

THE BARBER COUNTY INDEX.

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NO. 12

SAM BITLER CAPTURED

Notorious Belvidere Murderer Apprehended in Memphis, Tenn. Brought Home to serve Life Sentence.

Sam Bitler, the murderer who so brutally murdered Mrs. Rosenberger near Belvidere and several months ago escaped from jail in Hutchinson after being convicted of the crime, was arrested in Memphis, Tenn., early last week and brought back to Hutchinson by the sheriff of Reno county the latter part of the week, from whence it is said he will be taken to the state penitentiary this week, to begin serving a life sentence.

Bitler's unusual height made his identification easy. He made no resistance when the police took him. He admitted that he was Bitler when first accosted. This is a strange contrast with his written declaration that he would not be taken alive.

The Hutchinson News has this to say concerning Bitler's capture and his atrocious crime:

"Bitler lost his chance to appeal his case to the supreme court," said County Attorney Beck of Kiowa, who is here today, "when he ran away. He stayed too long and the time has elapsed for the appeal to be made. Consequently when he is brought back to jail he will be taken to Lansing, either by Sheriff Duckworth or by Sheriff Ham Bell of Dodge City, in whose care he was when he escaped.

"His attorneys had filed a bill of exceptions in the Ford county district court. This was to have been heard a few days after he escaped. When I went there to argue against this for the state the fact of his escape was lost for Bitler. In the event that this point was lost, as turned out to be true, Bitler had a chance to appeal his case to the supreme court. But that limit has also expired during his absence and he will have to go at once to Lansing and begin his term there."

The sheriff left Hutchinson for Memphis before it was known that Bitler had been captured. He had been on the trail of the man through the officers in different cities and knew that the time was about ripe to get him in Memphis. But the sheriff was on his way there when the message came which told of his arrest.

Sam Bitler was sentenced to serve a life term in the penitentiary at Lansing for the murder of Mrs. Rosenberger of Kiowa county, last year. He was kept in jail here until his preliminary hearing was held in Greensburg. Company E. K. N. G., was sent with the officers to Greensburg at the time of the trial in the district court there when a change of venue was secured to Ford county, owing to the fact that it was next to impossible to secure a jury in the county where the crime was committed. The military company didn't have to do anything and there was no trouble. The trial was held this spring in Dodge City and the jury brought in a verdict of murder in the first degree, the evidence being circumstantial. Bitler was then sent back here for safe keeping until his case was disposed of in the district and supreme courts.

Bitler has cost the state a good bit of money. The county commissioners of Kiowa county offered a reward of \$500 for his capture and Governor Stubbs offered a reward of \$300, making \$800 in all for him. This will go to the officers catching him.

So the chances are that Bitler will be sent to the state penitentiary at Lansing in a few days, there to begin his term. Even if he was able, through any legal technicality, to get out of the murder trouble he would be convicted in the Reno county district court on the charge of breaking jail.

Bitler was found in a resort at 102 South Third street, one of the toughest portions of the city, where he was keeping company with friends of a very questionable character.

Several messages and telegrams were found on him, dated at Hutchinson and Eureka, Kans., signed by his wife and mother, cautioning him to beware that the officers were on his trail.

It was due to the last mentioned articles that Bitler's arrest was brought about, and to George Duckworth, sheriff of Reno county,

and his assistants, the credit of his re-arrest largely belongs.

It was Bitler's love for his wife that proved his direct downfall.

On Monday, July 21, a letter was written by Sam Bitler at Memphis Tenn. It was sent to Little Rock, Ark., where friends re-addressed it and sent it to Hutchinson. The letter was apprehended here by the authorities and it was then that Bitler's whereabouts were first known. It was July 26 when the letter arrived in Hutchinson. Mrs. Bitler later got the message.

Sheriff Duckworth immediately communicated with the Memphis authorities telling them to keep on the watch for the man. It was for the purpose of taking part in his capture that Sheriff Duckworth left over the Rock Island railroad for that place.

Further communications received from Memphis said that Bitler appears unconcerned about his re-arrest. He willingly told of how he escaped from the Reno county jail and his trip to Eureka, his old home, where he stayed for several days.

There is one thing that Bitler is holding back, and that is the name of the persons who aided him in his escape. It is known that he went from Hutchinson in a machine, according to his statement, but it has been impossible to locate the persons. An investigation is being made by the authorities, and several arrests are promised in connection with Bitler's notorious escape.

Twin Daughter Dead

The little daughter of O. E. Hanby and wife of this city died at 10 o'clock p. m., Saturday, July 31st, after a struggle with malarial and typhoid fever about one month. Until a week before death the child's condition was not regarded critical. The sickness at the beginning was pronounced malaria but later it developed into typhoid. Its condition first became alarming on Thursday and by Friday evening Dr. Coleman became convinced that it could not recover. The funeral was held at the Baptist church at 4:30 Sunday afternoon, conducted by Rev. F. W. Imboden, pastor of the M. E. church, and the little body laid away in Highland cemetery.

Alma Esther Hanby was born in Stafford, Kansas, October 8, 1906; died in Medicine Lodge, Kansas, July 31, 1909, aged 2 years, 9 months and 23 days.

The taking away of this sweet little girl separates a pair of twins that were a source of constant joy to their parents and leaves them with only one child, a boy, Orsini Lester. The twins were an even size and two of the prettiest, sweetest little children we have ever seen. That one of them should be taken away so suddenly in its innocence and purity is one of those seemingly cruel decrees of fate that surpasses all understanding and those of us who have stood at the open grave and heard the pronouncement of the fiat, "dust to dust," can truly and sincerely sympathize with Mr. and Mrs. Hanby whose hearts have been made heavy.

The grief that comes with the parting with the little ones is of a different character than that occasioned by the death of one who has lived his allotted time, and the memories of the child's prattlings and simplicities impresses one in a peculiar way. It is hard indeed for the afflicted parents to be comforted and the sympathy of all goes out to them.

The state tax commission decided the valuation matter in the cases of the Badger Lumber Co. of this city and L. B. Hill of Kiowa a few days ago. The Badger's valuation was fixed at \$9,530 which is \$3,340 more than listed by the manager and \$470 less than fixed by the county assessor. Mr. Hill's mercantile stock was valued at \$25,740 which is \$260 less than the county assessor's figures but about twice as much as returned to the deputy assessor. In each case the county board of equalization raised the county assessor's figures but the state board concluded that the county assessor was about right.

J. F. VanHook, C. W. Wilson and J. E. Holmes of Kiowa, were closing up some matters in probate court here Monday, in the Owen estate.

BLOOMER GIRLS COMING

National Boston Bloomer Girls will Play Ball in Medicine Lodge August 11th.

The National Bloomer Girls will be here to play ball with the home team Wednesday, August 11th, instead of the 15th and 16th as first announced. This will be the only time lady ball players will visit the town this season and perhaps for many seasons to come. They are fine players, having met the best league teams of Oklahoma and Texas this year and having won 31 out of 35 games. The home team is also putting forth extra effort and will have a strong team for the occasion. The game is sure to be worth going many miles to see, both on account of the fine game that will be played and the fact that lady players of national fame will be here.

The home team has guaranteed \$75 to secure the Bloomer Girls and the people should respond liberally to raise this money.

Tax Levy of 1909

The board of county commissioners met as a board of levy Monday and made levies as follows:

State General	1.25	Mills
County General	2.00	"
County interest	.75	"
County sinking	.50	"
County poor	.20	"
County high school	.30	"
Total	5.00	

MEDICINE LODGE CITY.

The mayor and council of this city made the following levy Saturday night:

General	2.50	Mills
Street	1.00	"
Interest	3.00	"
Sinking	1.00	"
Total	7.50	

TOWNSHIP

General and road	1.00	Mill
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SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1.

Teachers	2.25	Mills
Building	2.25	"
Bond and interest	2.00	"
Total	6.50	

This makes a total in this city of 20 mills which is exactly two per cent. This is three mills higher than last year's levy. The valuation in the county and city is considerably greater also. The increase is due to the larger levies necessary to raise funds for state and city expenses. There is little difference in levies in the county, school district and township. In the meantime watch your tax receipt grow while you endorse existing extravagance in public affairs with your vote.

Happily Wedded

Two handsome young couples were made happy by Probate Judge Garrison at his office Monday, August 2nd.

The young people were Willie B. George and Florence E. Broughton of Hazelton, and Harry A. Stafford of Floris, Oklahoma and Lulu Vincent of Freedom, Oklahoma.

Both couples went on their way rejoicing immediately after the respective ceremonies.

Suit on Bond

W. L. Bragg and W. T. Collins of this city were sued in district court last Wednesday by The Connecticut Fire Insurance Company of Hartford, to recover \$141 with interest at six per cent from November, 1908.

Messrs. Bragg and Collins were sureties on a bond given to the company by S. D. Batson when he became its agent. Batson failed to turn in certain money collected and the company now seeks to recover. Batson is now in Oklahoma but will probably be brought here on a subpoena when the case comes to trial.

It is claimed that Batson turned his horse and buggy in to the company to cover this shortage and the company accepted them.

Last winter when the agent was here Mr. Bragg also tendered him what he thought was his part of the obligation but it was refused. He now says he will pay none of it.

Irving A. Oldham left Saturday to visit a few days in Labette county, Kansas. He will return today.

Our Public Schools



On account of the increased enumeration in this district of nearly one hundred pupils over that of last year and the filling up of our high school, extensive improvements are being made at the school building to accommodate the big increase in attendance in September.

Another new room in the basement has been floored and plastered for one of the grades while a third room on the second floor is being fitted up for the new Physics and Botany laboratory.

The new Normal Course which was approved by the State Board of Education is being organized by the superintendent with reference to subjects, apparatus, and reference library, new compound microscopes, dissecting microscopes, herbariums, illustrative slides, laboratory tables etc. The southeast room on the second floor will be used as the Laboratory. Four new sectional bookcases will be installed to house the reference libraries in Pedagogy, Botany, English and History, Science Mathematics and Latin. At the opening of school the first Monday in September, the Barber County High School of this city will be unsurpassed by any other school in Southwest Kansas in the matter of Laboratory and Library equipment.

Those high school pupils who elect to take the Normal Course during the fourth year and graduate from our school are entitled to take the State examination for a State certificate, which is renewable. There never was a better opportunity for young men and women in Barber county to secure a first class high school education, and if they desire a State certificate, that will be given this year in our high school. This tuition in the high school is absolutely free to all residents of the county who are qualified to enter.

The High School Bulletin, containing full information, will be ready for distribution next week when a copy will be mailed to all the common school graduates and any teacher or parent who may be interested in the school.

In the meantime any information concerning the school can be had by calling on Mr. Major, the superintendent, at his home or by addressing him at Medicine Lodge, Kansas.

Looks Like Robbery

County Clerk Ireland received a decided shock when he went through his mail Monday morning and found an epistle from the state board of levy saying that the state tax levy for Barber county had been raised from nine-tenths of a mill to one and one-fourth mills. This makes the county's share of state tax for the ensuing year \$22,123.92 against 14,722.18 last year—an increase of 7,401.74 in one year.

To say that this is an outrage is expressing it mildly. The county's share of state taxes now runs right up to what it costs to pay the running expenses of the county, build bridges and make necessary improvements.

When County Clerk Ireland and Commissioners Lake were before the state board last month they were assured that the county's valuation would not be disturbed. The board kept its word so far as the valuation is concerned but they took the other route by increasing the levy.

This, together with the legislature's interfering with the business of school districts and cities, increasing expenses, will put taxation above what it was last year and if it keeps on a few more years will find a great many delinquent tax payers on the tax rolls.

It appears to The Index that the state is loaded down with graft somewhere. How long are you going to endure it, Mr. Taxpayer?

Wanted: Piano scholars. Ralph L. Ewing.

Odds and Ends

A published report to the contrary notwithstanding, we still incline to the belief that there were 31 days in July, 1909.

Another sad feature about the tragic death of the two Mexicans which occurred accidentally at Belvidere recently, is that it reduces the population of Kiowa 2.

Notwithstanding the fact that Jamaica Ginger has been prominently before the public in this town for nearly a month, there are several writers, who still do not know how to spell Jamaica.

The court house boys have all become converted to the idea of woman suffrage recently. W. L. Bragg, deputy county treasurer, presented the argument that brought the bunch over to his way of thinking.

Gov. Stubbs declares that he would veto the tariff bill if he were president. It is presumed that the Governor, also, would have done differently in the Stone affair had he been president.

If Father Adam could live it over again and begin right here in Medicine Lodge, he would be proof against downfall without regard to the severity of the temptation. If you are a doubter, price the fruit that is being offered for sale here.

Unless some of the trains that come and go in this immediate vicinity take to carrying mail occasionally, it is our intention of doing the sack-clock and ashes stunt. Heretofore we have spoken in terms of praise of the new R. R. schedule.

Medicine Lodge abolished "2 per cent" last spring but she will have it in double doses next November and December. The fall dose is one we will all have to take whether we like it or not. That which was abolished we did not have to take if we didn't like it.

The engagement of Eddie Cudahy, son of the millionaire packer, is announced. It will be remembered that Eddie was kidnapped when he was a small boy and it took lots of cash and trouble to secure his freedom. This time he will find it still more difficult to get loose.

Are the young men getting worse or are the old ones becoming foolish? is a problem that is agitating the minds of several of the local gossips. If Dame Rumor prevaricath not several of our handsome young men have been denied the privileges of the vine and fig tree by "her" father.

We do not know how well the dog ordinance is being enforced but unless nine-tenths of the dogs that occupy the streets and alleys are merely visitors, the ordinance should yield sufficient revenue to defray all the running expenses and pay off the bonded indebtedness without imposing a general, interest or bond levy.

Speaking of Dame Consistency: A public official who was pictured in the recent city campaign as a law nullifier and a dangerous man generally, is furnishing the principal intellectual power in prosecuting alleged violators of the prohibitory law while Old Purity who has preached so loud and long in the cause of law enforcement has been retained to defend an accused rum seller. "By their acts ye shall know them."

Sickness has been more prevalent in Medicine Lodge this summer than we had suspected. We get this information second-hand. In a recent legal proceeding something over a score of men testified that they have been under the care of a physician during the entire spring and summer. In each case a cure was effected but on account of professional modesty the physician in charge does not care to have his name published.

Medicine Lodge 13; Attica 1

A base ball game played in this city Saturday afternoon ended in the figures above given. It was a tame event. The Attica boys were outclassed everywhere and the home team "played horse" nearly all the time. If they had tried very hard they could have doubled the score and shut out Attica entirely.

Commissioner B. E. Wadsworth took sick Monday morning and was unable to attend the levy meeting of the board.

Dr. Kociell—Continued

A second information was filed in the district court of Barber county against Dr. S. Kociell of this city by County Attorney Field last Thursday charging the Doctor with having sold intoxicating liquor. There are four counts in the information. Two charge sales on July 17th, and two charge sales on July 1st. Dr. Kociell gave a bond in the sum of \$1000 for trial in district court. His bondsmen are George Larkin and Henry Larkin of Deerhead.

A number of witnesses were examined by County Attorney Field and Mayor Skinner on Wednesday and as a result of the inquisition and testimony obtained Dr. Kociell was arrested for the second time on a charge of violating the prohibitory law.

This last arrest is really a counterpart of the first arrest made at the time the raid was made on the defendant's residence and office. The original charge was maintaining a nuisance but no sales of liquor were alleged. The second arrest is intended to make a stronger case for it is rarely that a conviction on the charge of maintaining a nuisance is secured without producing evidence showing that liquor was sold.

As matters now stand, Dr. Kociell, if convicted, could be made to pay a fine of \$2500 and serve a jail sentence of one year and six months, should he be convicted on all the counts. The minimum, if convicted on the five counts, would be a \$500 fine and five months in jail.

He still proclaims his innocence and his attorneys profess to believe that he will be acquitted, while the prosecution are just as certain that they will convict him.

Light Fingered

Ray Foster who works for B. E. Wadsworth west of the city was relieved of \$37 Saturday night and there are good prospects of landing the thief any day. Ray sleeps in the upper story of the engine house and the thief, who evidently knew of his sleeping there and having money, entered about midnight. Just as he was making his exit Ray awoke and spoke, thinking perhaps Mr. Wadsworth had come in to awaken him. At this the thief ran swiftly and when he got outside the dog gave chase. The fleeing man became entangled in some grass and fell, losing his hat and also Foster's watch which he had stolen, but he got away with the money. Mr. Wadsworth is almost certain that he knows the hat and its owner and Sheriff Mathews, while so far unsuccessful, has a warm trail and thinks he will get the thief soon.

The Citizens bank stockholders have decided to erect a brick building on the Adams & Co. corner. Work will begin next week.

Mrs. Frances Stafford is visiting with relatives and friends in Pueblo and other cities in Colorado. She will be gone several weeks.

G. J. Southworth and wife and son, Otto, and Guilford Davis and Miss Alice Rudolph made an auto trip to Kingman and return Sunday.

O. J. Corliss, the Coats Jersey specialist, took a car load of his cows to Anthony the first of this week for both advertising and sale purposes. He has a good prospect to sell the entire load.

Glenn Ellis, who has been sick the past week with typhoid fever, is holding his own and in some respects is improving. He is being cared for by Mrs. Strohl at her home. Dr. Coleman is attending him.

Miss Gertrude Rhoades left on Monday to visit a few days with her sister, Mrs. Lusk, in Anthony. From Anthony she expects to go to Hennessey, Oklahoma, to visit with Mrs. Jas. Mitchell and family. She will be gone about a month.

The Sawtelle (Calif.) Sentinel of July 21st, says: "Mrs. Vina Macy, of the famous town of Medicine Lodge, Kas., the home of 'Sockless Jerry' Simpson and Carrie Nation, who is here visiting and taking in the Elks' conclave, and also visiting old-time friends and neighbors, has been the guest of her former neighbor, Mrs. Ella Clark, of Sawtelle."