

## RESOLUTION FOR AUDIT OF SCHOOL BOOKS DEFEATED

Directors Sommer and Orton,  
Supported in Telegram from  
Director Plummer, Vote No.

## TWO OTHERS FAVOR IT

Traveling and Campaign Ex-  
penses Must Remain Mystery;  
Ne wDesk Bids Called For.

Resolution calling for an audit of the books of the school district by the county auditor back to June 1, 1915, was defeated at a meeting of the school board Monday evening. By the votes of Chairman E. A. Sommer and Director George M. Orton, Director O. M. Plummer was not present, but sent a telegram saying that the board should not allow themselves to be stampeded by the taxpayers' league into having the audit made, and that he was opposed to it. Director A. C. Newill made the motion to have the action taken. He was seconded by Director Geo. B. Thomas and both voted for the measure.

Reopening of the bids for school desks, tabling of the measure to have the courts determine the legality of trips for school directors and advertising campaigns for bond issues, and a discussion of the mysterious letter received in connection with the former bids submitted for the school desk contract, were the other outstanding features of the session.

## NOT THEIR PLACE, THEY SAY

Reasons assigned by Sommer and Orton for their negative votes in the matter of the audit of the school books were identical. In substance, these were that both directors felt that because they had not been on the board back as far as June 1, 1915, it was not exactly their place to authorize any investigation of the records for that full period. That it was not up to them to question the transactions of their predecessors, which might have been irregular, was stoutly maintained by both. They said that if they had been on the board for that period, they would be willing to favor such a measure. Only those who were on the board during the years back to 1915 should be allowed to order light thrown on their own acts, Sommer and Orton held.

## BUCK PASSED TO PLUMMER

However, after Plummer's telegram was read saying that he was opposed to being "stampeded" into an investigation of the books, both Sommer and Orton said that they would leave the matter to Plummer and that he would make a motion to that effect, they would vote for it.

Newill and Thomas, who spoke at length in favor of the audit, said that they realized the hopelessness of obtaining a passage of the resolution after the stand indicated by Sommer and Orton. They said that Plummer would never make a motion for it and that his telegram was sufficient proof of it. That there might be some chance of it next year was partially proposed in the message from the absent director who spoke of having an amount for such a purpose put in the coming budget for 1920, but that was discounted by Newill and Thomas who said it was an evasive delay that would eventually bury the measure.

Sommer and Orton spoke of favoring an audit for a year back, but neither made any motion for such a move.

## TAXPAYERS WANT FACTS

Director Thomas characterized the resolution for an audit as more than a motion to have an investigation made into the records of the school business for the past four years.

"I do not believe," he said, "that the taxpayers' league merely wish this audit made to learn whether or not the books have been properly balanced for the last four years. They want information more specific as to just how the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent by the board during this period has been given out."

"It is not really an audit that they desire," he said, "they want to learn where the money has gone and the manner in which it went."

"And I for one," he declared, "believe that they are entitled to it and I am go-

ing to fight for this measure and vote for it. I certainly am willing to have an audit made of any of the transactions since I have been on the board and see no reason why, since it is up to the school board to order it, the investigation should not go back as far as we can legally make it. My predecessors on the board might be willing for the same thing, but I fall to see how they can order it, if they are not on the board."

## THE MYSTERIOUS LETTER

Prior to the vote on the audit, the question of the "mysterious" letter received by Director Thomas in connection with the award of the bids for school desks to the Northwest School Furniture company was brought up in the shape of a letter to the board from the Northwest company denying any knowledge of the mysterious missive in question. It requested the board to give them an opportunity of seeing the letter as it was reputed to have been written to the Northwest company and was supposed to throw some light on alleged irregularities in the handling of the bids on the contract which they were awarded. They denied that there had been any irregularities whatsoever.

Before any action was taken Director Newill produced a letter from the A. H. Andrews company in which they asked him to inform them whether statements published in a local daily emanating from Chairman Sommer in regard to the letter were correct. The article containing Sommer's alleged utterances was, they stated, that they were responsible for the letter and that it was a frame-up on their part to cause their rival, the Northwest School Furniture company, to lose the contract. They denied having anything to do with the letter.

## LOTION IS IRRITATED

During the session of the matter Director Sommer became very much irritated and threatened to leave the meeting and go home unless they dropped the subject. He said that he had many things more important than a foolish argument over the subject of the mysterious letter. His threat to leave the meeting was, however, not carried out.

It was voted to hold a special meeting at 8:30 Tuesday afternoon to receive bids on the contract for school desks and thus eliminate any further controversy over the first award, which went to the Northwest School Furniture company.

Request of Clerk R. H. Thomas for approval of bills and claims amounting to \$68,938.96 was halted in its perfunctory passage when Director George Thomas said:

"I want to frankly admit that I don't know anything about those bills and that I would like to before they are authorized for payment. It is by handling affairs in this sort of a manner that is making trouble for us. We never see the bills. We don't even know what they are for and yet we pass them with a tap of the gavel."

## LEFT TO CLERK

Clerk Thomas in response to the director's remarks, said that for the past two years, since a resolution passed by the board, none of the bills were ever checked by the board, but that it was left to him entirely. After some discussion over a \$5000 item for lumber ordered during an emergency, with the usual formula of getting bids, the claims for \$68,938.96 were approved unanimously.

The matter of bringing suit to have the validity of the contract for school desks and publicity campaigns determined by the courts, which came after the opinion of District Attorney Walter H. Evans holding that such expenditures were unlawful, was tabled by the board on an unanimous vote. The motion was made by Director Orton and seconded by Director Newill.

"No use of spending any money for this purpose," said Chairman Sommer, expressing his opinion of the measure. "I don't see any sense in my suing myself," affirmed Director Thomas.

## OLD COST AGAIN

A letter from the secretary of the School Janitors' and Helpers' union asking general increases in pay was read and referred to the finance committee. It asked \$6 a day for janitors, \$5 a day for helpers, double time for overtime, Sundays and holidays, an 8-hour working day and the appointment of a superintendent of janitors.

Dr. Henrietta Moore, head of the department of English in the University of Idaho, was appointed to be head of the department of English in the Lincoln high school and acting dean of the girls to fill the position left vacant by the resignation of Dr. A. P. McKinlay, formerly head of the department of languages in that school. L. A. Dillon was made head of the department of mathematics at the Franklin high school upon the recommendation of Superintendent D. A. Groat.

## Ex-Service Man Dies

Centralia, Wash., Aug. 26.—Robert Conroy, a returned service man, aged 28, died Sunday. He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Mary Conroy. He was born in Clackamas county, Oregon.

## MYSTERIOUS SIGNS APPEAR OVER DOORS OF SEVERAL HOMES

Markings Vary on Different  
Houses; Rose City Park  
Residents Disturbed.

Mysterious markings on doorways of their houses have aroused the suspicions of residents of Rose City Park in the neighborhood of 64th street. The markings vary on different houses and are capable of a wide range of interpretations.

J. A. Bamford, 642 East Sixty-fourth street north, discovered a CX sign drawn with a lead pencil above his front door Monday afternoon and immediately notified the police. Investigations were made but the officers were unable to determine the significance of the marking.

Other houses in the neighborhood are marked with numerals or combinations of numerals and initials enclosed in circles, squares and triangles. The marks are usually placed above the doorways and are too high for the reach of children, according to Bamford. Solutions of the mystery offered by persons in that neighborhood are varied.

Some maintain that the houses marked are designated for future burglary and others insist that the markings are messages from the spirit world, while one or two housewives claim that the marks are made by peddlers of tea and spices.

The police admit they are baffled by the appearance of the mysterious markings and strict watch is being kept for the perpetrators. According to Bamford and his neighbors the marks are made upon their doorways during the night hours and no one has yet seen the miscreant at work.

## Pacific Employes Along Coast Reject Compromise Scale

San Francisco, Aug. 26.—(I. N. S.)—About 15,000 employes of the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph company have rejected the compromise wage agreement which served as a basis for the settlement of the recent telephone strike. This became known today following a canvass of the referendum vote of the workers in Coast cities.

This rejection of the compromise agreement will necessitate a reopening of the wage negotiations between the company and workers. If the company does not voluntarily then grant an increase, it is stated by union officials here that a strike vote will be taken. Likelihood of a strike could not possibly loom before October 1.

Under the compromise granted the workers the men were given \$5 a day while a scale of from \$12 to \$19 weekly, depending upon experience and size of cities, was given the girls. The men had demanded \$6 a day and the women a scale of from \$12 to \$24 weekly, after a period of service extending five years.

## Yakima Showered Elks With Melons During Convention

Yakima, Wash., Aug. 26.—Edward McWilliams, who had charge of the "Melon Patch" during the Elks' state convention, figures that he distributed free to convention visitors 50 tons of watermelons and cantaloupes during the three days of the convention. With the melons 500 gallons of cider was served. On the eve of the departure of the guests a carload of melons was given away in two hours. Seventy-five watermelons and three crates of cantaloupes were put in each Pullman sleeper on the Elks' special trains. Those who drove to Yakima in automobiles were given all the melons they would stow away in their cars.

## Politz Clothing Co. Doubles Floor Space By Use of Basement

Extensive improvements on the ground floor and basement of the building at the southwest corner of Sixth and Washington have just been completed by the Politz clothing company. The firm has practically doubled its floor space by fitting up the basement as a salesroom for overcoats.

Cabinets with glass fronts have been installed in the basement and in the sales room on the ground floor. Commodious dressing rooms are also provided and every modern facility for conducting a high class clothing business has been made a part of the Politz company's equipment.

## 10-Year-Old Boy Of Pendleton Is Reported Missing

Missing from his home in Pendleton since Sunday, 10-year-old Delbert Gray is believed to be in Portland, and the local police have been asked to help find him. He is described as having a fair face, light hair and blue eyes, and wore a black shirt and a pair of overalls. It is thought that he had some money in his possession.

Last seen about 11 o'clock Sunday, Wm. Jassilo, of 56 Everett street, was reported missing to the local police. He is described as 23 years old, dark complexion, hair and eyes, and about 5 feet 10 inches tall, weighing 130 pounds. He was dressed in a blue serge suit and cap.

River's Body at Centralia  
Centralia, Wash., Aug. 26.—The body of Edgar Rivers, son of Mr. and Mrs. L. R. Rivers, of this city, who was killed Thursday near Oregon City, when he was crowded from a bridge by a motor truck, has arrived here and is being held pending funeral arrangements.

Legion Post Picnics  
Marshfield, Aug. 26.—The local American Legion post held a big picnic on Cops river Sunday.

Ratification of the peace treaty is expected by congress before the end of the week.

## Railroads to Launch National Drive to Prevent Accidents

Railroads in the United States under federal control will carry on a national accident prevention drive, October 18 to 31, according to word received by J. E. Grodzki of the safety bureau of the O-W. R. & N. Launching of such a drive was decided upon by the director general of railroads.

H. J. Zell, regional safety director of the Northwest, that a conference of safety officials of the region will be held in Chicago in September to formulate plans for the safety drive.

## Reedsport's Council Holds First Meeting

Reedsport, Aug. 26.—At the first meeting of the new city council of Reedsport, with the first Mayor, W. P. Reed, presiding, it was decided to secure copies of the charters of both Marshfield and North Bend to aid in getting the new city started. District Attorney Neuner of Roseburg has been asked to attend the next meeting to aid in proper organization of the council.

## Granaries Are Full; Wheat Rots in Field

Omaha, Aug. 26.—(I. N. S.)—Wheat is rotting in many fields in Nebraska because the grain elevators are filled, according to charges made today by J. J. Welch, Omaha grain man, who has just completed a tour of the wheat fields of the state. Welch's charges are to be placed before the United States grain corporation.

## GRACE PHELPS IS ELECTED TO TAKE PLACE OF HOLDER

Change Made Following Resigna-  
tion of Volunteer General Man-  
ager of Local Red Cross.

## HOLDER HAS WORKED HARD

Successor Organized Base Hos-  
pital No. 46 and Served With  
It as Chief Nurse.

The resignation of Richard V. Holder, volunteer general manager; the election of Miss Grace Phelps to assume his duties under the title of assistant to the chairman; the election of Miss Margaret D. Crouch to the executive secretaryship of the home service section rendered vacant by the resignation of Miss Dorothy E. Wrayor, were features of the weekly executive committee meeting of the Portland chapter, American Red Cross, Monday.

Holder, formerly a well-known railroad executive, has urged the committee for some time to replace him on the grounds that while he is on leave from the Chicago & Northwestern railroad, he desires to devote more time to his personal affairs. He plans, however, to devote much time to the work of the chapter.

He has devoted his entire time without remuneration to the chapter since last January when Amadeo M. Smith, now

the chapter chairman, but then general manager, went on a long vacation.

Miss Phelps was with the chapter two years ago when she organized the teaching and first aid work, later recruiting the nursing personnel for base hospital No. 46, with which she served as chief nurse until its return to this country for demobilization, when she was appointed nursing chief of another unit. She is now resting at her home in Eugene.

Miss Crouch, a graduate of Reed college, created somewhat of a sensation in Portland by her survey of charitable organizations some years ago for the Portland Chamber of Commerce, and since that time has held executive positions with social service agencies in the East and in California. Since the resignation of Miss Wrayor a month ago she has been serving as acting executive secretary in addition to her work as supervisor, and her success and tact determined the committee to elect her.

While the majority of the committee chairman of the Red Cross in Portland are men, the executives now are all women.

## Washougal Hotel Is Damaged by Blaze

Washougal, Wash., Aug. 26.—Fire in the Olsen hotel here Sunday evening for a time threatened to become serious. The local fire department and employees of the woolen mills nearby brought it under control. The fire is supposed to have been started by defective electric wiring in the hall, running up the walls to the third floor, where it spread to all rooms on that floor. The loss was about \$1000, covered by insurance.

## Man and Woman May Be Leaders of Gang

Los Angeles, Aug. 26.—(I. N. S.)—Arrested here as suspected members of a gang of automobile thieves, Lillian Miller, alias Lillian Eaton, and Alfred

Bliss were committed to the police they had traveled through the states of California, Oregon, Idaho, Washington and Montana as man and wife. They may have to face a Mann act charge while their activities are being investigated. Four boys ranging in age from 15 to 16 years old were found in a bungalow co-

located by the gang. Bliss is suspected of being the leader.

General increases of about 30 per cent in the cost of living from June, 1914, to June, 1919, were shown by tables made public Saturday by the department of labor.

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