

# IMPERIAL VALLEY PRESS

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## PROTECTION OF THE VALLEY PROVIDED FOR BY SETTLERS

### WATER COMPANIES PLEDGE FUNDS TO RECEIVER FOR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW INTAKE FROM COLORADO RIVER

**Col. Holabird Asks Mutual Companies to Invest Half Million in Certificates to Pay For Building Headworks and For Putting River Back Into Its Channel. Work To Be Started Next Week.**

The boards of directors of all the mutual water companies in Imperial Valley have pledged the companies to raise money for the construction of a new intake from the Colorado River that will avert the danger of a water shortage at low stages of the river, and all but two of the companies have announced their readiness to provide means for building the works necessary to control the river from the heading to a point of safety some twenty-five or thirty miles below. The people of the valley have taken the matter into their own hands and will help themselves.

At a meeting of all the directors held yesterday morning in the Opera House at El Centro, the following was adopted unanimously:

"Resolved—That the mutual water companies here represented request the receiver of the California Development Company to proceed at once with the construction of a new intake and pledge themselves to supply the money required, taking his certificates therefor, in the proportion of their shares of issued stock, provided that their obligation is limited to \$35,000 and that the stock of company No. 8 held by W. J. Doran as trustee shall not be regarded as issued."

Action upon the matter of providing funds for building controlling works, at an estimated cost of \$500,000 was postponed because No. 1 and No. 5 desired to await the report of a board of engineers and to investigate other features of the proposed plan. Ultimate ownership of the canal system by the people of the valley is considered the inevitable outcome, and the two companies that declined to act upon the larger proposition explained that they want to know what terms the Southern Pacific, or any other party to the present litigation that may bid in the property at receiver's sale, will make to the people when they are ready to purchase the system.

The plan for protection of the canal system of Imperial Valley and insurance against shortage of water at low stages of the river has been worked out by Receiver Holabird and Engineer Clarke and placed before the water users. After thorough examination of the problem and consideration of conditions that have developed recently, the receiver has concluded that dredging the present intake would not give permanent relief and would fail to meet the situation created by cutting back of the channel. He proposes to make a new intake and to begin the work of putting the river back into its old bed, and he asks the people of the valley to help themselves by helping him to raise the money required for the work.

F. S. Webster was chairman of yesterday's meeting and Dr. Patten was secretary. Receiver Holabird explained the situation and said he had been unable to persuade the Southern Pacific to supply any more money. The executive board of the railroad notified him last Tuesday that it would not buy any more certificates and he was up against it and had to appeal to the water users, who must be the ultimate owners of the system. A dredge to build the present intake could not be built in less than sixty days, and in thirty days there might be a shortage of water that would cost the valley far more than the sum required now to avert it. Unless the river were controlled, the recession of grade might leave the floor of the headgate high and dry this year. When the river should be under control the value of land in the valley would be so increased that the money spent on the work would seem but a trifle. Certificates purchased by the water users would be first liens upon the

property, would bear interest at seven per cent and would represent so much of the ultimate purchase price.

Col. Holabird exhibited a map showing the proposed work. The present intake he explained, is at the wrong place and at the wrong angle to the river and serves as a catchbasin for drift and silt. The new intake would be a mile and a quarter long and could be made available in thirty days. The levee along the river bank below would be twenty-five or thirty miles long, would put the river back into its old channel and stop recession of the grade.

In the discussion that followed, the Southern Pacific's motives for refusing to supply money were questioned, and doubt of the ability of the settlers to raise the necessary funds was expressed by directors of No. 1 one of whom was very pessimistic and suspicious and intimated that he was ready to walk out of the valley. Views of that sort were combatted vigorously by the directors of other companies and by W. F. Holt.

Mr. Holt said one of the reasons for the railroad's attitude was that litigants seeking to have the receiver's certificates in order to get control of the C. D. Company and squeeze out the stockholders. He had tried to get the railroad to put up money to meet emergencies in the valley, and had found a feeling among the officers of the company that the people of the valley were not disposed to help themselves enough. All engineers were agreed that the river must be controlled and that settled the question with the speaker. The certificates he regarded as gilt-edge investments for the water companies.

"The farmers are not going to walk out of the valley," said Mr. Holt. "They can raise the money when they make up their minds to do so, and they are not the sort of people to give up and walk out. It is all foolishness to say that you can't raise half a million dollars in this valley. The people here have shown that they can do anything. The security is good and there is no such thing as not being able to raise the money. The only question is: 'Is it necessary to do the work?' There is nothing in any other point. It is bad for people to depend upon others and to figure that they are going to be taken care of like children. Let them get up and do something. When the people of this valley demonstrate that they are able and willing to do things for themselves, the credit of the community will be vastly improved. The government, also, is more likely to help the people than to help the railroad."

Messrs Holloway, Rockwood, Edgar, Bond, Peterson, McPherrin, Parazette and others spoke in a similar spirit, and county Engineer Perry, replying to questions, said the only way to safeguard the valley was to put the river back into its bed and keep it there. All other work was makeshift. The water in the delta has fallen five feet within a few days, and the roar of the overpour cutting back the Abojos is a warning that should be understood by those who were here when the flood was cutting New River gorge.

A recess was taken for consultation and then the companies were called upon for their decision. No. 1 reported adversely to an assessment of stock, asked for delay to await reports of engineers and favored raising money on notes secured by receiver's certificates.

No. 4—The work is necessary and we will take care of our part of the expense.

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## LEAGUE'S NOMINEES EXPOUND THEIR VIEWS

**Wallace and Eshleman Talk at Mass Meeting in Opera House at El Centro**

Oppose Southern Pacific's Political Bureau, But Are Not Hostile to Railroad—Demand That Corporations Cease Meddling With Government and Attend to Proper Business.

Candidates of the Lincoln-Roosevelt League for nominations on the Republican state ticket appeared in the Holt Opera House El Centro, last Saturday night, at a meeting of citizens called by the John M. Eshleman Club. A. J. Wallace, candidate for lieutenant-governor, and John M. Eshleman, candidate for railroad commissioner, were the only members of the party of league campaigners that caught the train at Los Angeles and kept the engagement. Hiram Johnson, Judge Works and the others missed one train and gave up the trip to the valley.

The opera house was fairly well filled but no such crowd attended the meeting as would have been present had the original arrangement been carried out. J. Stanley Brown was chairman of the meeting, and Judge Cole, W. F. Holt and other representative citizens occupied seats upon the stage.

Mr. Wallace spoke for about half an hour on the purposes of the league and the prospects of ridding the state of the political machine maintained by the Southern Pacific. He had many good things to say about Johnson, Eshleman and the other candidates and made a favorable impression upon his hearers.

Mr. Eshleman explained his own attitude toward the railroad and other corporations, making it clear that he had no animosity toward them as business organizations but was opposed to their activity in politics and to the system of misrule imposed upon California by the machine operating under their name. He said he was confident that no real railroad man had the least fear that he would be unfair to corporations if he should be elected railroad commissioner, and that only the parasites of the railroad, posing as political bosses and anxious to retain their jobs were opposing him.

Mr. Eshleman declared that Johnson and Wallace held views similar to his own, were unselfishly concerned for the public good and were entitled to the support of all citizens desirous of putting an end to machine domination in California.

After the meeting, the speakers and the reception committee joined in the rodeo of Elks at the Hamilton ranch.

El Centro was decorated in honor of the visitors and particularly in honor of Mr. Eshleman, and every citizen, regardless of party, wore the badge of the John M. Eshleman Club which comprises virtually all the voters of Imperial county.

## REPORT ON ROADS

**Highway Commission's Recommendations to be Presented Next Monday.**

The County Highway Commission will submit to its report to the Board of Supervisors next Monday, recommending the building of a north and south road from Brawley to Calexico by the most direct route, and an east and west road from Holtville to Mountain Springs by the most direct route. It is estimated that the highways may be constructed for \$475,000, and the commission will recommend a bond issue of that amount.

By delaying its report, the commission obtained terms for transportation of material from the gravel pits west of New River that make the highway project feasible. It will cost 65 cents a ton to deliver road material at any point on the railroad in the valley, and there is no doubt that the San Diego & Arizona's eastern section will be extended across New River to the gravel deposits to facilitate the building of highways.

## THREE NEW TOWNS ON RAILROAD LINE

**Wilsie, Mobile and Seeley Are Stations on Extension from El Centro**

Train Service to be Started in July By Holt Interurban on Eastern Section of San Diego and Arizona in Imperial Valley.

Track-layers of the eastern section of the San Diego & Arizona railway placed steel across the Brawley main this week and are pushing the work rapidly westward toward New River. They will finish their part of the job in about two weeks and surfacing will occupy another two weeks, when the road will be ready for traffic. The line will be operated, pending completion of the system, as an extension of the Holt Inter-urban, and it is expected that train service will begin in the middle of July with two round trips a day between El Centro and the terminus at New River. A large combination car of improved type was ordered some time ago and is to be delivered early next month. It is a gasoline motor car, with a seating capacity of fifty and a large baggage compartment, costing \$12,000.

There will be three stations on the new line; one to be called Wilsie, just west of the Brawley main, one at Mobile, six miles west of El Centro, and one at New River, where a town called Seeley is to be located. The founders of Seeley are R. R. Crabtree, of Covina, and his associates. They have secured 160 acres of land and eighty shares of water stock, and are preparing to put up buildings for all business enterprises required in a new town.

## LIBRARY IMPROVEMENTS

**Boards Plans for Purchase of Five Hundred Dollars' Worth of New Books This Summer.**

The El Centro Public Library is becoming a recognized factor in the life of this community. Although it has been regularly open for only a few weeks, the interest in it has grown constantly, and the daily circulation of books at present runs from twenty-five to thirty. About 700 volumes now constitute the library; but it is expected that at the next meeting of the Library Board provision will be made for ordering \$500 worth of new books.

Through subscriptions and donations the library is now supplied with newspapers and magazines for the reading tables. At present the room is kept open only during the day time from 9 to 12 and from 2 to 5, but a plan will be presented at the next meeting of the board eliminating the forenoon hours and providing for the library being kept open afternoons and evenings, as in this way it would accommodate a larger number of patrons.

The board has decided to lease the room adjoining the one now occupied so as to provide more space for reading tables, etc., and this change will be made at once.

At the next meeting of the board it is expected that definite plans will be made regarding the beginning of work on the new Carnegie library building.

## APPRECIATES SUPPORT

I desire to thank the many friends in the county who have interested themselves in my candidacy for railroad commissioner. I am deeply indebted to them, and find myself utterly unable to voice my sincere appreciation for the untiring efforts that are being put forth to help me.

To those loyal friends in El Centro and elsewhere who are organizing clubs in my behalf, I can only say that I will try, as I have tried heretofore, to justify their confidence.

JOHN M. ESHLEMAN.

The last will and testament of John G. Dow, deceased, has been filed for probate in the Imperial County Superior Court, and the hearing thereon will take place on June 10. Addie Cora Dow has filed a petition for appointment as administratrix.

## PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF VALLEY CANALS

**Method of Formation of Irrigation District Explained By An Investigator**

Settlers Can Own and Control Entire System and Issue Bonds to Pay For Works and Take Up Water Stock—Supervisor Webster Outlines Features of the Plan.

A plan for organizing an irrigation district under the Bridgford Act, to include all of Imperial county except Palo Verde and the Yuma Indian Reservation, as suggested by F. S. Webster, president of Mutual Water Co. No. 1 and county supervisor.

The Bridgford Act is the old Wright Irrigation Act amended and improved.

Mr. Webster's suggestions are as follows:

Vote bonds sufficient to take up all water stock issued by the different water companies, and put every system in shape so that all land tributary to every ditch may be irrigated and easily served.

Take over the holdings of the C. D. Company when the time comes, if we so desire.

This would put every piece of real estate in the valley on the same basis, and make all share in the burden of bringing in the water, and keeping it coming. As it is now, the farmer is bearing the burden alone. All other enterprises are not assisting, although just as much dependent upon the water as the farmer.

It would make the water appurtenant to the land, and give every acre of irrigable land a right to its share of the water, and it would in no manner impair the value of our water stock. On the other hand, it would place in the hands of the farmers for their present needs and use, the money they have now tied up in water stock. It would possibly turn loose several million dollars in the valley, and put us in a better condition financially than any other agricultural section of the United States.

It would put us in a position to own the entire system from the Colorado River to our delivery boxes.

There are some portions of the law that possibly should be changed to meet our conditions, for instance: It might be wise to change the qualifications of the electors, to holders of title or evidence of title.

There should be some way provided whereby men of some experience would be at the head at all times, and this plan would bring this about.

## FOREE IS FIFTH TRUSTEE

**Judge Cole, in Superior Court, Decides Contest Case of Candidates for Place on City Board.**

Thomas F. Foree is the fifth member of the El Centro Board of City Trustees, says the Imperial County Superior Court.

The case in which William Egerer petitioned the Imperial County Superior Court for a recount of the ballots cast at the recent El Centro municipal election, wherein a tie vote was declared for Egerer and T. F. Foree for City Trustee, was taken up by the court on Wednesday morning and occupied the entire day.

Out of the entire number of ballots cast but twenty-three were in question and out of these eleven were set aside by stipulation. Of the remaining twelve, six were rejected, two because of palpably distinguishing marks, two which were filled in with lead pencil and two which were marked with large crosses so that a question of there being distinguishing marks was raised. This left the result of 158 votes for Foree and 155 votes for Egerer.

The contest case of Andrew Broadbent against J. M. Keith for the City Marshalship of Imperial was to have been called yesterday; but it is too late to give an account of the results in this issue of The Press. Broadbent declares in his petition to the court that while Keith holds the office by an alleged vote of 137, it is Broadbent's belief that in reality Keith received only 125 votes, whereas he believes that he, Broadbent, received 155 votes.

## LAND OFFICE PLAN FOR CLEARING TITLES

**Relotting of Claims Will Cure Defects in Valley Surveys.**

Special Agent's Suggestions of a Year Ago Adopted By Washington Officials and Gravelly Submitted as Invention of Geniuses in Land Office.

Relotting of conflicting claims in Imperial Valley has been recognized at last by the general land office as the obvious and simple remedy for complications brought about by the futile efforts of numerous surveyors to retrace the alleged survey of 1856.

This method of adjusting was urged by Special Agent Satterwhite a year ago, but not until actual cases of conflict were placed in detail before the department could the officers clearly comprehend the situation.

The Assistant Commissioner and the board of law review have just got around to consideration of the problem put up to them by the special agent in a letter of July 29, 1909, and under date of May 21, 1910, they review the case presented and adopt the plan of relotting.

About two years ago, Horace H. Sheets, Charles S. Johnson and Jennie Thornquest squatted upon adjoining tracts of land, and fenced, ditched and cultivated their tracts according to the survey of the Imperial Land Co. In 1909 they made application for desert entries, but it was found impossible to describe their tracts according to the resurvey without bringing their entries into conflict. There was no conflict upon the ground and the parties did not desire to make conflicting entries, but the resurvey so muddled things that even the land office could not tell them "where they were at."

In the letter of May 21 to Special Agent Satterwhite, the commissioner says:

"In regard to such cases and to the claims of those who, in good faith, settled upon or occupied and improved lands in the Imperial Valley prior to the resurvey of such lands in the field, and who now claim it is impossible to adjust their claims to the lines of the resurvey, it seems to this office that an advisable course of procedure would be for a field investigation to be made, township by township, and upon this investigation as a basis, for recommendations to be made for a relotting of the lands claimed according to settlement or occupancy in cases where such relotting could be made from established corners of the resurvey. All persons known to have claims of this sort would be notified of the date of examination of the lands and information as to the proposed examination would be furnished to the newspapers published in the vicinity. Upon completion of the examination of a township, you would note on a copy of the plat of resurvey the proposed relottings of lands in that township and forward to this office with report and recommendation. Action by the local land office upon applications of this sort would be suspended until the reports were made and the supplemental plats were constructed, approved and filed."

"It is requested that you report to this office your views regarding the above outlined plan of procedure, with such suggestions and recommendations as you may have to make."

Mr. Satterwhite says the work can be begun early in the fall, and with two field assistants he can do the relotting expeditiously and dispose of eighty per cent of the conflicts in the valley without trouble or litigation. Patents may then be issued in a great many cases.

The special agent also reports that the school section conflicts in the older settlements of the valley have been settled by agreement and compromise to the satisfaction of all parties, and but few difficulties in adjustment of titles remain to be solved.

## PLANING MILL CHANGES

Henry M. Dimock and R. L. Greer have leased the El Centro planing mill from the owners, F. M. Burger and J. L. Travers, and this week have taken charge of the concern.