

The Times-Herald

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JULIAN BYRD - Manager

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Saturday, January 10, 1925

LETS BE FAIR

Under the heading "The Market Road Law," in the January 1, 1925 issue of the Harney County News is an article, the last paragraph of which is as follows:

"Again, the predominating feature of the policy of the State Highway Commission, both as regards highways and market roads, which makes the average taxpayer see red every time it is called to his attention, could be corrected if the management was in the hands of the Court, and that is the waste and extravagance of the engineering forces employed upon these roads. Engineering expenses and duplication of work has done more to make road work under the State Highway Commission unpopular than any other one thing."

The unfairness of the statement to the commission and its engineers is plain to see. He makes a sweeping charge without giving any facts or figures.

One of the many benefits of efficient engineering is the elimination of duplication of work.

The cost of surveys and field engineering on work under the direction of the commission since its beginning eight years ago has been 5 1/2 per cent of the total cost. For the last two years up to November 30, 1924, it has been 3.85 per cent of the amount expended during the two year period. In all fairness to the highway commission and its efficient engineers these facts should be made known.

The work of the highway commission is unpopular only to those who are misled by the ignorant person who says in effect, "Them got derved surveyers I bet get about all the money we spend on roads, and they don't do nothin' neither that I can see."

The only state property tax which is levied for the support of the state highway system is 1/4 of one mill.  
 O. O. JETLEY.

FIRE LAW VIOLATORS CONVICTED

Campers, smokers, brush burners and loggers all appear in the list of the 197 court convictions for criminal forest fire law violations on the National Forests of Oregon and Washington during the season of 1924. The report which has just been issued by the District Forester's office, Portland, shows that 222 cases were brought to trial. Of these, 197 were convicted, 9 were found not guilty and 16 cases are still pending.

Fines and costs were assessed in the amount of \$2096.25 under the criminal fire law convictions. In addition 33 civil cases were settled and damages collected covering Government timber destroyed in the amount of \$17,615.64; 22 civil cases are still pending, involving damages amounting to \$39,966.27, according to the report.

Campers' fires head the list of convictions under the criminal laws with 125 convictions, 5 not guilty and 6 pending. Brush burning without permit ranks second, the smoker's fires third.

Although the greatest number of convictions is for campers' fires, it is pointed out that the greatest damage

came from fires caused by loggers. Of the total \$56,621.91 damages under the closed and pending civil cases over 80 per cent is due to logging fires, it is said.

"Much as we dislike to inflict legal penalties upon forest visitors," said the District Forester, in discussing the report, "the fact remains that folks who violate the fire laws are law breakers, and must be punished as such. The future economic welfare of the Pacific Northwest demands it. However," he added, "if everyone would heed the printed warnings and suggestions, abundant in the National Forests, we would have fewer forest fires and fewer law enforcement cases."

A STATEMENT

At the request of John L. Caldwell, ex-assessor, I am making the following statement anent tax muddle:

Mr. Caldwell accosted me on the street the first part of September and asked me to put a notice of meeting of the Board of Equalization in the paper. I said very well. The matter entirely slipped my mind until it was called to my attention later by Mr. Caldwell when I at once admitted that such a notice had never been published in The Times-Herald for I had forgotten it. This is not the first omission caused from my not making a note of it, nor will it likely be the last, as I find many times after closing the forms of the paper that I have overlooked something that I wanted in.

I am assuming no responsibility in this matter as it was not my official duty to see that this notice was in the paper, nor do I have the authority to write it, although I would have looked up the notice published in former years in this paper and published it if I had thought of it. Had the notice been written and handed in by the assessor it would have been published.

JULIAN BYRD.

WHY NOT EXPLOIT OUR ADVANTAGES?

While the proposition of a line of railroad across the state to connect with California and western Oregon is under consideration why shouldn't Burns point its advantages in the way of advocating the through line he built through here and on to Prineville through the vast belt of fine timber where the tonnage is available? It is the feasible route and the one that would appeal to the railroad builders. Why should they prefer going out over a desert country that can never develop any tonnage when by routing over the northern alternative given by the Kephart report?

Peter C. Crockatt, of the University of Oregon faculty, writes an extended article in the Commonwealth Review of the University which was published and distributed in December. Prof. Crockatt points out the remoteness of any development of tonnage across the desert route while the advantages of the route through the timber is shown. Such a route would in no wise detract from any agricultural development as it would touch every point where farming is possible or where irrigation development may be expected.

HEADLESS GOVERNMENT

Under the above caption Herbert Quick has an article in the Country Gentleman of January 3 which deals with county government along the line of better business. This article recommends a county manager plan similar to those adopted in some cities. Such plans have been put into operation in the United States. The article points out the weaknesses of county government in general

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with no actual responsible head. It shows what may happen—and what generally does happen—through inefficiency, lack of authority of any one to really supervise or dictate a business policy.

The writer had read this article with some interest and was expecting to make some comment upon it at some time, but the morning following the reading of the article a letter was received from the editor of the Country Gentleman calling particular attention to the story and giving permission to copy it. However, this will not be done at this time, especially since it is to be followed by other articles on the same subject.

At the opening of the campaign four years ago when we had a county judge to elect, this paper advocated an amendment to the law of this state giving the county judge absolute authority in matters governing the business policy of the county and to make his salary sufficient to justify the selection of a man big enough to fill the bill. At that time this paper advocated a salary of \$3000 for the judge of Harney county with an additional sum of \$1000 annually for traveling and other expenses and make him absolute boss under conditions where he couldn't "pass the buck." Make him responsible and give him authority to compel all subordinate officers to do their duty or resign. The plan brought considerable favorable comment from different taxpayers—some

of them heavy investors in the county, and several successful business men. The writer has had no occasion to change his mind on the subject and believes it would be to the interest of the taxpayers of Oregon to have such a law and to really place the county affairs on a business basis with competent heads who are paid a sufficient salary to devote their entire time to that work.

CONFIDENCE IN MR. HERRICK

Without doubt the people of Harney county, and especially the business men of Burns, have faith in Fred Herrick accomplishing more for the development of the county during the coming year than any other individual. Mr. Herrick has the confidence of the business men of Burns and they are ready to give him any assistance within their power toward furthering his enterprises.

The development of the timber resources and bringing in transportation lines is an undertaking that requires great outlay of finances. Mr. Herrick has been at this work for some time and deserves the concerted backing of this community. For years this country has been retarded through lack of transportation and necessary funds to develop it. The opportunity is now at hand and we are expecting big things during the present year along that line but we should keep in mind that we are to help in the enterprise and not hinder. The undeveloped resources can

only become liquid assets when they are placed in a marketable form. We have other sources of revenue than livestock if we will aid in getting them in shape. Lets help Fred Herrick.

Wanted—Single bed by elderly man with wooden head and foot, box springs and felt mattress.—Weekly Gazette, Mich.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting of the stockholders of the Burns Flour Milling Co. will be held at Tonawama on Saturday, January 17, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The usual business will be transacted.

J. M. DESILETS, Secy.-Treas.

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