

DISCUSSES ROAD TAX.

Spartanburg Legislator Owning Land in this County Discusses Work of Local Delegation.

Editor Laurens Advertiser:

I have no desire whatever to "meddle" in Laurens county matters of a purely local nature, as they come up before the legislature. I have troubles enough of my own as a member from Spartanburg county. But there are two things in particular that I am very much concerned in, regarding the tax matter for this year for your county.—(1) road tax and (2) poll tax, etc.

(1) There was a thought or suggestion to make the poll tax \$5.00 instead of \$1.00 as at present. Let me say that possibly the only reason such a tax is not forced on you for this year, is that the state constitution forbids more than one dollar. That is about all that restrains them, so far as I can learn. It looks like they simply would do so, if they only could do so.

(2) There was a thought or suggestion to make you pay \$7.00 to \$7.50 for ordinary road tax, instead of \$1.50 as at present. There is no way that

I know to prevent them from doing this, however, except for you taxpayers to show them promptly that it is not desired by you. They do have the right, as I understand it, to fix the ordinary county levies as they please. They can hang you as high as Haman if they want to. And they are just about in the act of doing it, too. Keep silent and they very likely will do it. They might do it anyhow. I understand that "on second thought" they decided that \$7.00 to \$7.50 was more than necessary, and that they now have in mind a compromise of \$6.00. Noble statesmen! They pose as the "poor man's friend" at home in the campaign and in speeches down here, but this don't look much like "poor man's friend" to me! I am one who wants a man in the legislature to "act" down here according to the way he "talks" up there. Col. Wharton told me he had been in public life in Laurens county for about thirty years, and that such a "stunt" had never been "pulled off" before, and that it was wrong from every sound standpoint and should not be done now. But if three men out of four in your delegation vote for it, then that will simply settle it. It will just be your misfortune, that's all.

They have a very beautiful way of "explaining" that it will be sent back into the school district from which it is collected. But your affairs need to be run in that county in such a way that it won't need so much "explaining". As it is, only the Lord could explain where public road moneys have been spent. As I understand it, the officials there do not much more than even attempt to explain it.

Next year is election year. I asked your delegation to leave the road tax at \$1.50 as at present, and leave the question of increase to a vote of those who will have it to pay. If they vote for it, then have the county treasurer to collect accordingly. If they vote against the increase, then they will still have the \$1.50 as usual, and no harm will be done, for you will be having the elections anyhow. I told the delegation the money appropriated for each mile of road had not been spent on the roads in upper part of the county, and that the proper thing would be for the county officials to give us the worth of money already in their hands before giving them more. I wanted them to first be faithful and just in what they have already had. I told them I would take a contract to work all public roads touching my land at present assessment per mile. Then why charge more? Moreover,

I would keep the road up as well as any in the county. No doubt others in all parts of the county will gladly do the same. Don't hit good white taxpayers under the plea of "catching" certain negroes.

It is true that I do not now live in Laurens county, but I certainly do pay some little tax there and certainly do have the interest of the county at heart. Very likely I pay as much tax there as all your delegation put together, and I certainly know that I continually do business with great numbers of thoughtful white men in the upper part of the county who, like myself, not only feel, but simply know, that they are not getting a square deal in county matters. We don't know, and can't find out, what has become of money we have already turned over to the Laurens county officials. Then in the name of God, why should we be asked to spend more still? Every year taxes get higher and higher. For what? Yes, for what? If the officials of the county will come forward and make correct and straightforward and full statements of these matters, then all very well and good. Then I will take back every word I have said, and do so gladly. But until they do, then it all stands, so far as I am concerned.

But in the meantime, look after your delegation. And now in simple fairness to them, however, if you want to express yourself on anything, then DO IT NOW. Don't keep your mouth shut now, and then raise the devil with them later.

J. P. GRAY.

Jefferson Hotel,
Columbia, S. C.
Jan. 27th, 1920.

"HOME", AT OPERA HOUSE.

First Jewel Picture by Mrs. Charlie Chaplin at the Opera House Friday. Mrs. Charlie Chaplin's (Mildred Harris) first Jewel picture since the production of "When A Girl Loves," will be seen on Friday at the Opera House. "Home" is the title that has been given to the latest Lois Weber production starring Mildred Harris. The story was written by Miss Weber and she is also responsible for its admirable directing.

The story of "Home" will send audiences away with a new thought in their minds about the place called home. The story might well have been the inspiration of the song, "Home, Sweet Home," which has been sung in every home of the country. With Mildred Harris as the star, taking the role of the foolish young girl, who for-

gets the loving care of father and mother, little sisters and true hearted boyhood lover, and seeks diversion and a rich marriage among the codfish aristocrats of a summer party acquaintance, this photoplay so aptly named is an epic in human emotion.

When the word comes from her lover that her mother is seriously ill after caring for another daughter through a siege of scarlet fever, Millie Rannin, a small town plumber's daughter, played by Miss Harris, is cut to the heart by her neglect. Surfeited at the hollowness of high society, the meaningless seeking after diversion, the worthlessness of its members and the insidious intriguing and immorality of the people with whom she has been in contact, Millicent Rankin goes back to home and friends—a girl whose outlook on life has been changed.

The cast of Universal players which supported Miss Harris in the picture are William Crittenden, Lydia Knott, Helen Poder, Al Ray, Frank Elliott, John Cossar and Clarissa Selwynne.

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FINAL SETTLEMENT.

Take notice that on the 11th day of February, 1920, I will render a final account of my acts and doings as Executor of the estate of Lillian Owings deceased, in the office of the Judge of Probate of Laurens county, at 11 o'clock, a. m., and on the same day will apply for a final discharge from my trust as Executor.

Any person indebted to said estate is notified and required to make payment on that date; and all persons having claims against said estate will present them on or before said date, duly proven or be forever barred.

J. A. SMITH,
Executor.
25-5t-A

Jan. 7, 1920.

ANNOUNCEMENT

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