

GREAT ESTATE DWINDLES AWAY

Heirs Hold Ladd's Stewardship for Loss of an Immense Fortune.

MISMANAGEMENT IS CITED

Under His Administration and Trusteeship Half a Million Dollars Is Practically Frittered Away.

HEIRS OF A. H. JOHNSON ESTATE.

The heirs of the A. H. Johnson estate, who are now making an effort to cast W. M. Ladd from his position as administrator and trustee of the estate, have scattered through several states. With the exception of one or two of the grandchildren who are taking no very active part in the controversy, the following named persons, several of them in straitened circumstances, compose the list of those who expect to reap the reward of the remnants which may be saved from the wreck of the estate: Mrs. Anna M. Wylie, a stenographer in the Board of Fire Underwriters of Portland; H. B. Johnson, Mercy A. Johnson, Charlotte M. Johnson; Mrs. Mary Parkhurst, of California; Stephen M. Johnson, a drayman, of Portland; Arthur R. Johnson, of Colorado; Cordelia J. Dunbar, Mrs. Carrie J. Hibbard, Mattie B. Miller and Sadie B. Johnson, of Seattle; and Charles N. Johnson, of Forest Grove.

W. M. Ladd says in defense of his conduct as administrator of the A. H. Johnson estate that he has been forced to follow the path he has, in large part, by the useless litigation carried on by Mrs. Cordelia Johnson in combating the Isom White claim of \$17,000, on technical grounds. The Johnson heirs assert that she carried her litigation several times through the Supreme Court, upon the advice of Richard Williams, her attorney, who has since come to represent Mr. Ladd as a legal adviser.

The Isom White claim against the Johnson estate and the litigation it brought on furnished food for the courts for years and made great rents in the assets of the estate. Resultant from it, and the accrued interest and costs and lawyers' fees, has come much of the expense of the estate, and also the charge made by the heirs that Mr. Ladd, as administrator, erred in his duty by not putting a stop to the quarrel when he knew, or should have known, the justice of the claim against the estate and the flimsy technicality upon which the heirs based their case.

Died in California.

A. H. Johnson died in California, and upon the day of his death, Isom White, who held an account against Johnson for \$17,000, filed an attachment upon a block of property at First and Taylor streets. The service of the writ was made by serving the papers upon the Chinese cook at the residence. The justice of the claim was not disputed, but the legality of the service was, and upon this ground the case was taken three times through the Supreme Court.

In the long run the heirs were defeated in their contention and the property was ordered to be sold under execution. This order was carried out, the property being purchased by the Occident Investment Company for \$15,000.

Makes But One Investment.

This Occident Investment Company is also an object of suspicion on the part of the heirs, perhaps mainly for the reason that the records show that but one investment has ever been made by it, and that the purchase of the Johnson property under the Isom White execution sale.

About two weeks prior to the sale of the property in question, the Occident Investment Company was created in the offices of Williams, Wood & Lathrop, which firm was the legal representative of Mr. Ladd. The capital stock of the new company was \$100,000, and the incorporators were Rodney Gilman, D. W. Wakefield and Percy Elytis. Lathrop, who was the secretary of the company, is one of the attorneys who argued Mr. Ladd's answer made to the recent petition of the heirs asking for his removal as executor.

At the sale of the company bought the property for \$15,000 and, after keeping it for the statutory year, sold it again for \$20,000, thus making \$12,000 on the deal. Since that time the company has made no other investments.

Interest, like moths and rust, has devoured the Johnson estate, so it is claimed, but the heirs in their poverty are wondering and are about to try to learn why the property held for settlement has not been able to pay some income by which the interest could have been at least in part counterbalanced.

Worth Three-Quarters of a Million.

At the time of Johnson's death the estate was worth approximately \$750,000, which amount was encumbered by a debt of \$280,000 in round numbers. This was in 1894, at the time of Mr. Johnson's death in California. It is now alleged by Mr. Ladd that the estate of practically half a million dollars has been consumed by the interest on the indebtedness. Of this indebtedness approximately four-fifths was owing to Mr. Ladd and was drawing interest at 10 per cent.

Properties Which Were Sold.

| Corner Second and Ankeny, sold to J. F. Shea | Appraised, \$20,000 | Sold, \$12,000 |
|--|---------------------|----------------|
| N. E. corner Seventh and Hoyt, two lots | 37,500 | 15,500 |
| E. E. corner Washington and Ford, sold to J. C. Allen | | 12,000 |
| N. W. corner Third and Washington, sold to J. N. Towl | | 25,000 |
| S. W. corner Washington and St. Clair | | 22,000 |
| S. W. corner Washington and King, sold to A. C. Pike, one lot | | 8,000 |
| One lot on East Water, between East Washington and East Stark, sold to H. E. Noble | | 1,800 |
| Lot on East Water, between East Stark and East Washington, sold to H. E. Noble | | 1,800 |
| N. W. corner Tenth and Pacific | 11,000 | |
| Union Meat stock | 37,800 | 27,000 |
| Lot on Seventh and between Thurman and Upshur | 1,800 | 950 |
| Total | | \$123,400 |

Appraisement of Trust. The trust, which was originally composed of Portland realties and Union

Meat Company stock, was appraised as follows: Wood's Addition, west of Portland, \$27,000; Homestead, south of Washington, 20,000; Iveson St. Clair and Ford, 20,000; Other land, south of Washington, between St. Clair and Ford, 78,000; Half-block on Hoyt, between Sixth and Seventh, 35,000; Block bounded by King, St. Clair, Washington and Wayne streets, 63,250; Block in East Portland, fronting on river, bet. Stark and Washington, 70,000; Lots in Blackstone Addition, 45,000; South and North, 11,000; Union Meat Co. stock, 37,800; One lot, Seventeenth, between Thurman and Upshur, 2,000; Second and Ankeny streets, 25,000.

Cite Items of Mismanagement.

But little of the estate outside of the trust property has been sold. C. N. Johnson, one of the heirs, bought a tract of land in Washington County, paying \$5000 for it. Another parcel of land in Douglas County of about 40 acres has been sold. This was appraised at \$100, but cost Johnson \$10,000. A warehouse property on Front and Ankeny streets was also sold.

There remains in Washington and Yamhill Counties about 3000 acres of the best land in the two counties. This land is cut up into farms which, with the exception of one, so it is said, have never paid interest on their value. The one exception is the Reedville farm, which is said to be the model farm of Washington County, and yet no better naturally than any of the others.

The Springhill farm, which is leased to a dairyman, is held up by the heirs as an example of the alleged lack of management shown by the executor. This farm has been rented by Mr. Ladd to the present tenant on shares, but the area under cultivation has dwindled until the portion of the crop received by the administrator does not more than pay the taxes, if that. At the same time the tenant is using the larger part of the place as a dairy, and is fast becoming well to do.

Heirs Face Poverty.

Poverty stares the greater number of the heirs in the face, while the interest on the accumulated debts is rapidly eating up what little may be left. All of them have expected much from the estate, but will receive little or nothing. In the time of their waiting they have in some instances been reduced to real poverty, while none of them have enjoyed the benefits of what they had reason to expect should be theirs. Charles N. Johnson, of Forest Grove, is perhaps the most fortunate of all, as he is in comfortable circumstances, and the owner of a fine farm. Arthur B. Johnson, now in Colorado, is a man who could use to great advantage the share left him in his father's estate. H. B. Johnson, now in California, is not particularly in need of the money left him, but there are a number of others who are anxiously waiting for their shares to enable them to stop for a time in their chase after the elusive meal from day to day.

Stenographer for Underwriter.

Mrs. Anna Wylie is a stenographer in the offices of the Board of Fire Underwriters, Mercy A. Johnson, another daughter, lives in California, as does Charlotte M. Johnson and Mrs. Mary Parkhurst. Cordelia J. Dunbar, Mrs. Carrie J. Hibbard, Mattie B. Miller and Sadie B. Johnson, of Seattle; and Charles N. Johnson, of Forest Grove.

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FEDERATION WILL REMAIN

VOTE TO DISBAND PROVES ITS STRENGTH.

Officers Are Elected and Reports of Work Accomplished Are Made and Considered.

Resolved, that the Portland Federation Women's Clubs is a great benefit to the individual clubs and to the city. Such was the resolution adopted by unanimous vote at the annual meeting of the federated clubs in the A. O. U. W. Hall in the Selling-Hirsch building last night. This action was taken after an animated discussion in which the fate of the federation hung in the balance. The matter of discontinuing the organization came up for serious consideration, but was voted down, and the foregoing resolution adopted after a thorough discussion.

The discussion started with the withdrawal from the federation of one of the component organizations, the John Ivy Water Color Club. In order to see if there was a general sentiment in favor of disbanding the federation an open discussion was held on the subject. Mrs. Frederick Eggert, Mrs. Rose Hoyt and other prominent members spoke in favor of continuing the work and carried the sentiment of the members with them. The withdrawal of the John Ivy Water Color Society was referred back to that organization for consideration, and it was urged that all the clubs in the league continue in the centralized work with renewed enthusiasm.

YESTERDAY'S FIRES.

At 2:45 P. M.—Chimney fire in a residence at 305 1/2 Third street was promptly extinguished by the Fire Department. No damage.

At 10:40 P. M.—Fire caused by the explosion of a hanging lamp at 413 Guild street did damage amounting to \$100. The residence was occupied by Edward Hutchings.

were: Mrs. L. Durkheimer, of the Jewish Council, vice-president; Miss Leona Larabee, of the Teachers' Club, recording secretary; Mrs. E. H. Matthews, of the Froebel Club, corresponding secretary; Mrs. W. Wynn Johnson, of the Portland Women's Club, treasurer, and Mrs. L. H. Wells, of the Mothers' and Teachers' Club, auditor.

The report of the president, Mrs. Rose Hoyt, and those of the officers of the subordinate organizations showed that much work had been accomplished during the past year. Mrs. M. Blumauer, president of the Council of Jewish Women, reported that that organization now had 200 members. During the past year it has erected a neighborhood house at a cost of \$20,000. The Portland Women's Club was also reported to be in a thriving condition. This organization expects to erect a clubhouse within the coming year, and now has a fund of \$100 to be applied for that purpose.

The Illinois Study Club was received into the federation. It is a new organization, and promises to be a strong factor in the club work of the city. One of the objects of the federation in the future will be to assist in the work of the Juvenile Court. Mrs. Frederick Eggert addressed the meeting upon the work which this branch of the municipal government is doing for the boys and girls of the city, and a motion was passed assuring the officers of the Juvenile Court of the hearty support and co-operation of the club members in all of its efforts.

Another matter which the organization will take up is the securing of the public school buildings for the use of worthy public meetings. It will be necessary to bring about legislation to achieve this object, and the subject was referred to the legislative committee, which will consider the means of bringing it before the proper authorities.

The Pilgrimage.

The excursion of prominent Portland business men which has made a tour of Eastern Oregon, Eastern Washington and Southern Idaho, by way of the O. R. & N., will arrive in Portland at 4 this morn-

ing. Visits of shorter or longer extent were made at the following towns: Pendleton, Athena, Frewater, Or.; Walla Walla, Prescott, Watsburg, Pullman, Colfax, Dayton, Wash.; Moscow, Lewiston, Idaho.



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