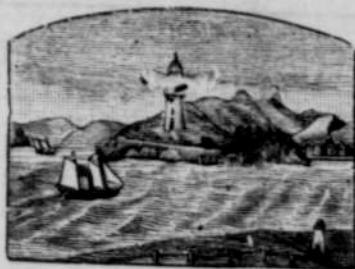


# Tillamook



# Headlight.

W. C. Chance

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### THAT BRIDGE QUESTION.

MR. OLOF NELSON—We are quite interested in your letters published in the HEADLIGHT, indeed you are manifesting a good deal of common sense and interest for the welfare of this county, more than we thought you in possession of, but we can expect both good and bad of the Swedes as well as other nations, according to the quality of the man. Your first letter looked somewhat funny but the second had so much good common sense in it that we changed our opinion of you very much.

Now, about your questions. We will try to answer to some extent, but you must not expect too much of us, for we know but very little of what you asked for but what we know we are going to tell you.

Without doubt you have heard something about the Wilson river bridges and road affairs, which have been a standing case for about four years, or as long as Mr. Holden kept the office of County Judge, and as you want to know where money goes, you will, in the proceedings, understand something about it.

About four and a half years ago the old bridge at Mr. Freeman's was almost rotted away, a big wrack heap of drift wood lodged against it, and it was destroyed, so it was necessary to build a new bridge across the Wilson river. Having been caused great trouble and inconvenience by leaving the bridge at a wrong place, the whole neighborhood agreed upon getting up a petition for a change of place for the bridge, so it would be a benefit for the neighborhood, as well as for the traveling public at large, and consequently, as a necessity, a change of road. The petition was favorably accepted by the court. Mr. Cooper was then judge, being well acquainted with the locality, and he knew the demand of the people was nothing else but just and fair, and the court ordered the road to be viewed and surveyed. So far was everything all right, but Mr. Freeman, always opposed to the change, declared so long as he had a dollar to his name no change should take place. Regardless of that the people went ahead, trusting that justice would be done to them, but a change of officers took place at that time, which proved

fatal to the petitioners, and soon you will see, Friend Olof, how money is used and expended in Tillamook. Mr. Holden was elected judge and Mr. West and Mr. Kelso commissioners, and so we had a new court willing to anything else except to do justice to the petitioners.

The first bill that came against the new road was a bill of damages of Mr. Kelso, over whose land the road was to run—bill put at \$300, and allowed at \$200. Then the court proposed to the petitioners if they wanted the road they had to pay one-half, or one hundred dollars, and, believing that settled the matter, they paid it gladly, so the road was established by the court and the people dared to believe all trouble was over, and hoped soon to have the bridge built on the ONLY right place, where it would have been a great benefit to the whole settlement on the Wilson river, (but is of very little benefit to the people where it is now) but it was not many weeks after before the sound of the pile-driver was heard at the old bridge. The court had then authorized Mr. Freeman to rebuild the old bridge in the same place. The petitioners then saw they were deceived in the hope they had cherished, yet it was to appear as a repairing, but the intention was to rebuild a section each year. That expense on the bridge we heard was over \$400.00, and immediately encouraged by the authorities. We suppose Mr. Freeman began to run a remonstrance in order to vacate the new road, and was successful because favored by the court. Next winter after repairing the bridge a freshet caused a wrack-heap to lodge against it, washing away the north apron and damaging the bridge. A new repairing, said to cost about \$150.00, was done. Now every thing was set in order till next time came, and it came the next winter. Another wrack-heap lodged against the bridge and damaged it so that the court, after viewing it, found it of no use to repair it again. Meanwhile the petitioners were not satisfied with the proceedings of the court in vacating the road they needed so much and had paid for too, so they appealed to the circuit court for justice and were successful. The circuit court restored the road to the petitioners, but Mr. Freeman and the court were dissatisfied

with the decision and took appeal to the supreme court, but even there the petitioners were given justice. Then the petitioners petitioned the county court to build the bridge at the upper place and it was granted to them.

At this time one of the old commissioners was gone and a good man, Mr. Bridgeford, was appointed. He was a man of justice and had he remained in court to the end of the case the bridge surely would not have been taken from the people and given to one man, that, least of all, had any need of it. Then the court advertised for two bridges to be built, one across the Wilson river, the other across the slough, and the plan was accepted which was no good, and the court could have known it if it had wanted to, for if they did not understand bridge building they should have called on some one else to assist. The contract was given to a party who built the two bridges for about \$1700.00 (the slough bridge to cost about \$400.00). Finished in September, it was accepted and pronounced a first class bridge, but every person that had any knowledge about bridges said "it will go down of its own weight" and others "the first high water will take it away," and so it did. There you see, friend Olof, \$1300.00 went in one stroke. Well, the tax payers pay the cost. All right then. Well, now, the opposer and the court try to smooth over their carelessness by putting the blame on the place, but the place is there yet, and is as good as ever. A new site, better of course, must be found, and a committee of of bridge builders and the court examined every foot of ground from the old bridge to the new and they located a site about 150 or 200 feet below the wrecked bridge, and ordered the petitioners to get up a petition for a small change of road to where the new bridge was to be built, and they, trusting everything would come all right went to work and run it and were successful in every way of legal undertaking in this matter. They went home glad of their success, but Mr. Freeman was at work with his assisting friends from the bay. They knew the court better than the petitioners and as they left court he went in with one of his influential friends and proposed to the court to build the bridge very cheap if they