

THE ST. LANDRY CLARION

"Here Shall the Press the People's Rights Maintain, Unswayed by Influence and Unbribed by Gain."

VOLUME XXXI—NO. 17.

OPELOUSAS, LA., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1921

TWO DOLLARS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE

HALF MILLION TAX BILL DUE BY THE PARISH IN 1920

Two-Thirds Collected Up To Middle of Week

DELINQUENT LIST WILL BE LARGE

Shortage of Cash Causes Many to Groan Over Load

Up to last Wednesday the St. Landry tax office had collected approximately \$200,000 of the half-million dollars due by the taxpayers of the St. Landry parish for the year 1920. Collections were going on briskly, the office being crowded with people and as fast as one secured his receipt and departed another took his place in the waiting line.

Only about three weeks now remain in which to settle with the collector before penalties are attached, and it is now practically certain that the important work will not be completed in that brief time. So many property owners are short of cash that they will either find it difficult or altogether impossible to pay their 1920 taxes hence the delinquent list, to be published some time later on, is expected to be unusually large.

Taxes have been getting higher every year since the adoption of the constitutional amendment creating the state board of affairs, and people are groaning under the weight. While the millage has been somewhat reduced from the old-time standard, the assessment has been doubled, tripled and even quadrupled, and thus the total cost to the property owner has been increased by leaps and bounds.

Few property owners are kicking against the hundred per cent assessment, but there is a strong kick against the greater sum of taxes they are forced to pay, and that can be explained in no other way except that the lowering of the millage has not followed suit with the increased valuation placed on all kinds of property for taxing purposes. The board of state affairs, wielding the "big stick" at Baton Rouge, immune from all attacks by the property owners because it is appointed by the governor, sits in the foreground and tells the numerous assessors what to do, and these officials, all of whom are directly elected by the people, simply have to obey the dictates of the board at the state capital.

What is true of St. Landry is equally true of every parish in Louisiana. Taxes have been increasing every year and today, according to those who have to foot the bills each year, the cost to the property owner is becoming absolutely burdensome. Municipal property has to bear a tremendous burden of taxes, for it pays not only the state and parish prorata but also the special taxes and the city taxes besides. We understand that many home owners in this city are paying a total annual tax bill large enough to pay fair rent for a home for twelve months. This, they correctly claim, is penalizing the home owner and discouraging all prospective home owners from pursuing their plans of buying or building a home of their own and thus getting rid of the bugbear of paying monthly rent, for after all the annual bugbear of paying huge taxes is more disconcerting than the small rent they would have to meet in monthly doses.

The taxpayers of St. Landry are paying state, parish, road, drainage, good roads, school, Confederate veteran and other special taxes today. Some are paying a greater millage than others, according to the locality and the special millage authorized. In the incorporated municipalities the tax load is greater, and the cause for groans and lamentations is just that much larger. Predictions are made that this matter of decreasing the tax load will be the greatest problem before the constitutional convention which is soon to convene in Baton Rouge.

COMMITTEE WILL SELECT SITE FOR SCHOOL HOUSE

Superintendent Prescott publishes a notice today, stating that the building committee of the new school building for Opelousas will meet on the 23d instant to take up the proposition of the new school's location. It is to be located in either the western or northwestern part of the city, and property owners having lots of sufficient area are asked to submit propositions to the committee for sale of their holdings.

W. C. Vaughn, editor of the Kinder Tribune, was an Opelousas visitor last week and spent several hours in the Clarion office. Mr. Vaughn was elected to the legislature last year from Allen parish and is one of the few newspaper men in the law.

FORMER OPELOUSEAN IS ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Friends and relatives of George T. Edwards will be pleased to learn that he stood a very creditable examination before the state supreme court on his application to practice law before the courts of Louisiana. Mr. Edwards is now residing in Winnsboro, Jackson parish, and will follow the profession there. He was connected with the law offices of Lewis & Lewis in this city for a number of years, and studied law under the late Thomas H. Lewis. It is stated that Mr. Edwards was long proficient in the law and could have been admitted to practice several years ago, had he made application. Unquestionably he has a bright and promising career open before him in the courts of Louisiana.

MYSTERY BOBS UP IN RECOVERY OF A LOST BRACELET

Unknown Woman Returns Valuable Trinket to Mrs. George C. Jordan

ASKS REWARD OF 250 DOLLARS OF OWNER

Money Not Paid and Identity of Person Has Not Been Made Known

Tally one more for Opelousas as a producer of mysteries! The famous diamond-set bracelet of Mrs. George C. Jordan, lost one night about two weeks ago, has been recovered and returned to its owner!

Mrs. Jordan lost her valuable bracelet while returning home with her husband from the moving picture show. Its loss was not discovered until after they reached home. An immediate search was made for the trinket but it was not discovered, and the following morning Mr. Jordan inserted an advertisement offering a "liberal" reward for its recovery and return. The information was flashed on the screen at the picture show and the entire occurrence given wide publicity, but the lost article did not show up and not a word was heard of it until the first of the week. Someone found it—that fact was patent from the first and became more so when the first of this week Mr. Jordan received a mysterious letter, signed with the initials "X. K. X." and evidently mailed on a passenger train operating between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, for the envelope bearing the missive bore the "New Orleans and Baton Rouge Railroad Post-office" mark.

The letter stated the writer had found a bracelet "set with nineteen diamonds," and notified Mr. Jordan that if this was his bracelet to "deposit (\$250.00) two hundred and fifty dollars with Mr. Charles Thibodeaux, and instruct him to pay the said sum to the bearer of the bracelet." Mr. Jordan was asked to "answer in the Star-Progress."

The "answer" was inserted in the newspaper, appearing last Wednesday morning, notifying "X. K. X." that the sum demanded was in the hands of the sheriff and would be paid for the return of the bracelet. The mystery person evidently expected the reply, for on Wednesday night an "old lady" appeared at the home of Mr. Thibodeaux, on East Groles street, about 8 o'clock, handed in the bracelet and was informed by Mr. Thibodeaux that the check for the two hundred and fifty dollars was at his office in the court house, and she was notified to call on him Thursday and get it. Up to a late hour Thursday, however, she had not shown up and the money was not paid over when this story was written.

It is understood that the bracelet was found at a very early hour the morning following its loss, and that it was picked up on the sidewalk near the postoffice, on Court and Landry streets. Why the finder should have kept the article in her possession two weeks is a mystery the curious public has not been made wise to. It is conjectured that the person who delivered the bracelet is not the one who found it, but acted as a go-between in the transaction. The identity of "X. K. X." may never become publicly known as both Mr. Jordan and Sheriff Thibodeaux are reticent on that point, not caring to divulge the secret which is known only to themselves and the mysterious woman who carried the trinket to the sheriff's house Wednesday night. Mrs. Jordan, however, is happy in the recovery of her piece of jewelry, as it is a family heirloom and is considered worth a large sum of money besides.

George K. Perrault, who is taking a course in law at the state university, Baton Rouge, came over Saturday to spend a few days with home folks. He was stricken with a case of measles and did not return Monday.

CARNIVAL DANCE WAS GREAT SUCCESS

LARGE CROWD FROM OPELOUSAS AND OTHER POINTS FILLS HALL TO ITS CAPACITY

The annual Mardi Gras dance given by the ladies of the Episcopal church of Opelousas, last Tuesday afternoon and night, was a great success both socially and financially. The Barrilleaux auditorium was taxed to its capacity with the crowd of people who attended. Many from distant towns, such as Rayne, Crowley, Lafayette and Washington, as well as other places, were on hand for the last festivities before the lenten season was ushered in with Ash Wednesday. Oge's band furnished music for the dance, and when the midnight hour sounded the death knell for the season of festivities the dance came to an end.

In the afternoon the young folks held the boards and enjoyed dancing to their hearts' content. Prizes awarded to the children were as follows: First, to Misses Norma and Bonnie Fontenot, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Fontenot. They represented "A Pair of Butterflies."

Second prize to Master Arthur Stander of New York. He represented a "Young Duke."

At the grown folks' dance the prize winners were Mr. and Mrs. John Debleux, Jr., who were dressed in oriental costumes. Second prize went to Misses Rosa Hebrard and Corinne Lacombe. Mr. R. O. Marsu, of Port Barre, dressed as a Scottish highlander, with full regalia of kilts, etc., was very striking and his make-up drew many favorable comments. So many and so various were the different costumes and so striking were their appearance that the matter of judging and deciding on the winners was a difficult task indeed.

The good ladies of the Episcopal church are to be congratulated on the wonderful success of the annual entertainment, which surpassed all their previous efforts along that line. They will have to strive very hard to surpass next year the standard set this year.

SUES PARISH FOR LARGE SUM MONEY

COL. C. W. KROTZ INSTITUTES PROCEEDINGS, CLAIMING \$47,000 DAMAGES

Col. C. W. Krotz, mayor of Krotz Springs and president of the Krotz Springs Hotel company, this week instituted suit against the parish of St. Landry, claiming damages in the sum of \$47,000. The colonel, who is classed as being thoroughly informed as to law and law procedure, drew up his own petition to the court, and it is generally understood that he will claim the rights as a litigant to prosecute his own case against the parish when the matter comes up for trial in the sixteenth district court.

The case arises from the refusal of the police jury to create a "navigation district" in the Krotz Springs territory. Mr. Krotz claims that the law makes it mandatory for the police jury to create such a district when petitioned by a certain number of property owners. He says that the company he represents is damaged in the amount of \$47,000 because of the jury's refusal to create the district requested. Mr. Garland, the parish legal adviser, in a written opinion states that there is no basis for the suit and that the jury is correct in its refusal to create the district. On these divergent and conflicting views the suit will go to trial at some future time.

PARISH GRAND JURY TO MEET IN MARCH

GRAND INQUISITORS WILL BE CALLED IN SESSION, BUT NO CRIMINAL TERM THEN

The grand jury drawn the last term of criminal court and which holds over for six months from the date will be called in special session some time in March by Judge Pay, acting on the request of District Attorney R. Lee Garland.

The inquisitors will look into criminal cases brought to their attention but there will be no jury term of court then for trying indicted parties the term having been deferred until some later date, perhaps not before early summer. There are a number of parties in jail who are unable to furnish bond and their cases will be called before the jury for investigation, and if no true bills are returned they can be released.

Louis Brooks and Henry Fontenot of Crowley were here Tuesday night for the carnival dance given by the ladies of the Episcopal church.

CENTENNIAL Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Town of OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA.

Monday, February 14, 1921, at 2:30 P. M., High School Auditorium.

Proclamation

Whereas, the Town of Opelousas was incorporated by Act of the Louisiana Legislature on February 14, 1821, so that the first Charter of this municipality will be One Hundred Years old on next Monday, February 14th; and whereas, this important historical fact has been taken cognizance of at a meeting of the Board of Aldermen of this city at which it was unanimously voted that it be called to the attention of the citizens thereof and that a public demonstration in honor of the occasion be held and that the Mayor be authorized to give notice of the same.

Therefore, I, Edward L. Loeb, Mayor of the City of Opelousas, La., do hereby issue this, my proclamation calling upon all patriotic citizens of the City of Opelousas and vicinity to assemble at the High School Auditorium in Opelousas, La., on Monday, February 14th, 1921, at 2:30 p. m., for the purpose of taking part in the Centennial Celebration of the incorporation of the Town of Opelousas; and I hereby request that all citizens suspend their usual occupations between the hours of 2 p. m. and 4 p. m., so that this occasion may be participated in by all.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto affixed my signature, officially, at Opelousas, La., on this, the 8th day of February, A. D., 1921, and caused the official seal of the City to be hereunto appended.

EDWARD L. LOEB, Mayor of Opelousas, La.

Attest:—J. J. FERRODIN, City Clerk.

HUNTING SEASON PRACTICALLY OVER

QUAIL SHOOTING MUST STOP ON 15TH—CLOSED ON OTHER GAME TWO WEEKS AGO

The open season on game in Louisiana is practically ended for the winter of 1920-1921, and hunters will now have to lay aside their guns until next fall and winter. Game Warden Henry Landry issued a notice to this effect and published it in a Eunice paper last Saturday.

The open season on ducks, all migratory birds and deer closed about the 1st instant, and that on quail will end on the 15th. Strict laws have been enacted to protect all game in this state and the penalties for the violation thereof are heavy.

Woodcock are protected at all times and the killing of these birds is absolutely prohibited. We understand, however, that quite a number of this rare bird have been slaughtered contrary to the provisions of the law, but as evidence is difficult to secure convictions would be almost impossible. Hunting without first securing the necessary license is another evil hard to suppress, and it is probable that a few hunted off and on the past season without securing the license.

Methodist Choir Meets
The Methodist choir met at the residence of Mrs. E. G. Bureleigh last Friday at 7:30 p. m. Singing was practiced and refreshments were served. Those present were:

Mrs. Drake, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Ballard, Rev. and Mrs. Riggs, Mrs. Chas. Dupre, Mrs. W. F. Nolan, Mrs. H. A. Phillips, Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Skiles, Misses Irene Shute, Della Roberts, Crawford, Florence Phillips, Mr. R. D. Lamson, Miss Pearl Evans, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Holland, Mr. Harvey Phillips, Mr. and Mrs. Ballard of Thibodaux; Mr. Leonard Riggs and Miss Lily Bell Bodemuller.

AFTER LONG SHUTDOWN, PORT BARRE MILL RUNS

The big sawmill at Port Barre, which closed down quite awhile back, resumed active operations last Monday. Owing to the small demand for lumber and the large supply on hand, it was found necessary to stop operations in order for business conditions to become adjusted. Starting up again means a revival of business in the Courtableau village, for a large number of men are employed, both at the mill plant proper and in the woods.

The big mill located at Hazelwood, on the Gulf Coast Lines several miles east of Port Barre, is still shut down and nothing has been given out as to when it will resume work.

Thomas P. Bowden of the Gulf Coast Lines, with headquarters at DeQuincy, spent Sunday here with home folks.

WHITE MAN LOSES HIS LIFE IN COUPLING LOGGING CARS

An employe of the Port Barre sawmill named Everett was killed Friday of last week while coupling cars on the logging railroad of the mill company, out in the woods. Projecting logs struck him in the head and literally mashed his brains out. The mortally wounded man lived a short while and died when he was being taken from the train at Port Barre. He was about forty years of age and leaves a family.

COLLECTOR TO AID LOCAL TAXPAYERS

A. L. STAGG WILL BE HERE TWO DIFFERENT TIMES ON INCOME TAX MATTER

Mr. A. L. Stagg, deputy internal revenue collector, announces that he will be in Opelousas from February 21 to 23, inclusive, for the purpose of aiding income taxpayers in making out and filing their blank returns with the government. He will again visit Opelousas for the same purpose on March 9 to 15, both dates inclusive. Parties who have difficulty in making out their returns will find it to their interest to meet Mr. Stagg at his office in the federal building and he will gladly aid them in this important work. The income tax blanks are intricate and difficult to understand, but long experience in filling in these blanks makes Mr. Stagg thoroughly competent to handle all the details thereof and thus aid the taxpayer in circumventing any difficulties which he may have in filing a properly filled sheet.

Catholic Church Notes

Last Wednesday was Ash Wednesday. There was blessing of ashes at the Catholic church before the 7 o'clock mass. Ashes were distributed by Father Colliard and Father Simery.

Ash Wednesday ushers in the holy season of lent, the time of mortification and penance for Catholics in preparation for Easter. There will be lenten sermons alternately in both French and English every Wednesday night.

LOCAL FISHERMEN ARE GETTING ACTIVE AGAIN

Several parties of Opelousas have visited near-by fishing resorts recently, and in practically every case they have been successful. Those who went to Darbonne, Geromo and "Chene Vert" report having caught good strings of perch, trout and sea-bass. With the coming of spring and the prevailing warm weather the number of fishing parties will increase and as the streams and lakes are full of the games, big catches will be the rule.

WILL CELEBRATE 100TH ANNIVERSARY

INCORPORATION OF OPELOUSAS DATES BACK JUST ONE CENTURY

All district, parish and city officials, including all ex-mayors of Opelousas and the resident ministers of all denominations and representatives of the newspapers are requested to occupy places on the platform.

The first charter of the town of Opelousas was adopted by the legislature of Louisiana on February 14, 1821, and it will therefore be one hundred years old on next Monday.

At a meeting of the mayor and board of aldermen, held last Tuesday, it was unanimously voted that a public demonstration in honor of the event should be held on next Monday the 14th instant, at the high school auditorium, at 2:30 p. m., and the mayor was authorized to issue a proclamation calling upon all patriotic citizens of Opelousas and vicinity to assemble for the purpose of taking part in the centennial anniversary. The mayor has issued his proclamation and he requests all citizens to suspend business from 2 until 4 o'clock on that day so that all may participate in this celebration. We publish same in this issue.

We heartily approve of this action on the part of the mayor and board of aldermen, and we trust that our people will turn out in great number to do honor to this important historical event. While Opelousas is much older than a hundred years, its official incorporation as a town occurred just that long ago, and we believe it is meet that its citizens take formal notice of that fact.

We understand that a short but interesting program has been prepared for the occasion and aside from the fact that it will take but a little time to participate in the celebration, we feel sure that all who attend will enjoy it. We urge all good citizens to take part.

JAIL BIRD WANTS TO KNOW STATUS

PRISONER IN THE ST. LANDRY LOCK-UP WRITES GOVERNOR RELATIVE TO MATTER

Some time ago Marshal of the City Court Plais Horn arrested a negro in this city on the charge of forgery. It is stated that the negro forged the name of Dr. John A. Haas to a check and failure to "get by" with the deed was the cause of his downfall and arrest.

Investigation by the officer disclosed that the negro was a much wanted individual. He was an escaped convict, having gotten out of the penitentiary in December, 1917, since which time he has committed various crimes, being under indictment in Avoyelles parish for murder.

There are still eight years, two months and four days of hard labor due the state penitentiary, and he writes to the state executive to find out if he should finish serving out his term or stand trial on the several charges pending against him for other crimes. Apparently he expects to escape punishment for the new offenses by being returned to the pen to complete serving his unexpired term.

Two negro women from Kinder were here Thursday to secure legal aid to defend a sister of theirs on the charge of blackmail in the Allen parish court. The woman under this charge is now in jail in Oberlin. She is charged with mailing a blackmail letter to a sawmill proprietor, demanding money under penalty of having his property destroyed and his crew killed.

The convict in jail here whose real name is Rideau and not Harris, admits having written the letter and giving it to the negro woman in the Oberlin jail to mail. His criminal record appears to be a long one.

MARY SYRUP MILL TO MOVE TO LAFAYETTE

INDUSTRY LOCATED AT WASHINGTON MAY BE ESTABLISHED IN NEAR-BY PARISH

An item of local news in one of the Lafayette papers states that Mr. James T. Mary of Washington, this parish, is contemplating moving his long established syrup mill from its present location in Washington to some point in Lafayette, where the supply of cane is larger. Mr. Mary, according to the newspaper story, was in Lafayette parish last week investigating the situation and stated that he might decide to change the location of his plant. It requires many thousand tons of cane each season and the farmers in Lafayette will furnish him this cane if he moves there.

TO START DRILL ON OIL WELL AT VERY EARLY DATE

Extra Casing Bought And Received And Unloading Here

ALL PREPARATIONS MADE FOR THE WORK

Experienced Helpers to Aid At Derrick to Be Gotten in Texas

Except for the securing of renewals on a few leases, the Opelousas Oil Co. is ready to resume drilling and it is expected that active work will be begun Monday. The casing for the well is on the track and will be unloaded at once.

A meeting of the directors will be held today and formal action taken to start drilling.

A letter received by Mr. J. A. Perkins from a friend of his in El Dorado, Arkansas, gives something of an idea of what might be expected should oil be struck here. Speaking of a mutual friend, this gentleman writes Mr. Perkins as follows:

"Mr. Murphy's deposits have gone from \$500,000 to over \$2,000,000 in 15 days. So much for an oil development. It would be great if you could get some wells near Opelousas."

A man who has recently been in El Dorado reports that it is practically impossible for anyone to get a bed to sleep in. In fact, he stated that people there were paying the city rent for the city sidewalks, in order that they might sleep on them.

If oil is found near Opelousas it will make the city over night and it will not be a question of selling merchandise or a question of prices but just simply a question of whether or not the stuff is here to sell. Hotels, boarding houses and restaurants turn into small gold mines where there is a rush of this kind.

Nothing unforeseen occurring, active work of drilling at the well on the Crewell farm, southeast of Opelousas, will be resumed some day next week. A supply of casing, bought elsewhere some days ago, has been received and unloaded in local freight yards. Work of installing a commissary and eating house on the grounds is already under way, this to supply the needs of the workmen and bosses employed on the drilling rig.

All details practically have been cleared up and the work of sinking the pipe to pay sand will be prosecuted vigorously from the very start. Experienced men in oil drilling will be secured from some of the Texas oil fields, a representative of the local company having already gone there to employ the lass of labor needed at the well here. Prospects for a "pay" strike are said to be good and those actively in charge are enthusiastic over future results. The immense amount of acreage under lease will be extremely valuable if even a slight trace of grease is found in the initial well sunk.

Reports of the uncovering of a potential oil field on the south side of Spanish lake, just this side of New Iberia, and located in almost the same soil formation as the well near Opelousas, increases the hopes of the local people interested in the well drilling here. An item of news furnished the Clarion by a gentleman who has considerable knowledge of the territory surrounding Spanish lake reads as follows:

New oil territory is being exploited around Spanish lake, and we learn that the outlook is promising near Cade station, on the main line of the Southern Pacific railway.

One mile and a half from "Lady of the Lake" plantation, on the lake front, the company owning the big farm has signed a drilling contract, the well to commence in thirty days. They have made eight locations but have only contracted for one well. The geologists of the big oil companies speak speak highly of that section. The lands are all leased for several miles around at five dollars per acre, but a few sub-leases can yet be obtained.

The well on the south of Spanish lake is down a little over two thousand feet and has passed through two small oil strata and the well is still drilling.

The Gulf Standard and Humble companies are getting busy there and around lake Simomet. Captain Lucas, the veteran discoverer of the once famous "Spindle Top," is to drill on Jefferson island for other parties. He is to drill in the salt dome. It is stated.

As predicted by Dr. R. A. Mayer, native Opelousean, now residing at Abbeville, it seems likely that a good deal of actual drilling will commence in the near future in South Louisiana, which for many years he has predicted would prove the greatest oil field in the state and perhaps in the world.