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FIRST WITH THE DATA

Washington Corps Searching Railroad Records.

WORKING ON ORIGINAL LINE

Commission Gives Reasons for Ascertaining Cost of Lines—Asks for Suggestions and Criticisms From Engineers.

OLYMPIA, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—Members of the State Railroad Commission have considered it advisable to give out a statement relative to the work the commission now has in hand to ascertain the cost of construction and the present value of all the railroad lines in this state, as they consider this by far the most important matter of the kind now before the people of Washington. The future work of the commission relative to railroad freight rates will all be dependent upon the result of the report to be made by the engineering force at the conclusion of their investigations. Similar investigations are being carried on in other states having railroad commissions, but the work in Washington is laid out on entirely original lines and will be completed, in the expectation of the commission, much earlier than in any of the other states and at a much less cost. While this work is under way, the commission would welcome criticisms or suggestions from engineers or others competent to speak on the subject, which might be of value to the commission or its corps of engineers. The statement issued by the commission is as follows: Since the return from St. Paul, Minn., of Messrs. H. A. Fairchild and J. C. Lawrence, State Railroad Commissioners, and their engineer, Mr. Halbert P. Gillette, plans have been perfected for the appraisal of all the railroad property in Washington. The appraisal will be made by one of the most experienced and reliable of all products within the state since regulation of freight rates will be based upon the cost of the property and the cost of operating them. To secure an estimate of the value of the property, the commission has arranged to employ a corps of engineers who will be kept busy for the next four months. The Railroad Commission has arranged to cooperate with the officials of the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific Railways in abstracting data from the records and maps of the railways, and by the method that will be employed, the commission will ascertain not only a fraction of what similar work has cost the states of Wisconsin and Michigan. In undertaking the present investigation of the actual value of railroad property the commission is proceeding under the mandate of Sec. 12 of Chap. 81 of Laws of 1905, which requires that the commission shall ascertain as early as practicable the amount of money expended in the construction and equipment per mile of every railway in Washington. But even if this mandate did not exist, it would be necessary to make an appraisal of railroad property before attempting to fix freight rates; for, in the now celebrated Nebraska rate case, the Supreme Court ruled as follows: We hold, however, that basis of all calculations as to the reasonableness of rates to be charged by a corporation

maintaining a highway under legislative sanction must be the fair value of the property being used by it for the convenience of the public. And, in order to ascertain that value, the original cost of construction, the amount expended in permanent improvements, the amount and market value of its bonds, and stock, the present as compared with the original capacity of the property under particular conditions, and other facts, are to be given such weight as may be just and right in each case. We do not say that there may not be other matters to be regarded in estimating the value of the property. While the company is entitled to ask for a fair return upon the value of that which it employs for the public convenience, the public is entitled to demand that no more be exacted from it for the use of a public highway than the services rendered by it are reasonably worth. In Texas, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota have made or are making appraisals of railroad property within their boundaries, principally for taxation purposes. In Minnesota the work of appraisal has been completed, and is likely to consume two years' time, due to the methods employed. It is the purpose of the Railroad Commission of Washington to have the appraisal of the railroads completed within the next four months—in time to report to the next Legislature. With this end in view, the Commission has adopted a policy that enables it to work in harmony with the railroads, thus availing itself of the plans and records in the office of the different railroad companies. By so doing it becomes unnecessary to put a large corps of engineers in the field, as was done in Wisconsin, for example, but a small corps of engineers employed by the commission and working under the direction of Mr. Gillette, is at work in the engineering offices of each of the railroads, abstracting the necessary data from the records in the railroad offices, the cost of making the appraisal of the railroads, and their general equipment, and the cost of operating them. In this manner the office records will be checked by actual inspection of structures along the line. Finally, based upon the data obtained in both the office and field, an estimate will be made of the cost of reproducing all the railroads in the state. Due to the fact that the most of the records of quantities of excavations, masonry, steel work, etc., will be obtained direct from the records in the railroad offices, the cost of making the appraisal is less than that obtained in either Wisconsin or Michigan, and it is believed that the results will be more accurate than were obtained in those states. In addition to securing an estimate of the cost of reproducing every mile of railroad in the state, data will be obtained from the railroads showing the age of bridges, steel, walls, structures and equipment upon which to base an estimate of the present value of the railroads. No attempt will be made to inspect every freight car in the state, as was done in Wisconsin, at great expense, it is believed by the Railroad Commission that the guesses of railroad inspectors are less reliable than data obtained directly from the offices of the railroads. Judging from the trend of public opinion, as shown by the recent action of Congress in empowering the Interstate Commerce Commission to fix railroad rates, it is probable that every state in the Union will follow the lead of Texas, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Washington in determining the actual value of the railroad property. At any rate, it will be impossible for any state, or indeed for the Interstate Commerce Commission, to make any real headway in the matter of rate fixing until a basis for logical rate making has been established, and in view of the decision of the

Supreme Court, above quoted, the actual value of the railroads must form one of the largest factors to be considered in solving this important problem. GRABBED UP BY SPECULATORS Klamath County Development Will Be Delayed, Says Blanchard. SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 15.—(Special).—C. J. Blanchard, a member of the reclamation service from Washington, is authority for the statement that the development of the Klamath country will be hindered because of the fact that land speculators have seized upon hundreds of acres in this new irrigation project of the Government. "I look for a great development in the Klamath country," he said, "but this development will be delayed because of the number of land speculators who have secured fine tracts there. They are holding this land at from \$25 to \$40 an acre. This price will prevent many settlers from coming to Oregon, and will retard the progress of the Klamath country. The Government will charge the settlers \$25 an acre for water, and this amount, added to the speculators' price for the land, will act to the detriment of the purchaser. The fact that the Southern Pacific will build through Klamath will greatly add to the value of the land there." Blanchard was delighted with the work of the Irrigation Congress at Boise, which he attended. "We appointed a publicity committee there," he said, "which will greatly aid the cause of the Klamath country. It will place before the common people of the United States a truthful report of the irrigation country and will help them get land." PROMISE OF A RAILROAD. Lytle Makes Proposal to Tillamook Merchants and Presents Demand. TILLAMOOK, Or., Sept. 15.—(Special).—A meeting of the business men of Tillamook City was held Thursday evening at the rooms of the Tillamook Development League to hear a proposal from E. Lytle, president of the Pacific Railway & Navigation Company, now building a railroad from Hillsboro. Mr. Lytle said he wanted a guarantee that the people of Tillamook County would procure him a free right of way from Tillamook City to Buxton, in Washington County, 100 feet wide, and free terminal grounds 250 feet in length by 250 feet in width at both Bay City and Tillamook City. Then he would guarantee to build a railroad from Tillamook. Starting work from Tillamook City, he would build 15 miles of road next year, and by December 31, 1908, would have the entire line completed and in operation. The sense of the meeting was that the people preferred Mr. Lytle's road as more direct to Portland and a shorter route than by Astoria, and although the business men pledged Mr. Lytle their support, it was not thought advisable to give a guarantee that evening that they would secure the rights of way. It was decided to send out committees today and secure the pledge of most of the prominent citizens that they would help get the right of way, as the road will go through some valuable land. Money in the Blacksmith's Safe. GARFIELD, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—The Postoffice, Williams' blacksmith shop and the O. R. & N. depot were broken into here last night by robbers. Nothing was taken from the depot, but the contents of the big safe was badly battered in an attempt to open it up. The Postoffice department lost 50 cents and the blacksmith's safe yielded the robbers \$15.

PLAYING BOY IS KILLED

SHOT BY REVOLVER IN HANDS OF IONE STOREKEEPER.

Refugee From San Francisco Is the Involuntary Cause of the Death of Little Arthur Cochran.

OLYMPIA, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—While playing around the hardware store of W. B. Snodgrass, Arthur Cochran, 8 years old, was shot in the head and killed almost instantly by a revolver in the hands of the proprietor of the store. The shooting was purely accidental and no blame attaches to Snodgrass, but the storekeeper is overcome with grief. Snodgrass was examining a 32-caliber revolver, he knew it was loaded, but in some manner the weapon was discharged, the bullet entering the boy's right eye and lodging in his brain. Snodgrass came here recently from San Francisco, where he was burned out and nearly lost his life in the recent disaster. The parents of the dead boy are old residents of this place. They are very much distressed by the sad occurrence. Board of Control Contracts. OLYMPIA, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—The State Board of Control today awarded contracts as follows: Sugar, to National Grocery Company, Seattle; Tacoma Grocery Company, Tacoma, and W. B. Glacke Company, Walla Walla. Fresh and salt meat, Fry-Bruhn Company, Miller & Ehrman, Vancouver; C. A. Blurock, Vancouver; Union Meat Company, Swift & Co., Tacoma; A. G. Henderson, Chehalis; Carstens Packing Company, Tacoma; Conrad, Scharman, Reardon, Huffman Company, Medical Lake. Bids were opened at 1 P. M. and it will probably be ten days before all the bids and samples are checked over and the contracts awarded. Indorser Must Be Notified. OLYMPIA, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—In the Spokane case of Archie Galbraith, appellant, vs. O. P. Shepard, respondent, the Supreme Court holds that unless an indorser of a note is notified of proposed action for its collection, the indorser is relieved from liability. In affirming the case the Court says: "Presentment for payment of a note is not necessary in order to charge persons primarily liable. It is, however, specifically declared that presentment for payment is necessary in order to charge an indorser. When a note is dishonored by non-payment, notice of such dishonor must be given to the indorser and that in the absence of such notice he is discharged." Gobbled Up by Telephone Company. GARFIELD, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—William Lawrence, a wealthy pioneer farmer of the Palouse country and a brother of the Railway Commissioner, was in Garfield today and regarding the taking over of the rural line by the Pacific States Company said: "We find we are in another man's house without our consent. We, as owners of the Dry Creek line, connecting Garfield, Okanogan, Elberton and Colfax, give the Pacific States Company no authority whatever to take over our line. There are 24 farmers who built

ASSESSOR'S FIGURES SUIT

RAILROADS ASK EQUALIZATION BOARD TO USE THEM.

In Some Counties of Washington Valuations Have Been Raised by the County Boards.

OLYMPIA, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—The railroads had their innings before the State Board of Equalization today. The Great Northern was represented by Tax Agent John L. Snapp, the O. R. & N. Co. by Tax Agent W. W. Morrow, the Northern Pacific by Tax Agent Jay Sedgwick and his assistant, J. C. Fairchild, and the Columbia & Puget Sound Railroad Company by Francis Greene. The men asked that the classifications and valuations be placed at the same figures as fixed by the Assessor's convention last Spring. The State Board of Equalization was requested, in cases where valuations have been raised by county boards, that they be again fixed at the figures fixed upon by the Assessor's convention. No action was taken by the board. The returns forwarded to the State Board of Equalization by the County Board of King County, received here last night, were today returned to Seattle for correction. Proper segregation had not been made in his personal property and the State Board considers that in numerous important particulars the King County returns are practically valueless. The King County Board fixes the blame upon the County Assessor, who is said to have ignored the forms sent out by the State Tax Commission for making assessment returns. The Assessor's side of the case has not been heard. The work of the State Board will be delayed several days on account of King County returns. ANKENY HOLDS WALLA WALLA Controls Legislative Ticket and Names County Delegation. WALLA WALLA, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—At the Republican County Convention here today a solid Ankeny delegation was elected to the state convention. The Legislative ticket is the Ankeny ticket, and was nominated without opposition or objection. Senator Ankeny was heartily indorsed, as was also the administration of the National, state and county officials. The direct primary was indorsed, and the Representatives in the State Legislature instructed to vote and use all honorable means to secure the passage of such a law. Speeches were made by Senator Ankeny and other prominent Republicans. The Senator's remarks were warmly applauded, and one speaker created a ripple of laughter when he suggested that a "kind words" club be organized in Walla Walla, and that the editors of the different newspapers be invited to join as charter members. Senator Ankeny was in the convention as a delegate from his own precinct, and was allowed to name the delegation to the state convention, with the exception of himself, his name being placed at the head of the delegation on motion of Boxer delegates that he be made the unanimous choice of the convention in place of Chairman J. L. Sharpsteen, who said he would be unable to attend. There was no discord in the convention and few contests for places on the county

ticket, most of the nominations being made by acclamation. The ticket is as follows: Sheriff, James Haviland; County Attorney, Otto Rupp; Judge, J. N. McCaw, now County Commissioner; Clerk, Dorsey M. Hill; Incumbent; Treasurer, P. B. Hawley, incumbent; Assessor, W. L. Cadman, now City Assessor; Surveyor, George Winkler; School Superintendent, Grant S. Bond; County Commissioners, J. L. Harper and Herb Hansen; Justice of the Peace, J. J. Huffman, incumbent; Constable, Nels Petersen, incumbent; Representatives, Emmet Henderson, W. H. Weber and Morda McDonald, brother of State Senator Peter McDonald, of Union County, Or.

Title Invalidates the Law.

OLYMPIA, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—The Supreme Court has wiped another legislative enactment off the statute books by declaring the law passed February 27, 1890, entitled, "An act for the protection of builders, and declaring an emergency" invalid. This law purported to protect home builders from fraudulent contractors who left unpaid labor and material bills to stand as a lien against the building. The Supreme Court finds the title fatally defective. "What is a builder?" asks the court. "If the contractor is a builder, the act in question provides for the punishment of the very person whom its title purports to protect. The manifest purpose of the Legislature was to protect the owners of buildings from liens for labor and material after payment to the contractor, and yet the owner of the building is in no proper sense the 'builder' unless he is actually engaged in the work of construction, and in that case needs no protection."

Mortgage Decided to Be Regular.

OLYMPIA, Wash., Sept. 15.—(Special).—The following decision has been handed down by the Supreme Court, vs. J. K. Lord et al., respondents, from Yakima County, affirmed. This was an action to quiet title and to secure for the appellants possession of 163 acres of land in Yakima County, to which patent was issued by the Government to Ferrell in 1888. Ferrell's wife died in 1888, leaving several children. The property was mortgaged and foreclosed against fourteen years after the death of the mother the children appellants herein, brought suit against the present owner of the property, claiming title through their deceased mother. The courts hold that the mortgage, and foreclosure proceedings following, were regular and conveyed title.

Collision With Gravel Train.

EUGENE, Or., Sept. 15.—(Special).—A light engine from the gravel pit collided with the rear of the north-bound passenger train on a curve at the entrance to the Eugene yards today, badly wrecking the engine tender and damaging a coach. One passenger was slightly hurt and a gravel brakeman was cut in the head.

Boy Killed by Street-Car.

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 15.—(Special).—Sol Loeb, 13 years old, was run down by a south-bound Fillmore-street car on the grade between California and Sacramento streets this morning and died a few minutes after being taken from beneath the wheels of the car, while being taken to the hospital. The little fellow never regained consciousness.

Killed in Logging Train Wreck.

BARNESTON, Wash., Sept. 15.—While going to work, a logging train of the Kent Lumber Company, in rounding a curve near Barneston, struck a land and rock slide, instantly killing H. Everett and injuring E. J. Evans.