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Address all communication to "THE CHRONICLE," The Dalles, Oregon.

THURSDAY, - - JANUARY 30, 1896

MR. BLOWERS' SIDE.

The communication which is published below was received this morning from Mr. Blowers. We are very glad to give the requested space, as it is the desire of this paper to give both sides the strictest justice. As THE CHRONICLE has no interest in the matter further than this, we do not make any comment upon the contents of the letter, though Mr. Blowers, in writing that THE CHRONICLE said the matter was "all closed up in open court," does not quote us correctly. What this paper said was that whatever was done, was done with the full concurrence of all the members of the county court, and Mr. Blowers was present when the granting of the franchise was decided upon. This is the end of the matter.

EDITOR CHRONICLE:

Sir:—Having just read an affidavit from Winans Bros. and an explanation in your issue of today in regard to the action of the county court at its last session in declaring Hood river a public highway, etc., I feel that in justice to the other members of the court I should be heard in the matter.

So far as my part in the article quoted from the Glacier is concerned, I was not correctly quoted, and as soon as I noticed it I wrote a reply and went to the editor with it, intending also to reply through your paper; but discovering it was an unintentional mistake on Mr. Blythe's part, I thought it an act of courtesy to set the matter right through the columns of the same paper in which the mistake occurred; also believing that no one of my friends would for a moment believe I would stoop so low as to prevaricate in order to shun my share of responsibility in any action taken in open court, when I had acquiesced there. (But it appears I was mistaken in my estimate of my friends.) I therefore wrote a reply setting everything right; but as our paper is not issued until Saturday, although my explanation was in the hands of the editor long before I saw the article in your paper, I feel that I am entitled to an explanation through the columns of THE CHRONICLE.

The affidavit above mentioned is of course true, and so is your statement so far as it goes; but to make matters plain to Hood Riverites I will explain fully. When Mr. Winans approached me in regard to the matter I was much pleased with the idea, knowing that the opening of the river and building and operating mills here would be the making of our little city, besides bringing a large amount of taxable property into the county and making large and almost endless forests of timber tributary valuable, whereas it is now comparatively worthless. But knowing the propensity some of our good citizens have for kicking, I advised Mr. Winans to go down and see how they felt in regard to the matter; which he did. Upon his return he reported everyone in favor of the project, and those along the stream willing to sign away their rights to the bank for the purpose of making improvements. Being very favorably impressed with the proposition myself, and believing that all my neighbors felt the

same as I did, I, of course, favored it. Mr. Winans did not hand in his contract until a very few minutes before court adjourned, when we looked hurriedly over it, but had no time to take action, and left the matter as it was—unsettled, so far as the contract was concerned; but had declared the river a public highway several days prior to that time.

Your article would lead readers to believe that the whole matter was settled together and at the same time, which was not done, except so far as the court was unanimous, as I stated before. But upon my arrival home I had scarcely stepped off the train until I was besieged with all manner of questions, and was informed that a report was being circulated to the effect that this whole scheme was being carried out on the part of Winans Bros. and myself to thwart and prevent the building of a proposed ditch or canal; besides any amount of other nonsensical rumors. In fact I found that, after talking so favorably to Mr. Winans, through the workings of our chronic kickers, an entire change of feeling in regard to the matter had been effected. The next day Judge Blakeley called me to the telephone and informed me that Mr. Winans was there to close up the contract. I suggested that the matter lie over until our next session, but he informed me that Mr. Winans was anxious to close it up, and that the judge and clerk could legally close it up, whereupon I advised him to be very careful not to give a monopoly whereby interested parties could be injured, etc. Later that evening the judge called me again and told me he had Attorney Dufur drawing up a contract, which he would submit to me for my opinion, or sanction, which he did on the succeeding day, when Mr. Dufur, through the telephone, gave me an outline of what he had written, which was virtually in accordance with your statement of the conditions of the contract in today's paper. But in addition thereto he said they were "bound to interfere in no way with any riparian or irrigation rights of anyone taking water from river." I then told the judge that I could see no objection to the contract and thought it all right, since which time I have heard nothing further. I did not know the contract was signed until this morning; but supposed it was.

I write this long explanation to justify myself, for during the two or three days time in which the matter was being arranged between the judge and Winans Bros., I consulted with the people here and told them the condition of affairs, and thereby got their opinions and several suggestions, which I communicated to the judge. But, now, taking your statement that the matter was all closed up before court adjourned. It appears as if I had been simply "trumping" up telephone messages to make the people here believe I had nothing to do with it. Judge Blakeley, Mr. Dufur, Winans Bros. and the operator at this end of the telephone will all agree that my statements are true. I cannot understand why you make the statement that the matter was all closed up in open court, when it is not the truth. If I were in politics and this came from my opponents I would know what it meant, but coming from supposed friends, I hope it is a mistake on your part.

I have done nothing since I have been county commissioner that I am ashamed of, nor have I ever shirked my responsibility. My official acts are public property. All I ask is that the whole truth and nothing more, be told. I am always ready to abide the consequences of my own acts, which have always been in the interest of the taxpayers of Wasco county, as the records will show and the present price of county warrants prove.

A. S. BLOWERS.
Hood River, Jan. 29, 1896.

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