

The Cottage Grove Sentinel

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RECORDS OF SHARP AND RONEY ATTACKED BY COL. MERCER

Would Dethrone Princes of Inefficiency and Extravagance Now in the County Court.

RONEY IS MORE DANGEROUS

Nothing Is Bought Here That Can Be Bought in Portland, Speaker Declares.

Like a father denying his own flesh and blood, Colonel W. G. D. Mercer Thursday night attacked the public records of County Commissioner Roney, of whose platform he declared himself the author, and Emmett Sharp, to whom he declared he had given his support when he was a candidate for the position. These men had betrayed him, he declared. Both had broken every pledge of economy and efficiency they had made.

A death-like stillness greeted the speaker as he stepped forward to start his address. Many had anticipated that some attack might be made upon the personal character of the two men. A seething denunciation was anticipated by others. Expectation was heightened when the speaker removed his coat and rolled up his sleeves. Colonel Mercer confined himself, however, almost entirely to an expose of the alleged inefficiency and extravagance that had been expensive to the county. He endeavored to show that an alleged studied policy upon the part of the commissioners to buy nothing at home that could be bought in Portland had proved expensive; that to every item thus purchased a hundred or two or three hundred dollars had been added to the Lane county price—and this by commissioners pledged to economy.

He endeavored to show that commissioners who had given their pledge that expensive foremen and superintendents would be done away with, with a saving to the county, had paid more for superintendents than any preceding administration and had shipped to the labor to which these high wages were paid, so that the county had not a chance to get back its own money through the channels of trade.

The auditorium of the high school was filled, a number of those present being opponents of the recall who wished to learn what the other side had to say. Because of circumstances which occurred at the last moment, Colonel Mercer had to revise his prepared address as he proceeded, which put him at something of a disadvantage.

"I come here, not for revenge, not for the hope of reward, but to appeal for purity in public and private life, to appeal to the taxpayers to dethrone the princes of extravagance now seated in the county court. Roney is the more dangerous man of the two, for he has the better brain, the higher mentality and consequently can do the more serious injury. In addition he has the longer term to serve.

"A member of the county court can not legally sell his own property to the county. Upon the 13th day of January following the day that Roney took office, his bridge tools were sold to the county. That he knew this could not be legally done was shown by the fact that they reached the county through a third party who had been drawn in through subterfuge and had no intention of being a party to a transaction of that kind.

"Roney promised in no uncertain terms that he would superintend the bridge work of the county, with a great saving to the county treasury. What is the record he has made in only a year's time?

"Take the repairs on the North Fork bridge, requiring the services of only three laborers for a few days. All bids were rejected and a contract entered into with the Union Bridge company. A foreman and three men were shipped in from Portland and Washington. Not only was the foreman paid a salary of \$10 a day for superintending three men, upon which the county paid a bonus of \$1, but the 10 per cent was added to the fares of the men from Portland and Washington. Laborers were paid \$7 and \$8 a day, and this was during the time that the county had two competent bridge foremen upon its pay roll at a wage not greater than that paid the laborers shipped in from elsewhere. The county was mulcted to the tune of \$447.50 on this one deal alone, all because Roney did not keep his platform pledges.

"Take the repairs on the Springfield bridge. Again for some mysterious reason all bids were rejected and a contract at cost plus 10 per cent was let to the Union Bridge company. The county paid \$35 for lumber that had been offered at \$27.50 and paid the 10 per cent profit on the higher figure. Under the cost plus 10 per cent system, it is good business for the contractor to get his costs as high as possible. The greater the cost the greater his profits. Again foreign labor was imported at a wage greater than that commanded by Lane county labor. The county was mulcted on this deal to the tune of \$2000 or

TAXES IN LANE \$83,000 LESS THAN LAST YEAR

Every Item on Roll, Except One, Shows Decrease From Last Year's Amount.

Lane county property owners will pay \$83,408.76 less taxes this year than they did last year. The total amount to be collected this year is \$1,473,355.95 as compared to \$1,556,763.71 last year.

The state and county taxes are \$35,046.58 less this year than last and every item on the roll is less except that of the port of Siuslaw, which is \$678.59 greater this year than last.

The state and county tax levy last year was 25.1 mills and this year it is 23.1 mills, the reduction being brought about largely by decreased state expenses.

A comparison of the items in the summary this year with those of last year, as furnished by Assessor Keeney, follows:

State and county taxes—1922 roll, \$89,795.39; 1923 roll, \$86,748.81; decrease, \$3,046.58.

Special school taxes—1922 roll, \$339,284.51; 1923 roll, \$333,197.51; decrease, \$6,087.

Special union high school taxes—1922 roll, \$20,123.81; 1923 roll, \$18,128.03; decrease, \$1,997.78.

Special county high school tuition fund—1922 roll, \$30,129.19; 1923 roll, nothing; decrease, \$30,129.19.

Special road taxes—1922 roll, \$45,933.54; 1923 roll, \$40,104.22; decrease, \$5,829.32.

Special city taxes—1922 roll, \$193,617.32; 1923 roll, \$189,316.82; decrease, \$4,300.50.

Special port of Siuslaw taxes—1922 roll, \$23,403.29; 1923 roll, \$24,081.88; increase, \$678.59.

Forest fire patrol taxes—1922 roll, \$4452.71; 1923 roll, \$3779.68; decrease, \$673.03.

Squirrel claims—1922 roll, \$23.95; 1923 roll, nothing; decrease, \$23.95.

Totals—1922 roll, \$1,556,763.71; 1923 roll, \$1,473,355.95; decrease, \$83,408.76.

better—all because Roney forgot his platform pledges.

"The county commissioners decided that they wished an electric compressor and bids were received. Roney told the Eugene dealer making the low bid that the order would be given him, but a few days later Roney went to Portland and bought identically the same machine at \$83 more than the bid of the Eugene dealer.

"I am not accusing Roney of graft, but I would like to know who gets the difference between the Lane county price and the price paid to outside dealers.

"Why can't Lane county dealers sell tires to the county? Eugene has the largest tire dealer in Oregon and this dealer has always made prices lower than those made by Portland dealers, whom the county commissioners insist upon patronizing. Upon one order of tires alone Sharp and Roney paid the Cascade Tire company, of Portland, \$168.20 more than the price of identically the same article from the Eugene dealer. The Cascade Tire company is a subsidiary of the Warren Construction company. One must wonder why the Warren Construction company is the recipient of so many favors from the present commissioners.

"I am accusing no one of theft, but the results to the county are the same as though outright theft had been committed. Who will give me an explanation of all these purchases at higher prices than those of Lane county merchants?

"Just north of your city is a Buffalo-Pitt road roller standing out in the weather. From my investigation I find that this roller was given in exchange for another road roller owned by the county, which was in every way as good as the roller that was received in exchange, and yet the records show that there is yet due on this roller the amount of \$2400. At least, upon the invoice appears the statement, signed by Mr. Sharp alone, 'Balance due April 1, 1924, \$2400.' This is all the record there is of this nefarious deal that will cost the county \$2400. Why were the number plates torn from this dilapidated old road roller? Someone must have wished to prevent identification, but I found numbers that had been overlooked. This road roller had been so rotten that the man in the moon must hold his nose when he passes over the old roller."

The speaker exhibited a sign which he had had painted to place near the old roller where all who passed might read. The sign read as follows: "Lane county's Teapot Dome. Notice this old roller. Balance due April 1, 1924, \$2400. E. Sharp."

"Lane county business men," the speaker continued, "are entitled to the business of Lane county upon equal or better terms than those offered others. Why then was \$1364.36 worth of oil bought from the Indian Refining company without so much as the formality of calling for bids, as required by law?"

The speaker listed a total of \$19,108.47 of illegal overdrifts and remarked that no wonder the county couldn't pay the \$2400 due on the old road roller that was never worth more than the one given in exchange.

"I didn't come to disclose all of the pitiful story," the speaker continued. "I have worked 38 days and nights in gathering the information and it would take me a week's time to give all the information I have which is supported by the records or by affidavits."

Salesbooks for merchants—The Sentinel.

SENTINEL HAS PRAISE FOR SHARP

In a letter published in these columns a week ago, J. H. Hawley questioned whether the Sentinel had ever said a good word for Emmett Sharp. Since that time others have expressed the opinion that the Sentinel has ever been a Sharp knocker.

The Sentinel has taken pains to make a hasty examination of some of its files and it is with pleasure that it gives a number of quotations from its own columns which indicate that it was ready to give Emmett Sharp every opportunity to make good.

In addition to publishing the complimentary things which the Sentinel has said about Mr. Sharp it will make this proposition: IF ANYONE WILL SHOW WHERE THE SENTINEL SAID ONE WORD AT ANY TIME DEROGATORY TO THE CANDIDACY OF MR. SHARP, IT WILL RETRACT EVERY WORD WHICH IT HAS SAID ABOUT MR. SHARP. ANY who wish to take advantage of this offer will be given free access to the files of the Sentinel for that purpose. Any who doubt the genuineness of any of the quotations given herewith may examine the files in the Sentinel office and read the originals with their own eyes.

Cottage Grove Sentinel, May 10, 1916: "J. B. Foster (of Detroit, Mich.) spoke highly of the concrete roads in California but said the roads of Oregon are much better than the roads in northern California. He especially spoke of the splendid road into the city from the south in the district in which Emmett Sharp is supervisor. He said this is a perfect road and could not be improved upon. He made 50 miles the hour coming in over this."

Cottage Grove Sentinel, June 7, 1916: "Emmett Sharp's district is an example of what road patrol will do, even on a small scale, and there are many examples near at hand of good roads going to pieces in one or two years without patrol."

Cottage Grove Sentinel, June 29, 1916: "The same committee also reported that from its investigation of the patrolled road in Emmett Sharp's district, compared with other roads in other districts that are not patrolled, they believed that road patrol should be given a thorough trial at once. As near as the committee could learn, the expense of patrol and repairs was about \$50 the mile."

Cottage Grove Sentinel, March 12, 1920: "Mr. Sharp will be a candidate upon his record as a road builder and a constructive program for reducing the cost of county maintenance. At one time Mr. Sharp maintained the Latham road, which he built, so that for two years it remained in as good condition as the day it was laid. He is an enthusiast for road patrol, which he says will obviate entirely the need of repair and rebuilding."

COTTAGE GROVE TIMBER IS DESIGNATED FOR CRUISE

Commissioners Start Nease to Work on Contract Which Caused Much Contention.

The county commissioners, despite all contention over the Nease timber cruising contract, have designated the 100,000 of timber land to be cruised this year and an order directing M. G. Nease to go ahead with the cruise has been signed. Commissioners L. N. Roney and Emmett Sharp signed the order but Judge C. P. Barnard declined. He has voted against the Nease contract from the outset.

The lands to be cruised this year are located in three distinct sections on the headwaters of the Mohawk river and north of the McKenzie river, another southwest of Eugene on the upper Siuslaw river and the third southeast of Cottage Grove on Moseby creek and tributaries.

The tracts of timber designated by the county court to be cruised this year are described as to township and range as follows:

In township 19 south of range 7 west, 16,990 acres; township 20 south of range 6 west, 7680 acres; township 20 south of range 7 west, 1600 acres, all in the vicinity of Mound, on the upper Siuslaw.

In township 21 south of range 1 west, sections 1 to 4 inclusive, sections 9 to 16 inclusive and sections 21 to 24 inclusive, 16,040 acres; township 22 south of range 1 west, 16,000 acres, southeast of Cottage Grove.

In township 15 south of range 1 west, 7231 acres, in the vicinity of Mabel.

In township 15 south of range 1 east, 12,480 acres; township 15 south of range 2 east, 5540 acres; township 15 south of range 3 east, 2335 acres, north of the McKenzie river and east of Wendling.

In township 16 south of range 1 west, 3200 acres, in the vicinity of Wendling.

In township 16 south of range 1 east, 3920 acres, north of Vida.

In township 16 south of range 2 east, 12,440 acres; township 16 south of range 3 east, 6574 acres, north of Blue River.

University High Defeats C. G. H. S. American Legion Buys Building.

These quotations show that in past years the Sentinel took pains to put Mr. Sharp's name into news stories in a complimentary way and went to considerable trouble in doing so. There is no doubt that if a close examination of the files of the Sentinel were made, many more complimentary notices could be found for Mr. Sharp, but these given are sufficient for the purpose.

Cottage Grove Sentinel, April 23, 1920: "Emmett Sharp, one of the two candidates from here, emphasized his belief that if given assistance by one other member of the county court he would be able to carry out the economy program outlined in his platform."

Cottage Grove Sentinel, October 23, 1920: "Except from editorial espousing the candidacy of C. I. Barnard. We do not believe that the incoming commissioner will be able to bring about many things which he hopes to bring about. Even with the extravagance that naturally goes with county government it appears to us that no tremendous saving can be made. The important thing to us is that our incoming commissioner is an enthusiast for good roads, is enthusiastically loyal to his own end of the county. Give him a man with whom he can work in harmony and give him a chance to do his utmost for his end of the county in particular and the whole county in general."

Cottage Grove Sentinel, October 13, 1922: "Two years after Mr. Sharp took office: 'Nearby every resident here has known Mr. Sharp for many years and during all the time of his residence here his reputation was that of an honest, upright citizen and a live booster for good roads. It has been with regret that friends have for months heard persistent rumors of the charges that appear in the recall petitions. Even now that the storm has broken and Mr. Sharp is the storm center of what bids fair to be the nastiest fight in the political history of Lane county, there are many to defend him and to express the belief that the charges against him are trumped up and unfounded.'

Cottage Grove Sentinel, October 20, 1922: "The recall petitions did not prove very popular in the Cottage Grove country, if the number of signers be used as a criterion."

Cottage Grove Sentinel, October 27, 1922: "In this issue appears a story nearly a column in length quoting almost verbatim what Mr. Sharp said in his own defense in a meeting held on a Sunday afternoon in the school house. The editor of The Sentinel, at this time, made the motion which gave Mr. Sharp 30 minutes of extra time in which to complete his defense."

It will be noted that a number of the quotations are from stories from which the name of Mr. Sharp could easily have been eliminated.

NEAR RIOT RESULT WHEN RECALL PETITIONS ARE RECEIVED AT LOWELL

"There was a regular riot when the recall petitions arrived at Lowell," stated Frank Blair, of that place, who was here Thursday on business. "It was almost necessary to have them stand in line to get a chance to sign. Practically every person in that section will have his name signed to the petitions."

Mrs. Blair accompanied Mr. Blair and they remained to hear Colonel Mercer give his talk that evening on "The Truth About Sharp and Roney." Before leaving, Mr. Blair arranged to have Colonel Mercer appear at Lowell and promised that there would be an even larger audience there than there was here, where the high school auditorium was completely filled.

NELSON DOESN'T LIKE TO HAVE CIPHER ADDED TO MILEAGE OF USED CAR

N. J. Nelson Jr. objects because The Sentinel can't tell the difference between 2400 and 24,000. The trouble is that N. J. writes too much like an editor. He wrote an ad for a Gray car he has for sale. He said it had been run only 2400 miles. The printer made it 24,000. The printer has explained that he thought a Gray car run only 2400 miles would be sold as brand new and that to say that a Gray car had only run 24,000 miles was the same as saying it had hardly been used at all. This is not an admirably explanation.

SPECIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD WITH MAY PRIMARY

The question has been asked many times as to when the special recall election will be held in case sufficient names are secured to the recall petitions. While it is understood that the law requires that such an election shall be held coincident with a regular or primary election to be held within 90 days, those in charge of the recall move are arranging to file their petitions at such time that the special election will be held at the same time as the primary, the same election officials serving for both.

The American Legion post has bought the Bender bakery building near the bridge. The purchase was made in anticipation of erecting a community house upon the property but the building will be rented until the Legion raises sufficient funds to start its building.

GRANGE AND UNION ARE NOT BACKING RECALL

Members of These Organizations Are, However, as Citizens Ready to Oust Commissioners.

Creswell grange, at a meeting held Saturday, adopted resolutions in opposition to the proposed recall of Commissioners Sharp and Roney on the ground that the commissioners are not guilty of either malfeasance or inefficiency in office. It was said that not more than half of those present voted upon the resolution. The county farmers' union has adopted a resolution stating that it as an organization is not behind the recall.

The Sentinel has not at any time stated that either the grange or farmers' union organization was backing the recall, nor has it seen such a statement made in print. The Sentinel and other newspapers have stated that the recall candidates were selected by men who are members of the grange and farmers' union. This statement is not disputed.

A prominent member of the grange has stated to The Sentinel that, while the grange as an organization can not endorse the recall move, he believes that more than half of the members of the grange will vote for the recall.

RECALL PETITIONS ARE BEING FREELY SIGNED HERE

It Is Estimated That Total of 800 Signatures Will Be Obtained in South Lane.

The Sharp and Roney recall petitions, which have been in circulation here during the past few days, are being quite generally signed. So far they have been circulated largely in the country outside the city—along Mosby creek, Row river and Coast fork and in the Divide neighborhood. Petitions bearing 40 names have been returned from the road district south of the city in which Sharp made a reputation as a road builder years before he thought of becoming a candidate for county commissioner.

A report has reached here that every employe in one sawmill, which has about 40 men on its pay roll, has signed.

It is planned to organize a local committee here and to employ some one to circulate petitions over the city. It is thought that at least 500 names can be secured by this method. It is estimated that 50 per cent of the voters are willing to sign and that a total of 800 names will be signed in this end of the county.

A report has been brought that 90 per cent of the voters in the Lorane country will get their names onto the petitions. Feeling there is high against the commissioners because of the unsatisfactory work done on the Cottage Grove-Lorane road.

COTTAGE GROVE-PORTLAND LOCAL MAKES LAST TRIP

The Cottage Grove-Portland local will make its last trip today. The last trip from Portland was made last night. The removal of this train has been contemplated for some time on account of lack of patronage. Railway officials contemplated changing its schedule so that it would leave here early in the forenoon, but owing to the fact that the train picked up the Marshfield train at Eugene, the change was found impracticable.

SILK UNDERWEAR CANNOT BE BOUGHT AT \$5 SUIT, SAY THOSE WHO KNOW

The Sentinel has been informed that it must have been mistaken when it said the county commissioners bought silk underwear at \$5 the suit for a woman resident of Eugene who is a charge upon the county.

Those who take exception to the statement say that silk underwear can't be bought at that price. Possibly it can't. The Sentinel has never bought any and doesn't know. Very few of those who helped pay \$5 a suit for underwear for a woman in charge of the county know whether or no silk underwear can be bought at that price.

The Sentinel will give Sharp and Roney sufficient space to tell whether or not the underwear was silk. There is no dispute about the underwear being purchased at \$5 the suit. The commissioners will also be given space to explain how the county can afford to buy fancy feeds for its charges, when many of those who pay for such feeds are unable to buy such feeds for themselves.

London, Ore., Feb. 27.—(Special.)—"Dad" Lyons, although past 85 years of age, claims that he is just as good as some of the young fellows. As a result of a playful effort Friday to prove his claim, a large glass was broken out of the front of the store at London owned by his stepson, Charles Wood.

He engaged in a scuffling match with Byron Newton, a young man of about 20 years, and shoved the younger man through the glass.

PAVING COMPANY PRESENTED \$5000 BY LANE COUNTY

Struggling Taxpayers Ask Why Such Charity Towards Wealthy Corporation.

Many are wondering why the Warren Construction company should be the recipient of so many favors from County Commissioners Sharp and Roney.

It was bad enough, many think, for the commissioners to refuse to buy automobile and truck tires at home and purchase them from a subsidiary of the Warren Construction company, but the act of the commissioners in making the company a present of about \$5000 in connection with the construction of the Lorane road has caused many uncompromising questions to be asked.

It is certain beyond any question of doubt that the Warren company would have insisted upon the fulfillment of any part of their contract that meant money in their pockets. They would have made no division of profits with the county under any circumstances.

When the construction company stood ready to insist that the county fill its part of the agreement to the letter, many want to know what pressure could have been brought to bear to induce the commissioners to relieve the construction company of the \$25-a-day penalty which it was to have paid beginning September 1 of last year. The total penalty from that time to the time that the company could complete the road would amount to not less than \$5000.

Why were the county commissioners so thoughtful of this great corporation, which is making millions annually, and so thoughtless of the taxpayers of Lane county, many of whom are struggling to pay their tax bills? Why should this bloated corporation be made a present of \$5000?

That is the question that is being asked. The Sentinel will give Sharp and Roney sufficient space to make an explanation. The taxpayers believe they are entitled to one.

C. G. H. S. IS REPRESENTED AT EXPOSITION AT O. A. C.

The Cottage Grove high school was well represented at the educational exposition held Friday and Saturday at Corvallis by the Oregon Agricultural college. Five delegates, Homer Dickson, student body president; Lewis Strobeck, Elmer Young, Bernice Brainard and Virginia Bosley, with two teachers, Miss Myrtle Lay and Miss Maude Lamson, were sent to represent the school. Other high school students who attended were Ray Godard, Ethel Lambert, Mary Cornutt and Lloyd Arnes. The purpose of the exposition was "The taxpayer should believe they are entitled to one."

DOUBLE HEADER BASKET BALL GAME ON TOMORROW

A double header basket ball game between the C. G. H. S. boys' team and the Eugene high school hoopers, and the local girls' basketball squad and the Corvallis girls' team will be played here tomorrow evening in the armory.

The line-up for the local boys' team is as follows: John Hewitt (F), Clifton Swanson (F), Dana McCargar (C), Dale Miller (G), William Skilling (G), Delmas Richmond (S), Gordon Wright (S), Clare Adams (S), and Ross Glass (S).

The regular girls' squad, which is made up of Dolly Pitcher, Crystal Robinson, Mabel Martin, Frances Cameron, Frances Newlin, Bernadine Schneider, Alverda Finch, Hilda Favor and Daisy Bennett will represent the high school in the girls' game.

SENTINEL OFFERS FULL OPPORTUNITY FOR REPLY TO SHARP AND RONEY

In following out its policy of endeavoring to give a square deal to all sides of a controversy, The Sentinel has notified Commissioners Sharp and Roney that they will be permitted to answer any charges made against them by The Sentinel. If they fail to do so, The Sentinel will take it for granted that the charges are admitted to be true.

The letter to the commissioners read as follows: "Cottage Grove, Ore., Feb. 22, 1924. Messrs. Sharp and Roney, County Commissioners, Eugene, Ore.—Gentlemen: This is notice that The Sentinel will give you a fair chance to answer any charge which has been, or may be, made against you by The Sentinel during the recall campaign. If you hold a meeting here, you will receive the same publicity as that given meetings opposing you. In taking advantage of this offer of ours, kindly furnish your copy early enough in the week so as to inconvenience us as little as possible. We must reserve the right to use our own judgment as to how far we can permit you to go in attempting to refute charges not made by The Sentinel, but shall endeavor to give you every reasonable opportunity to defend yourselves. This offer is not made to cover this particular case. It is our established policy to give a square deal to all sides in any public controversy.

Yours truly, COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL.