

The Columbia Register.

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HOULTON, ORE., MARCH 24, 1905.

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY—

R. M. MITCHELL, Editor.

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Flagg defends the rock crusher graft.

If your neighbor does not read the Register, tell him he is missing a good thing. Loan him this issue and tell him to read the rock crusher article. It may be the means of getting him to subscribe, and we need all the subscribers we can get. A subscription to the Register may be the means of getting a vote next June against grafters.

Some two or three weeks ago we called attention to a graft that had been worked on this county by some Portland agents in the matter of selling this county a gold brick in the shape of a rock crusher. This week we give some of the inside facts. There is more to follow. A direct bribe of \$100 was offered by a certain party to a member of the St. Helens city council if the council would buy this same outfit. A bribe of a sixty dollar wagon was offered the city recorder of St. Helens if he could induce the city to buy this same crusher outfit. Of course they would not be bold enough to go to the county court and offer a bribe of any amount. No?

Nunc pro tunc was the desire of the Rainier city attorney for the St. Helens Flagg. A nunc pro tunc order concerning the salary of the Lewis and Clark commissioner might be in order. The people of the county do not approve of the acts of the county commissioners in the appointment of a president of the Lewis and Clark clubs for this county, and it is a foregone conclusion that this county will have nothing for an exhibit without some other measures than the present are taken to secure it. Three months' salary has been drawn down with regularity and dispatch; but no effort is being made to secure the stock exhibit, or agricultural and horticultural exhibit. Flagg should put his time in looking after the matter. And if he does not take hold of it pretty soon the commissioners had better withdraw the order appointing him and enter an order nunc pro tunc for a man who will do something. Of course Flagg thinks he is entitled to this because he was appointed by the court. But if the court acted without sanction of law, then his appointment is null and void.

The Register some time ago took up the matter of getting a site for the new court house. A block 600 feet long by 200 feet wide was secured without one dollar cost to the county. A warrant deed has been made and placed on file for the use of the county. There is only one condition made and that is that the county shall within two years accept said site and commence the erection of a court house thereon. The proposed site is a quarter of a mile from the Houlton station. It has as fine natural drainage as any piece of ground in Columbia county. If selected and a court house should be erected thereon, a city of from five to ten thousand would be built up where now there is nothing but a lot of basalt rocks only fit for pavement and building stone. If the court house is not commenced within the next sixteen months, another county seat fight will be on between St. Helens and Clatskanie. This latter proposition we do not care to see, but the people of the county have rights in the matter. It is not a question as to the rights of a few people living on the river. Where will the court house accommodate the most people? On the river front or near the railroad?

Uncle Sam is having a run of legal hard luck. He was mulcted by the sugar trust a few days ago in a Supreme court decision which cost him \$5,000,000—and now the Cherokee Indians have won out in a suit involving the payment to them of \$1,500,000. "Lo, the poor Indian," down on the Cherokee strip, must now be accepted figuratively and not literally.

General Kuropatkin does not need to go all the way to St. Petersburg to explain how it happened. The Japs can tell all about it.

Americans will soon begin to think that, after all, they are not so far ahead of the French at canal making.

THAT ROCK CRUSHER.

Our Flagg Flops Over a Little.

Under the caption "Are our county officers thieves?" the Oregon Mist reprints an article from the Columbia Register. We here reproduce the article and Mr. Flagg's comment along with a few facts concerning the Aurora No. 1 Rock Crusher:

We trust every man in Columbia county will read the following from the Columbia Register:

"County Commissioner Libel is repairing the leak in the old engine for the rock crusher. It appears as though the boiler was left last fall with water in it and when the cold snap came last winter the crown sheet was forced loose to the extent that it leaked. It is possible that the old junk can be patched up for another campaign, but it never was intended to do duty as a motive power for an engine on the road or to drive the crusher. The sooner the county quits playing with the road question and gets down to business, the better off it will be. The rock crusher and engine laid down here in Houlton cost this county in gold coin \$3000. It is safe to say that a private individual could now, or could at the time the investment was made, have duplicated the crusher and engine for \$1750. What became of the other \$1300? The Register may have more to say on this interesting story as soon as facts can be ascertained.

Here are the exact figures as taken from the records in the clerk's office:

Aurora rock crusher No. 1, f. o. b. cars in Chicago	\$1300
Second-hand engine, f. o. b. cars, Portland	1050
Freight on crusher from Chicago end on engine and	
and crusher from Portland to Houlton	195
Water tank, etcetera	143
Total	\$2688

This does not include the roller which could have been purchased for \$100, but cost about \$300, which brings the sum total up to within \$12 of the amount stated in round numbers, being \$3000.

Brother Flagg never opens his mouth any more but what he sticks his foot in it. His comment last week follows:

"Here is a direct charge that in a transaction of \$3000 the sum of \$1300 was grafted or stolen by county officials. The board at that time was composed of Commissioners Colvin and Case and Judge Doan. Mr. Colvin is still a member of the board, and Messrs. Case and Doan are residents of this county. The amount charged is so large in proportion to the total purchase price that ignorance of the value of machinery can not be urged as an excuse. Mr. Colvin, in particular, is a successful business man who is well informed as to the value of machinery. If this county paid \$1300 more for the rock crusher and engine than they were worth, it was his duty to know it and stop the steal. This charge of Mr. Mitchell's should have some definite result. We trust he will keep his word and probe the matter to the bottom. Of course he must know what he is talking about; for surely no man would be so infamous as to make such a statement through malice or partisanship. Generally his charges are so vague that no attention is paid to them, as they are believed to be merely the wild ravings of an agitator, their only purpose being to stir up strife. Like the froth that exudes from the mouth of a mad dog, they are poisonous, but the only way to prevent the frothing is to kill the dog—he can not be cured. But here is something direct and tangible, and either the parties accused or the one making the accusations should be punished according to law. It is a matter for the attention of the grand jury, and those who are charged with malfeasance in office should demand that it be investigated by that body. If this county has been governed by thieves, the people have a right to know it. If, on the other hand, honest men have been elandered, that also should be known."

The Register did not say that the officers who bought the crusher and engine were to blame in this matter. And in defense of them we think they acted with pure motives and as honorable men so far as they knew how. Mr. Colvin was not an active participant in the purchase of the rock crusher and engine.

It appears that Columbia county is not alone in the "gold brick" rock crusher graft. Here is an open letter to the taxpayers of Chehalis and Lewis county, Washington," which we give in full and also a letter from The Austin-Western Company, Ltd., of Chicago. Considering the fact that the crusher is the same as the one bought by this county and the time of purchase, is not very far from the time the Columbia county experiment was made. Here is the open letter referred to:

Chehalis, Wash., Nov. 14, 1904.

To the Taxpayers of Chehalis and Lewis county:

Gentlemen and Others: It is with pleasure you are addressed on the stone crusher proposition. We hear about "graft" and while you close one eye and wink with the other, you that are interested, I merely ask, Mr. Taxpayer, that you read and reflect:

Last spring this city had some talk about buying a stone crusher. At that time the city had no rock. It was rather raw work to buy a crusher then, so a provisional order was "worked" through the channel by Beall & Co., and I suppose their "local agent," and possibly by others interested, for a No. 1 Aurora rock crusher, elevator and screen to be ordered of the Austin-Western Co., Ltd., Chicago, Ill. "agents." Price very low (?), \$1200, with plenty of time and interest, of course. Why say, that crusher was almost given to the city! Such anguish at the ridiculously low price of \$1200 was nearly enough to drive one crazy, and if not tears of anguish, it must later have been tears of joy. We will see.

In September Beall & Co., agents of the agents, etc., wrote the mayor and city council "insisting upon some definite arrangement being made with us regarding its shipment (the crusher), while the present council who purchased it is in power." Why "the present council" is more than I can say, but subsequent events may tell you plainer than I could or dared to do in a letter. A couple of weeks later along comes a man representing what is termed National crusher. He wrote, I believe, all the council—I know he did me—saying, "I would be willing to indemnify you against all damages which they might claim."

He also said: "We will be glad to furnish you a machine of equal merit for at least 25 per cent less than what you have paid for the one already ordered." He understood the city was to pay \$1400 for the crusher and equipment. This would have been a saving of something like \$450 to Chehalis. This letter was read in full by me to the council on October 3 and upon motion of Councilman West, "laid on the table." A crusher was then ordered bought and the mayor and clerk were authorized or empowered to sign a contract with the Austin-Western Co., Ltd., of Chicago, for the purchase of the Aurora stone crusher, 14-foot elevators and chute screen, which contract was kindly passed up by a Beall & Co. agent of the Austin-West-

ern Co. to the mayor, who obligingly signed the same, and as it was very nearly 12, midnight, I desired time to look the same over and refused to sign it just then and have not done so yet.

It struck me that there was something wrong and I set about looking up prices and different crushers.

County Surveyor Geiger gave me October 5 some valuable data, catalogues, and prices, and I immediately saw that the price was entirely too high, hence my original letter. I also find that there are many other crushers that stand wear and tear and I consider that they are away ahead of this cast-iron framed contraption. The Treadwell Mining Company wrote me that they find the "Comet" crusher the best. I thought the people of Chehalis should know something about the financial condition of Chehalis, and incidentally "stone crusher" facts, hence my letter of October 7 that appeared in the Bee-Nuggett, and furnished the other paper also. When lo! and behold! up jumped Johnny Beall, from Portland, who tried to answer my two little paragraphs of the week before in a letter to "A. J. Long, local agent for Beall & Co." In his vamping and frothing he managed to say nothing more than "From Mr. White's actions it would seem to us as though he was deeply interested from some unknown reason in seeing the city buy a National crusher."

Poor Johnny! It is too bad that I should try to block a rakeoff of from \$400 to \$600 in favor of the city, isn't it? I never did know and do not know what the National crusher is sold at. I had the price of \$570 mentioned in my letter from Mr. Geiger, county surveyor.

Thinks I, Johnny, you have struck the wrong one this time, and will go to headquarters for prices on your machine. It would never have done to have written direct, so had my brother of Coudersport, Pa., write for prices to the Austin-Western Co., Ltd., Chicago, Ill., upon just exactly the outfit and to the very same firm this city made its order to, and below you will see a copy of the letter he received from Chicago. Read it. Study it. Figure on it, and then I believe you will have an idea why I have been threatened to have a head put on me because I have endeavored to do my duty. I have a few other facts relating to other crusher deals that I will not take time or space to speak about just now.

In my correspondence other crusher manufacturers, not "agents," have written me, and one of them said: "The No. 1 Aurora stone crusher is their 9x14 size, and we happen to know that they are sold at all kinds of prices. We have it from reliable authority that sales have been made as low as \$600 for the equipment that you describe in your letter, and that we know from actual experience that people are continually discarding machines of this type." I described the cast iron outfit attempted to be foisted upon Chehalis at \$1200, with \$215 freight added.

Some of those instrumental in procuring this crusher outfit claimed, so I am informed, that this particular outfit could not be had for less than \$1300 f. o. b., Aurora, Ill. See letter to White & VanKuren, where the cost of the outfit is placed

at	\$817 50
Less 3 per cent for cash in 30 days (gold is good	
anywhere	24 53
Cash price	\$792 97

Or only \$407 difference from the same firm. I don't know what this \$407 is for, unless it is foolishness. Call it that and not by a harsher name. Kindly draw the mantle of charity over it, but come to the front and pay your taxes just the same, and pay no attention to city matters. Respectfully,

S. C. WHITE, City Clerk,

We have in our possession a facsimile letter of which the following is a copy:

Chicago, Ill., U. S. A., October 25, 1904.

Messrs. White & VanKuren, Coudersport, Pa.

GENTLEMEN—We are just in receipt of your valued favor of the 22nd requesting catalogues and our very best prices on the No. 1 Aurora rock crusher, with elevator 14 ft. long and chute screen.

We enclose to you herewith special folder of the Aurora crusher, and are pleased to make you the following special price, f. o. b. cars Chicago:

No. 1 Aurora crusher on skids	\$675 00
Trucks for mounting same, thus making it portable	60 00
14 ft. elevator	125 00
Chute screen	17 50

The above constitutes the typical portable outfit. It can be readily moved from place to place; you will find that it will give the very best of service. This machine we sell under a guarantee which you will find in the enclosed order blank governing this type of machine. We are in position to make prompt shipment and hope the above special price will merit your order.

For cash within thirty days from date of invoice, we will allow you a discount of three (3) per cent. Kindly advise if you wish quotation on an engine for running the above.

Trusting to hear from you favorably and by early mail, we are,

Yours truly,

THE AUSTIN-WESTERN CO., LTD.

A. N. FITZSIMMONS.

Now there is no frothing of a mad dog nor nothing coming from a lunatic in the statements made, and if Mr. Flagg will do the kindness to give his readers these inside facts, they may take the matter up intelligently, and by and by we may get some good road work in our county.

Now on the engine proposition we have not much to say. The old rattle trap was a good one of its kind, when new. But the first Buffalo Pitt traction engines were like balky horses whenever the collar touched the shoulder with a heavy load, they would rare up, and have been known to tip up backward. The people of Houlton remember how the contraption balked and refused to haul the crusher—why it even dug a hole in the mud in front of Matthews' hotel as though it would bury itself. A new engine that will haul the crusher and this engine and its load can be purchased, 15-horse power, \$1349; 12-horse, \$1200 cash. And it is our humble opinion, publicly expressed, that the commissioners would do well to get rid of the old junk of an engine at any price. The crusher, although costing more than it should, may answer the purpose of the county for several years.

Do not try to frighten us, Brother Flagg, with threats of a grand jury, for really we are in hopes the Judge will call one next May.

GASILA

ONE OF THE FINEST THOROUGHbred COWS OWNED in the Pacific Northwest is GASILA, represented in the cut above. GASILA is a prize winner. She took first premium on butter test at the Oregon State Fair in the years 1900, 1901, 1902, and in 1902 won the silver cup shown in cut. She also won first premium in Washington State Fair in competition of all breeds on butter test. Gasila is 13 years old and has dropped 12 calves. Mr. West owns one of the finest stock ranches in Oregon. It is located near Scappoose this county.



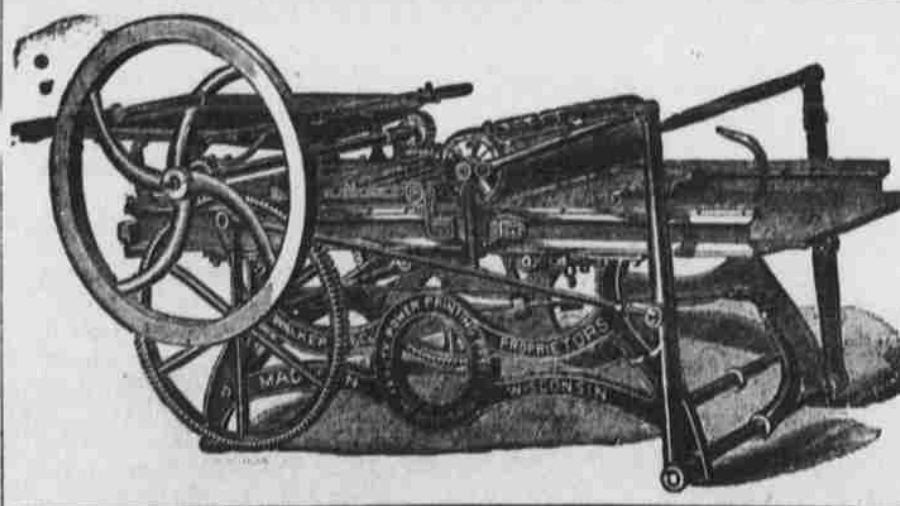
Silver Cup Won by Gasila



S. M. Rice & Son,
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RAINIER, : : OREGON.
Wholesale and retail dealers in home grown meats and vegetables. Highest cash price paid for stock in condition to kill.

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