

# Crockett Courier.

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VOL. XVII.

CROCKETT, TEXAS, MAY 3, 1906

NO. 15.

## REPORT OF FINANCE COMMITTEE.

### A Document Full of Interest to the Tax Payers of Houston County.

Hon. B. H. Gardner, Judge 3rd Judicial District:

The undersigned committee appointed by your Honor at the beginning of the present term of your court to look into the financial condition of the county, the reports and books of the county's officials, beg to submit as follows:

We have been in session some twenty days or more, all of which time has been diligently applied to a vigorous overhauling of all accounts, reports, minutes and the official conduct of the county's affairs by those elected and charged with such responsibility. We are frank to say that actuated solely by the consideration of compensation we should have abandoned the undertaking at the expiration of the period of five days, for which the law expressly authorizes remuneration, but having enlisted in the task of a thorough and comprehensive research into the fiscal affairs of the county and other matters closely allied thereto, we decided that motives of good citizenship as well as the welfare of the county constrained us to complete as far as we could the work so unsatisfactorily begun during the first five days. We have been greatly embarrassed and hindered in our work from limitation of time as also from crude and insufficient data supplied in the records of officials. We do not hesitate to advise your Honor that there is not a Finance Committee in the state nor an expert accountant who can go through the official records, documents and books of this county for ten years or more past, check out and present same in an intelligent manner and on an intelligible basis, and that these ends may be attained, we believe the law dealing with such matters should be changed so as to provide for the appointment by the district judge of an auditor for each county of his district thoroughly competent and with an expert knowledge to handle the records, accounts, dockets, etc., of county officials and to give him ample time to do such work. If such a change in the law cannot be made then we suggest that the law be modified so as to remove the five day limitation and require that finance committees be appointed at every term of court, that they be given authority to administer oaths and to employ at least one bailiff for summoning important witnesses. It is utterly impossible for us to do the work contemplated by the law provided for such committees in the time prescribed by law, or even in the self-imposed extension made by the committee for want of a clearly defined starting point. Embarrassed as we were in the matter of time and a well established beginning point we have dealt with what we consider matters of greatest concern to the county of which we will speak *SERILATIM* in the order of importance.

#### DELINQUENT TAXES.

Of these by far the most important is the one dealing with the taxes due the county and state. In any system of government we do not doubt that there must be those who always escape bearing their share of the burdens of government, but we know of no system and of no county under our system where the tax delinquencies have increased from year to year, the volume growing with cumulative effect and the number increasing with mortifying frequency as right here in Houston county. A year ago the grand jury invited the commissioners' court, the tax collector and the State Commissioner of Revenue to meet with them to consider the question of

delinquent taxes. They all met in joint session. Up to that time no efficient effort had been made by deputy collectors to gather these taxes in. A thorough plan was discussed by all present and a system of collection and collectors agreed on. The commissioners' court was to recommend men for the work and the tax collector agreed to appoint them and have the lists ready. Some effort was made on the lines agreed on to collect these delinquent taxes, but the results were not at all satisfactory and not such as could have been done if the proper spirit and energy had been used by the commissioners court and the tax collector. The tax rolls of the tax collector from 1885 to date show delinquent taxes due state and county of some fifty odd thousand dollars. But the real sum is much smaller than this. Our present efficient tax assessor, Mr. John Ellis, some years ago proposed and with the co-operation of the commissioners' court did the county and the state a great service in correcting the tax rolls of this county. For years there have been carried on these rolls tracts of land doubly and even triply assessed. The same tracts assessed in the name of two or more owners, thus causing the same piece of land to be assessed several times and thus swelling the tax rolls and tax values beyond the real facts. This has been true of not only certain tracts of land, but of personal property also, and of polls. The latter two cause an additional swelling of tax values, and the three together explain in some degree the volume of tax delinquencies. These fictitious renditions or assessments besides misleading as to the true taxable basis and values of the county have been the cause of a heavy expense to the county in the salary of the tax assessor and in advertising. We are not far from the truth when we say that these false assessments have cost the county without any return whatever the sum of six to nine thousand dollars during the past twenty to thirty years, that this incorrect system has been in use. This will hardly occur again in view of what Assessor Ellis has done in the elimination of fictitious land surveys and other assessments. To be more exact a correction of the land assessments shows an elimination of fifty-five thousand six hundred and eighty-one acres assessed more than once, valued at three hundred and four thousand and ninety-nine dollars; of city values seventeen thousand four hundred and ninety-five dollars; of personal property one hundred and seventy thousand five hundred and sixty-five dollars; of polls eight thousand six hundred and seventy-eight and 25-100 dollars. There have been carried on the rolls seven thousand three hundred and ninety-nine polls where there were only four thousand nine hundred and fifty-nine in the county subject to taxation. Here are fictitious values of nearly half million dollars causing a heavy expense to the county in the salary of assessors and advertising. After eliminating all of these elements which Mr. Ellis has done, there remains a large delinquent element due on land, personal property and polls, amounting in the aggregate to about twenty-five thousand dollars. It is impossible to collect all of this but we believe seventy-five per cent of this could have been and can yet be collected if the commissioners' court will do their duty to that end. No one pays the tax gladly but it is not right that some should pay while others who enjoy all the blessings of government equally should escape. Until recent legislation, the responsibility for this condition rested equally on the commissioners court and the tax collector, but now the main responsibility is with the commissioners' court for the law puts it there. In this connection we wish to say that we believe the affairs of this county can be conducted on very little over one-half of the present tax rate, if the commissioners' court would do their whole duty to the people, see that the taxes are collected and use the same business sagacity and economy in paying bills against the county as they would against themselves. The expenditures for current items of county government are in the main enormous and the fault lies with the commissioners' court. They pass on these bills, reject, allow or reduce the same. Some bills are paid by the court out of county money that they wouldn't for one moment pay out of their own. One case in point is a bill for electric lighting at the jail at the rate of three and 50-100 dollars per month or forty-two dollars per year. There are only two lights there, one used for only half hour at night, the other until about ten o'clock only. The charge is one and 75-100 dollars per month, while in residences the charge is only seventy-five cents each month where only two are used. This is an illustration of the extravagance that seems to be characteristic. We trust we may be indulged in the remark that the people cannot be too careful in selecting men for the commissioners' court who should be the clearest-headed business men in the county. The county's finances imperatively demand that this court from judge down should be constituted of conservative, level-headed officials who know a job when they see it, and have the nerve to kick it out of court on sight. We believe it would conduce to the best interests of the county and the best service of this court if all four commissioners were nominated and elected by the county at large instead of by precincts as now. We repeat it again that the standard of qualification for this court cannot be too high and calls for financial ability of a type that has been tried and proven. It is mortifying and humiliating to all good citizens that the warrants of one of the oldest counties of the state should be at discount as they have been for years, a fact due in the main to extravagance running through a series of years, in some degree to graft, not by the commissioners themselves, but by their neglect and to indifference in collecting delinquent taxes. The public debt of the county has decreased considerably during the past three years, but it has been in some degree due to an increase in the taxable values and not to the decrease in expenditures. That the script of this county should have ever gone below par is deplorable and indefensible, when we consider the county's resources. And it is still more deplorable and indefensible that it should continue there. By proper and exacting economy, reducing expenses here and there, collecting taxes due, there is reason to believe that the warrants of this county can be taken out of the hands of speculators and cash paid for them when issued. It may also be mentioned that the very fact that the warrants have to be discounted, is an incentive or inducement for those dealing with the county to increase their bills, when if these warrants were paid in full and for cash when issued, these bills would be smaller. The county's warrants have been at a discount for twelve or more years, and however much it may be worth to some for its paper to continue at a discount, the great mass of citizens have a right to expect and insist that this condition be discontinued and the county's credit restored to its old-time standard. That the people of the county may

know just how their affairs have been conducted, the shiftless, systemless manner in which important matters of business have been handled, we call attention to the present road working system or rather want of system.

#### ROAD WORKING.

The present plan of handling the convict question is unquestionably the correct solution of a vexatious problem. But we cannot endorse such methods as have prevailed in this matter. We have not been able to find any reports from those in charge of the working force, no record of any collection of fines, no report of expense and no bond on file from the superintendent of the convict camp. He gave such bond and delivered it to the officials of the county, but we could not find it. Later, the bond was found in the hands of the road superintendent who complied fully with the law in making the bond and brought it to the court house for filing and finding no one to take same, carried it home. The bond has since been filed. We cannot but condemn such loose methods of looking after public affairs. We have every confidence in the road-working system as the proper one for dealing with the convict problem. But system should be substituted for chaos. We unqualifiedly condemn any return to the old plan of taking convict bonds from which the county derives little help and very few officers ever got anything in the way of costs. It is our information that the salary of the present county judge was increased four hundred dollars in contemplation of the increase in the duties of his office, incident to the establishment of the plan of working convicts on the road, and he is the one official charged with the responsibility of protecting the county's interest, and should be held to such responsibility by the commissioners and the public.

#### JOINT SESSIONS.

We invited the county judge and the commissioners to hold several sessions with the finance committee in the consideration and discussion of important matters. With us also for nearly a week was the state revenue commissioner, Hon. F. S. Bell, who gave us valuable aid. Besides the matters already spoken of we brought to the attention of the court the question of county treasurer's bond which we did not and do not now consider a legal bond. The law governing the question is clear and unequivocal. The law requires two bonds of the county treasurer, one to protect the available school fund and the other to protect the general revenue of the county. The law says both shall be double the amount of each fund; for twenty-five years or more the basis for fixing the amount of the school bond was to double the probable total of the available school money which the county treasurer handles for a year. During nearly all of McCConnell's terms, all of Bakers, Ellis' and Bayne's, the school bond has never been less than sixty thousand dollars. Of late years the total of available school funds in the hands of the county treasurer has increased very largely instead of decreasing, and the bond, if changed at all, should have been increased from sixty thousand to eighty thousand or more. Instead of increasing this bond, if any change was to be made, the commissioners' court in November, 1904, cut the old bond one-half, reducing the sum from sixty thousand to thirty thousand dollars in clear and indisputable contravention of the plain mandates of the law. We insisted that the court take the matter up and comply with the law, but on a recorded vote the commissioners divided two and two, Hallmark and Isbell voting in favor of putting the bond to the figures, con-

templated by law, Murchison and Sewell voting to let the bond stand as at present. On a tie vote County Judge Newman voted to leave the bond as it is. We then submitted that all precedent in this county as in others sustained our position and our construction of the law and we believe the court had no warrant in law or otherwise for so extraordinary proceeding. On this subject we hope to see a change in the law so as to authorize bonds of county officials to be made by Fidelity Companies in or out of the state. □

#### BANK DEPOSITS.

Another matter we called to the attention of the court which they seemed to be ignorant of or disposed to treat with indifference was the law passed at the regular session of the 29th legislature making it the business of the commissioners' court to invite bids from banks and bankers as a depository of county funds, stipulating and binding to pay the county a rate of interest on daily balances. The funds in the hands of the county treasurer may be deposited with any bank or banker in or out of the county on the payment by such bank or banker of a rate of interest. This we regard as a wise provision and should be carried out by the commissioners' court of this county. It can be safely done, the moneys of the several funds properly guarded and in this way be a source of revenue to the county. As it is now and has been for years the money of all these funds has been deposited with the Crockett bank and nothing ever paid for its use. It's a conservative estimate to place the average total of all these funds on deposit at not less than fifteen to twenty thousand dollars which is worth to any banking institution from 8 to 12 per cent. For such a sum it could safely pay the low rate prescribed by law and make a handsome profit over. Instead of paying interest, the county treasurer has been paying and the bank actually charging for years an exchange of one-fourth of one per cent for collecting school warrants—the proceeds of such collection to go on deposit in the bank and to be used by the bank in its business. A bank that has had the free use of the county funds for years without interest, could certainly collect these warrants without charge. Safe and profit-bearing depositories can be easily found if the proper effort be made by the commissioners' court.

#### ITEMS OF EXTRAVAGANCE.

We have referred to the extravagance in the conduct of the county's business by the commissioners' court. We beg to refer to two other items one of which is of state wide notoriety and has brought charges of graft in nearly every county in the state. We refer to the items of stationery and lumber. The minutes of the commissioners' court for two terms of 1904, show the enormous allowance of nearly fifteen hundred dollars for stationery. This is certainly extraordinary. We invite attention to the fact that the stationery bills for this county go out of the county and in many instances out of the state. This is certainly not right or just. There are some three or four papers published in this county, all of them equipped by machinery, material and expert labor for doing this work. These home papers should be given preference to houses out of the state or out of the county. The young men owning and operating these home plants inform us that they can do from 85 to 90 per cent of the "blank" work needed for official purposes but that they do not get 15 per cent of it. It goes to drummers of foreign houses who never pay one cent of tax in this county; do not vote here, and

(Continued on Fourth Page.)

**J. T. HARRISON & CO.,**  
DEALERS IN  
**Wines and Liquors**  
PALESTINE, TEXAS.

Mr. J. T. Harrison formerly conducted a saloon business in Crockett and is known for his fair dealings. Send him your orders and you will be treated right.

**Shoes and Clothing.**

I have as good a stock of Shoes and Clothing as can be found in any town. My Shoes were bought largely from the Tenent Shoe Co., a bankrupted firm,

**And I Saved Big Money in the Purchase.**

I can save you half of what you have been paying for Shoes. I also have a large stock of Clothing that was bought cheap and will be sold as cheaply as bought.

**LET ME SAVE YOU MONEY**  
on your spring purchases of Shoes and Clothing.

Yours for an Honest Deal,  
**H. ASHER.**

**HAIL & BYNUM**  
**KEEP ON HAND HIGH-CLASS BEEF**

and deliver to any part of the city at 8 and 10 cents per pound. Also game in season.

**HIGHEST PRICE PAID FOR**  
**Hides, Tallow & Beeswax.**  
**MARKET ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE SQUARE.**

**REPORT OF FINANCE COMMITTEE.**

(Continued from Fourth Page.)

and Neches rivers have not paid their license and only one has furnished the bond required by law. Except in the matter of convict bonds and suits on same we found the affairs of District Clerk Stanton in good shape as far as we had time to investigate. Same is true of Sheriff Phillip's office. We discovered what we thought was an error in some matters but they were subsequently explained. This office was conducted so far as we could judge at an expense to the county and state remarkably low.

**COUNTY TREASURER.**

The books of the county treasurer were in most excellent condition barring a few errors of entry. We found a few instances in which funds which the law directs shall go to the credit of R. & B. fund or the County fund were erroneously entered under another fund. But these were of minor importance and were easily corrected. Besides, they have been found in the books of every treasurer. With these exceptions County Treasurer Cater has administered the affairs of his office with exceptional intelligence and rare good business judgment.

We cannot close our report without again calling the attention of the public and the commissioners' court to the sum total of the loss which the county and its officers have sustained by the careless manner in which the convict bonds have been handled for years. County Clerk Allbright has receipts from county officials extend-

ing back six years or more for convict bonds which in the aggregate amount to several thousand dollars in fines and costs. We do not know how much of the sum has been collected and properly credited, but there seems to be a large sum which has been neglected and allowed to go out of date by the commissioners' court. We repeat it again that it was the duty of the commissioners' court and still their duty to trace these bonds and to see what has become of them and why they were not collected and if collected to what fund the money went. It is still not too late to hunt them up and to see if they were paid and to whom paid. The indifference and neglect of the commissioners' court in the matter of these bonds has cost the county large sums and cannot be excused.

**PUBLIC DEBT.**

The public debt of this county as appears from reports and the Finance Ledger is as follows—on April 1:

|                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Bonded indebtedness:           |             |
| C. & J. ....                   | \$2,000 00  |
| Bridge .....                   | 28,000 00   |
| Bridge repair.....             | 1,999 50    |
| Total.....                     | \$31,999 50 |
| Registered script unpaid:..... | 6,682 39    |
| Grand total.....               | \$38,681 89 |
| Cash on hand:                  |             |
| County fund.....               | \$1,654 94  |
| C. & J. fund.....              | 2,995 00    |
| Jury fund .....                | 2,014 10    |
|                                | \$6,664 04  |
| Net public indebtedness.....   | \$32,017 85 |

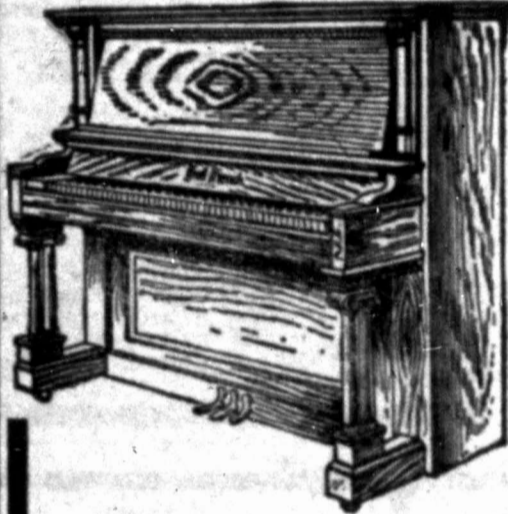
This is a very creditable show-

ing when compared with total a few years back. We see no reason why the warrants in a year or so should not be brought back to par with systematic and conservative management of the county's affairs. In conclusion we beg to thank your Honor for courteous treatment and patient consideration of the task we had to deal with. Also to extend to all officials our thanks for all aid given us. The same is due from us to the grand jury, for they were ever ready to aid us in any way they could.

W. B. PAGE,  
C. W. MOORE,  
G. M. WALLER.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th day of April, A. D. 1906.  
J. W. YOUNG,  
Notary Public, Houston County, Texas.

A magnificent steel engraving of Hagerman Pass, the most famous mountain pass in Colorado, has been issued by the Colorado Midland Railway. This engraving is 26x40 inches and suitable for framing. It will be sent to any address on receipt of 15 cents in stamps by Morell Law, traveling passenger agent, 566 Sheidley building, Kansas City, Mo., or C. H. Speers, G. P. A., Denver, Colo.



We Challenge Makers or Dealers Anywhere in America to Surpass our Values in

**New Pianos**  
AT  
**\$165 and \$225**

It will be profitable for Piano Buyers to ask us for information about these instruments. Many local dealers ask \$100 and \$150 more for pianos no better than these. You can pay for yours just about as you please. Write us how you want to make your payments.



**WE SELL**  
**VICTOR TALKING MACHINES**

For \$1.00 Cash or \$1.00 per Week.

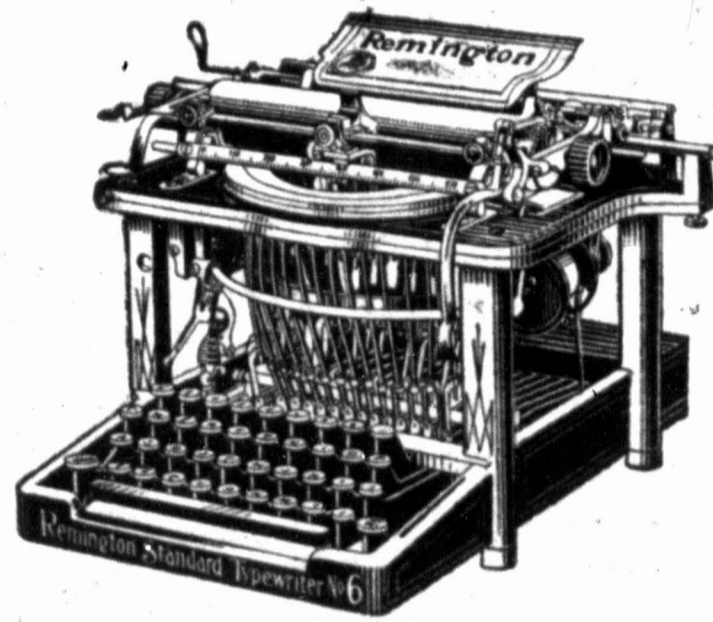
A Victor Talking Machine is a source of amusement and instruction for every home. You can in your own family, hear the great actors, the renowned singers, the most famous bands and orchestras and the most amusing dialogues and recitations.

We have a large and fine selection of Victor Records, usable on all disc talking machines, prices 35c, 60c, \$1.00 and upward.

Write us the address of any disc machine owner, together with the name of some friend you think we may sell one to, and we will mail you FREE a package of 50 Watkin Needles, the best needles ever made.

**Will A. Watkin Music Co.**  
Elm St.  
DALLAS, TEXAS

Please mention this paper when writing.



The reason for the supremacy of the Remington Typewriter is its

**PERSISTENT SUPERIORITY**

emphasized again and again in every new model since the invention of the writing machine.

**NEW MODELS NOW READY**

Remington Typewriter Company,  
313 Main Street, Dallas, Texas.

**Notice of Sheriff's Sale.**

(REAL ESTATE.)

By virtue of an order of sale issued out of the Honorable District Court of Houston county, on the 26th day of April, A. D. 1906, in the case of J. S. Johnson versus J. S. Brewer, No. 5007, and to me, as sheriff, directed and delivered, I have levied upon this 26th day of April, A. D. 1906, and will, between the hours of 10 o'clock A. M. and 4 o'clock P. M. on the first Tuesday in June, A. D. 1906, it being the 5th day of said month, at the court house door of said Houston county, in the town of Crockett proceed to sell at public auction to the highest bidder, for cash in hand, all the right, title and interest which the said J. S. Brewer had on the 9th day of May A. D. 1905, or at any time thereafter, of, in and to the following described property to-wit: Two tracts of land lying and situated in Houston county, state of Texas, containing 20 acres and 10 acres respectively and each being out of and a part of the Joseph Teague headright league; the same being generally known as the Johnson place, and fully described by field notes in said order of sale and in a certain deed from W. B. Robinson to J. S. Johnson, dated December 30th, 1904, and recorded in book 37 page 292 of the deed records of said Houston county, and in deed from said J. S. Johnson to said J. S. Brewer dated on or about May 9, 1905, said property being levied on as the property of J. S. Brewer to satisfy a judgment amounting to \$84.16, in favor of J. S. Johnson and costs of suit.

Given under my hand this 26th day of April, A. D. 1906.  
A. W. PHILLIPS,  
Sheriff, Houston County, Texas.

**Herbine**

Will overcome indigestion and dyspepsia; regulate the bowels and cure liver and kidney complaints.

It is the best blood enricher and invigorator in the world. It is purely vegetable, perfectly harmless, and should you be a sufferer from disease, you will use it if you are wise.

R. N. Andrews, Editor and Mgr. Cocoa and Rockledge News, Cocoa, Fla., writes: I have used your Herbine in my family, and find it a most excellent medicine. Its effects upon myself have been a marked benefit. Sold by Murchison & Beasley.

**A Positive Necessity.**

Having to lay upon my bed for 14 days from a severely bruised leg, I only found relief when I used Ballard's Snow Liniment. I can cheerfully recommend it as the best medicine for bruises ever sent to the afflicted. It has now become a positive necessity upon myself. D. R. Byrnes, merchant, Doversville, Texas. 25c, 50c and \$1.00. Sold by Murchison & Beasley.

**FOLEY'S HONEY AND TAR**

Cures Colds; Prevents Pneumonia

**MIKE YOUNAS**

DEALER IN

**FRESH VEGETABLES and FRUITS, ICE COLD DRINKS, CONFEC-TIONERIES.**

Telephone No. 50.  
Free Delivery.

**Loretto Mineral WELLS**

**SUCCESSOR TO ELKHART WELLS**

The Wells are now open and ready to receive guests. Special attention given to Sunday dinners and suppers. Dances with or without refreshments on short notice. Luncheons served to clubs. Special rates made to families. Best attention to sick. No better medicine than the Elkhart Mineral Water.

**A. & E. B. FLICK**

Managers and Owners.

**WHITE'S Cream Vermifuge**

**THE GUARANTEED WORM REMEDY**

THE CHILDREN'S FAVORITE TONIC.  
BEWARE OF IMITATIONS.  
THE GENUINE PREPARED ONLY BY  
**Ballard-Snow Liniment Co.**  
ST. LOUIS, MO.  
Sold by S. L. Murchison.

**FOLEY'S HONEY AND TAR**

stops the cough and heals lungs

**FOLEY'S HONEY AND TAR**

Cures Coughs, Colds, Croup, La Grippe, Asthma, Throat and Lung Troubles. Prevents Pneumonia and Consumption

Smith & French Drug Company.

**THE ORIGINAL LAXATIVE HONEY and TAR**  
in the **YELLOW PACKAGE**











# The Crockett Courier

W. W. AIKEN, Editor and Proprietor

## PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.

Obituaries, resolutions, cards of thanks and other matter not "news" will be charged for at the rate of 5c per line.

Parties ordering advertising or printing for societies, churches, committees or organizations of any kind will, in all cases, be held personally responsible for the payment of the bill.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

We are authorized to make the following announcements, subject to the action of the democratic party:

- For District Attorney  
Tom J. Harris  
Porter Newman
- For Representative  
John B. Smith  
I. A. Daniel
- For District Clerk  
Joe Brown Stanton  
Nat Patton
- For County Judge  
John Spence  
J. W. Madden  
E. Winfree
- For County Attorney  
Earl Adams, Jr.  
J. A. Ragland
- For County Clerk  
Nat E. Allbright  
C. G. (Gershom) Lansford  
J. J. Collier
- For Sheriff  
A. W. Phillips  
C. E. Lively  
John C. Lacy
- For Tax Collector  
A. L. (Gus) Goolsby  
Oscar C. Goodwin  
J. W. Brightman
- For Tax Assessor  
John H. Ellis
- For County Treasurer  
D. J. Cater  
J. J. Cooper
- For Commissioner, Precinct No. 1  
W. H. Wall  
J. A. Morris
- For Commissioner Precinct No. 3  
C. H. (Cal) Barbee  
S. M. Hallmark  
J. J. Hammond  
J. C. Allee
- For Commissioner, Precinct No. 4  
C. B. Isbell
- For Justice of Peace, Prec. No. 1  
C. R. Stephenson  
C. J. Hassell  
E. M. Callier  
J. W. Saxon
- For Constable Prec. No. 1  
J. N. Wellborn  
O. B. (Deb) Hale

## REPORT OF FINANCE COMMITTEE.

(Continued from First Page.)

never have a generous word of commendation to speak of the county, a thing which these home papers without exception are always saying. We regard this as an outrage to our people, nor can it be justified on the theory that these foreign houses do better work or cheaper work, for they do not do it. We have before us a letter from Judge Bradley of Fannin county in which the stationery trust in Texas is shown up, and while we do not mean to say that any one is a party to such an exploiting scheme in this county the facts call for an explanation of these enormous stationery bills and the practice of sending this work out of the county to be done. We see in one publication issued on this subject, that a justice of the peace of Hill county ordered a typewriter at an expense of some one hundred and forty dollars and gradually and adroitly worked the bill in and had it paid for by Hill county when the machine was for his own individual use. We invite further attention to the exposures of Judge Bradley by reproducing some items of expense on this line; that is, what the counties had to pay for stationery and what the stationery actually cost the publishing houses all of them foreign houses and not home plants. Judge Bradley shows for the year of 1904 stationery bills as follows for one quarter only:

| Counties. | Actual cost of publish'g houses. | Am't ad- vanced tually by counties. |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Anderson  | \$43.75                          | \$334.00                            |
| Cooke     | 42.75                            | 317.75                              |
| Kaufman   | 47.50                            | 414.70                              |
| Hopkins   | 48.00                            | 443.25                              |

|       |       |        |
|-------|-------|--------|
| Hunt  | 46.00 | 478.75 |
| Brown | 33.00 | 320.00 |
| Falls | 47.50 | 408.75 |

These counties and their bills which Judge Bradley gives show how these stationery houses are becoming enormously rich by overcharging and extortion in the matter of stationery. As proof of the fact that they have no regular and fixed schedule of prices, it is a notorious fact that their price lists cannot be had from any of the houses or agents, which is suspicious evidence that they have a flexible, elastic system of prices to suit occasions, counties and competition. The lumber item is the next one or rather the first one in importance. We are advocates of good roads and sound and safe bridges, but we do not hesitate to say that a great deal more money has been paid out for bridges in this county than was necessary and for which the county never got an honest equivalent. The minutes of the court show enormous bills of lumber, some of them suspiciously suggestive of jobbery and graft between the saw-mill man and the road overseer. We hear of bills of lumber for bridges never built, but paid for and allowed to rot or be plundered. The sum for one year quite recent was eight thousand dollars paid out for stationery, lumber and bridges. Multiply that amount by ten years and the people will understand how county warrants are at a discount and the rate of taxation increasing instead of decreasing.

### COURT EXPENSES.

The court expenses of this county are burdensome and especially does this apply to the criminal dockets of the district and county courts. We regret to see this but they are sad and lamentable facts to be met and dealt with. A large part of the expense of the criminal docket of the district court, we have believed for years, could be easily eliminated if the legislature would provide every district judge with an official stenographer for criminal cases; said stenographer to have access to the grand jury room just as the district attorney has; there to take down in shorthand the language of every witness in felony cases. Then our dockets would not be loaded with cases of malicious and frivolous prosecution and when the cases were not malicious we should find that the witness in the grand jury room if he knows that on the trial he would be confronted with his evidence in the grand jury room, duly attested and authenticated, would not be swearing one thing before the grand jury and, with the lapse of time and that easy, oily infirmity of memory which lapse of time brings to some witnesses, be swearing something else before the trial jury. If we accomplish nothing in securing the ends of justice by this innovation, we should at least save state and county a great out-lay in the way of costs which are now heavy from these causes.

### BILLS PAID VND REJECTED.

We find on minutes of commissioners' court instances where bills have been rejected but at a subsequent term of court some of these same bills would answer to roll call and in a new dress or under a new guise pass muster and be paid. We also find bills presented, never sworn to, and paid as promptly as if they had been. We find bills paid and not recorded on the minutes and in one or two cases the amount of bills changed and being paid. This was the case for a small amount at one term of court only. We did not have time to go through bills, script stubs and minutes of other terms as we would like to have done and as is the duty of the commissioners' court to do. We found where the commissioners' court had had some blank bonds printed for use in investing the school funds. Of this number, five, we were able to find only three and could get no trace of the other two. We have no evidence that there was anything wrong in their disappearance, but it is evidence at least of carelessness in not placing these bonds where they could not be abstracted, and be handy for use when needed. We notified and put on guard the comptroller as to the disappearance of these bonds and we hereby notify the general public that these bonds can be easily disposed of by fraud.

### COLQUIT LAW

We cannot but believe that the Colquit law has been a hindrance instead of a help in collection of taxes. If there has been a suit in this county under this law for six years past we find no record of it nor can we determine who is responsible for it. We do know that those charged with the duty of collecting taxes and we may even say paying them, seem to sit down and wait for the Colquit law to begin work of its own accord. The impression seems to be that the law is automatic and self enforcing and all wait for that happy period to come.

### SCHOOL FUND.

The permanent school fund which at times is large though now only some six or seven thousand dollars in cash, should be invested for the benefit of the schools. We suggested to the commissioners' court the propriety of using this fund after bonding it to meet current expenses of the county and to use the taxes to liquidate registered script. In this way the warrants could probably be brought back to par and kept there.

There is no reason why the court should be paying fifteen dollars a month for janitor services when there are those, one at least, indebted to the county for convict dues who could do this work and thus save that money to the county.

### COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE.

The Finance Ledger, the keeping of which has been the cause of so much criticism to County Clerk Allbright in the past and some of it, by the way, unjust is in better shape and kept more fully and intelligently than we have ever seen it. And while speaking of this office it gives us pleasure to note the excellent manner that all dockets seem to have been looked after and put in proper condition. We found a few errors in the stray records in this office which were promptly corrected on bringing them to notice of Mr. Allbright. In this connection we wish to say that the clerk cannot keep a full and correct Finance Ledger if the county and precinct officials do not make the report which the law enjoins on them, and it is the plain duty of the commissioners' court to see that these reports are made. They have the authority to force these reports by fines and should do so if necessary. County Clerk Allbright needs more room. The books and records in which every family in the county is interested are not safe in the present crowded condition of this office, and we regard it as the urgent duty of the commissioners' court to make some provision to remedy this condition and to do so at once.

Tax Collector Brightman has certainly looked closely after the occupation taxes, and we commend him for it. This is an important part of the county's revenue and is more closely collected than for years.

We have not had time to look through the convict bonds which are held by the county clerk previous to the installation of the present road working system, but the totals of these bonds in costs and fines amount to several thousand dollars and should be checked out by the commissioners' court at once. We find quite a number of bonds valid in time and security that have been allowed to go out of date for want of suit on them. Some one has been seriously remiss in this matter.

In checking up the dockets of the justices of the peace, we found the most of them in good shape. We found a few of them short in sums ranging from ten cents to ten dollars or more all of which was promptly paid. We found a shortage in some of the accounts of county officials amounting in one case to about seventy dollars all of which was paid in promptly. Aggregating all of these sums from dockets and records due the county, the total of which we were instrumental in having turned in to county treasurer was close to five hundred dollars. These errors would not occur if the commissioners' court would do their duty, make these officials reports and go through these dockets and reports as the law directs. They can impose fines for failure to make reports and should not hesitate to do so. As an illustration of the careless manner in which the commissioners' court have

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been doing this work we found that the report of one justice of the peace had been O.K'd by the commissioners' court, but there were some twenty odd cases on this report which did not correspond by number with his docket. This was slipshod work and no commissioners' court can justify it. The only safe, correct way to do this is to make every justice of the peace bring in his report with his docket at every quarter term of commissioners' court and go over the two together. Then again we find some thirty odd criminal cases in precinct 1 that were never entered on the docket at all until the grand jury and the finance committee discovered the omission. This is no way to do

business and the commissioners' court is responsible for it. In quite a number of these cases the costs had all been collected and the fines neglected and in one case the fine had partly been collected and not turned in. It occurs to us that it is the duty of grand jury to look more closely after such errors and present some cases by indictment before these matters will be looked after as they should be.

Speaking of estrays we discovered a notice of a cow and calf strayed on black board of court house with no date on it at all and nothing to fix responsibility. Some of the ferries on Trinity

(Continued on Eighth Page.)

## If You Wish to Raise a Better Grade of Horses, You Now Have the Opportunity

He is a genuine registered horse foaled at Highland, Ohio, in the spring of 1890. He is a large, handsome, dark bay horse, with left hind foot white, stands 16 hands 1 inch; weighs 1200 pounds. In confirmation he is a grand, big horse with a beautiful head and neck and the very best feet and legs, short back, deep body and very fine knee and hock action.

J. W. T. No. 35496.



His blood lines are the very best of Northern horses. That he will beget speed and grand road qualities there is no doubt as he not only inherits, but possesses, these qualities. Even common mares bred to a horse of this class can not fail to produce high-class horses—ones that will sell readily for high-class roadsters, carriage and general all-purpose horses. If you wish to improve your grade of horses, never breed to a cold-blood horse. If necessary, sacrifice a little to the individual to get the blood. In J. W. T., No. 35496, you get the individual as well as the blood. I can say without fear of contradiction, that there is not a better blooded or better individual in East Texas than J. W. T., No. 35496. As this is his last season in Houston county, better avail yourself of the opportunity and get a colt from this grand horse.

He is at my barn just north of the residence of John Monk. Mares from a distance will be taken care of without charge, except for feed. Will not be responsible for any accidents while in my care.

My terms are as follows, from which I will not deviate: A season fee of \$5.00 for each mare, same to be paid at time of service. This gives fourth return privilege. For every mare that gets in foal an additional fee of \$15.00 will be charged. One owner getting two or more mares in foal, fee will be \$20.00 for two, \$30.00 for three, and so on. Same to be paid from 3 to 6 months after service.

J. C. HIPPEL, Crockett, Tex.