....Fred Hoffman

ATTY. HALL OUSTED

Oregonian News Bureau, Washington Dec 31—President Roosevelt today directed the absolute removal of John H Hall United States District Attorney for the District of Oregon. The action was taken at the request of Francis J Heney, who has been conducting, as the nominal assistant of Mr Hall the land fraud cases in Ore.

The announcement of this action was made by Attorney-General Moody as he was leaving the White House after a conference with the President. Mr Moody declined to state what the charges against Mr Hall were if any but did say that it was for the service to displace with him, particularly in regard to the conduct of the land fraud cases now being investigated in Oregon.

Vocal Solo.....J H Fleir
Recitation.....E D Jasper
Recitation.....Roy Gekeler
Recitation.....Ella Snow
Recitation.....Zazel Eaton
Vocal Solo.....Mrs Lena Jasper
Recitation.....Kate Gekeler
Recitation.....Ruth Harrison
Recitation.....Arthur Golden
Vocal Solo.....Almira Peel
Recitation.....F M Jasper
Vocal Solo.....Nellie Gekeler
Recitation.....Earl Houghes
Everybody come

Mr J W McMillan, of Starkey is in the city today with his son, whose hand was hurt some time ago, in order to have the wound dressed. Drs Bacon and Hall have charge of the case.

TO THE PUBLIC:

The rush of Holiday trade is over and business in general has got back to its normal condition. I wish to inform all my patrons, and those not my patrons but who are liable to be, that I am now in a position to take care of all watch, clock and jewelry repairing with dispatch. I have secured all the necessary help in all the latest tools and materials known to the trade, as well as the best workmen that money can procure.

All repair work is under my personal supervision and I guarantee each and every piece of work done to be finished in first class workmanlike manner, and to give (with proper attention) perfect satisfaction. All work sent by mail or express will receive the same careful attention as if delivered in person, and to be promptly returned in first class condition.

Thanking my patrons for their past liberal patronage and assuring them of my utmost ability to give them perfect satisfaction in the future. I remain as ever,
J. H. PEARE,
Next to Newlin's Drug Store. La Grande's Leading Jeweler

COUGHS

Coughs are warnings of something amiss in throat or lungs. Don't mind the cough, mind the cause. Use a remedy that will go to the source of trouble and cure that. Such a remedy is our

White Pine Cough Balsam

It cures promptly and thoroughly because it cures in the right manner. Relieves irritation, heals inflamed surfaces, loosens the cough, and soothes and strengthens while it cures. A splendid remedy for children because it is so good to cure and so good to take. Price 25 and 50 cents.

THE NEWLIN DRUG CO
LA GRANDE OREGON

GREATEST

of all

ANNUAL CLEARANCE

SALES

Commences Wednesday, Jan. 4

Watch for further announcement. This will be the greatest money opportunity ever recorded in the history of La Grande.

The Fair
THE PLACE TO SAVE MONEY

Senator Mitchell's Denial

Spokane, Dec. 31.—"If anyone says Pater ever paid me any money in connection with land matters or anything else, he is a damned liar."

This statement was made by Senator John H Mitchell, who passed through Spokane on his way to Washington tonight. A brief telegram which he received before he arrived here informed him of his indictment, but he was unacquainted with the details until informed by the Associated Press correspondent here.

"I never saw Pater in my life," said Mitchell, "until he called on me in Washington with a letter of introduction from F P Mays, a friend of mine in Portland. In helping him before the land office, I did what I have done for a thousand other citizens of Oregon. He told me he had been employed by Mrs. Watson, as I recall it now, to look into matters for her. Never in the slightest degree was the matter of compensation mentioned between Pater and myself."

"I think I am exempt from arrest on this indictment while congress is in