

Eagle Lake Headlight.

Bruce W. McCarty, Editor and Proprietor.

"NOTHING EXTRAORDINARY, NOR SET DOWN AS SUCH IN MALICE."

One Dollar and a Half Per Year in Advance.

VOLUME X.

Eagle Lake, Texas, Saturday, November 2, 1912.

NUMBER 24

To the Tax Payers and Citizens of Colorado County, Texas:

As a number of friends have requested me to make a public statement in reference to the indictment found against me as tax assessor of this county, by the last grand jury, in which I was charged with unlawfully changing the minutes of the board of equalization by reducing the assessed valuation of one R. H. Beyer's property from \$22.50 per acre to \$22.00 per acre, and as I feel that the taxpayers and citizens of this county are rightfully entitled to such statement, especially so where it concerns the public interest, I make this method of informing them briefly as to all the facts and circumstances incident to and concerning said indictment.

Beginning in November of the year 1900, when I was first elected tax assessor of this county, I made my first appearance at Santa Anna school house, the precinct in which R. H. Beyer's property is located, and in which he then and now resides, assessing taxes for the year 1901. At this time, and upon this occasion quite a number of taxpayers in that precinct, and especially the neighbors of R. H. Beyer owning property adjacent to his lands, complained to me that they were paying nearly double as much per acre on their respective lands as was R. H. Beyer on his lands, and they seemed to feel that inasmuch as their lands were of equal value, if not of less value, than R. H. Beyer's, that the assessed valuation should be equal. Of course I will admit I was then totally unfamiliar with the duties and authority of the tax assessor, however I knew that if these conditions existed that as a matter of right and justice to all concerned something ought to be done by way of equalizing and adjusting the valuation of these lands, so I told these complainants for them to appear before the board of equalization when they met in June of that year, and I would use my influence with the commissioners' court, and have them adjust this matter if possible. After this Mr. Beyer came to give in his assessment, and I then told him of the complaints made by his neighbors in reference to the difference in valuation placed on his and the adjacent lands. Later upon investigation, I found Beyer's land to be assessed at \$6.72 per acre, while that of his neighbors was assessed at \$9.64 per acre. And he, Beyer, then admitted there was practically no difference in the true market value of his lands and that of his neighbors. I also told Beyer then, as I told his neighbors, to come before the board of equalization in June in order that these differences in valuation could be adjusted to the satisfaction of all concerned. This suggestion on my part seemed to be satisfactory to all except Mr. Beyer, who insisted that I take his assessment as given by him at \$6.72 per acre, which I refused to do, and thereupon reported this matter to the board of equalization on the following June, and at said meeting they equalized the valuation of these lands by placing an assessed valuation thereon at \$8.00 per acre. I invite the inspection of the records of the board of equalization in corroboration of the above statement. Mr. Beyer seemed to think that I was directly the cause of such action on the part of the board of equalization, and he then told me that he would get even with me sooner or later (whether or not he kept his promise or not remains to be seen from the following).

At the next general election when Frank Taylor was my opponent, he, Beyer, loomed up on the political horizon as one of my strongest political enemies, and used all the resources then at his command to defeat me. This

political opposition on his part has continued all along during my tenure of office, and especially so in the last campaign when Mr. Louis Bunge was a candidate against me, being very active against me in that race. In mentioning this opposition on the part of Mr. Beyer, I do not mean it in the light of criticism, for I concede that every man has the right to support or oppose any aspirant to a public office. I only make mention of this in order to throw light, if possible, upon the events which follow.

Now, in reference to the instigation of the indictment against me and the foundation therefor, I have been informed that Mr. R. H. Beyer, who by the way was a member of the grand jury that found the bill, without any solicitation upon the part of any of the grand jurors, but at the request of the district attorney, and with an effort to connect me with an alleged change in his assessment, he misquoted a conversation which occurred between him and me on August the 26th, 1912, as was shown by the testimony of other witnesses upon the stand, and on the witness stand he testified to the same conversation, in which he claimed that I told him on that date that I had reduced the valuation of his property from \$22.50 to \$20.00 per acre after the board of equalization had placed a valuation thereon at \$22.50 per acre. I am informed that the testimony of Beyer as a witness was practically the same as his statement before the grand jury, and I am further informed that this statement of Beyer before the grand jury was nucleus and basis upon which the indictment was found, and had it not been for this statement by Beyer before the grand jury, I am further informed that no bill would have been found. Upon the witness stand Mr. Beyer further testified that when the above conversation occurred, he, Beyer, was absolutely sober, as he had not drunk anything intoxicating on that day, claiming that he was sick. In this connection I desire to state that the uncontradicted testimony, with the exception of that of Beyer himself, shows, and this was proven by eight of the most prominent people in this community, that Mr. Beyer, at this time and on this occasion was unquestionably under the influence of liquor, as he had been drinking very heavily while in Columbus and before the conversation occurred; the witnesses testifying that they not only observed his condition, but actually drank intoxicating liquors with Beyer on that day. If this was not true, Mr. Beyer certainly did himself a great injustice, and undoubtedly disappointed a great number of his friends in not even attempting to prove by a single witness other than himself that he was not drunk or had not drunk anything intoxicating during that day.

Now, the truth of this conversation between Mr. Beyer and me is, and it occurred as follows as was shown by witnesses on the stand: on the afternoon of August the 26th, 1912, I met Mr. Beyer in August Ilse's saloon, and I remarked to him that he was looking bad. He replied, "Yes, if you had had the luck the last year or two that I have had, you would look bad too. I lost about \$2000.00 on my kinfolks, nearly \$500.00 in the Ellinger bank failure, now this Burttschell bond, and then you d— tax assessor and commissioners' court raised my land higher than that of my neighbors." I told him that I thought he was wrong in this as the court (meaning the board of equalization) fixed that before they adjourned. This was about all that occurred between us, and after this conversation I don't think I saw Mr. Beyer any more that day. When I met Mr. Beyer on this occasion he insisted that I join him in taking a

drink, which I did, and after that we walked from the bar to the south door of Ilse's saloon where we stopped and where the conversation occurred. I was not the only one who testified to this conversation, for fortunately there were two citizens of this town, Mr. Joe Greenrod and Mr. Adolph Franz, who happened to pass out this door at the time the conversation occurred, and each of them overheard what I told Mr. Beyer in reference to the court fixing the valuation, and these witnesses testified to these facts upon the trial. In reference to what I meant in telling Mr. Beyer that the court had fixed this matter, I then had in mind, as I remember it, the action of the board of equalization in June of 1912 when the question of the valuation of the lands belonging to Mr. Beyer and other people in that immediate vicinity came up for discussion. Last year Mr. Beyer's land was assessed at \$16.00 per acre, and the adjacent lands at about the same valuation, but the commissioners' court felt that this valuation was too low, in comparison with other lands over the county of the same character of soil, improvements, etc., and decided to raise these lands in value. In the meantime with permission of Mr. Anton Kallas and several others owning lands in that vicinity, agreed that a valuation of \$20.00 per acre would be satisfactory, consequently the court did not notify any of them to appear before them and show cause why they should not be raised, in that precinct, except Mr. Beyer and Mr. Blinka. During the discussion by the court upon this matter it appeared that some of them felt that all lands in that vicinity of the kind and quality of Beyer's should be assessed at more than \$20.00 per acre, but as the court was then about to adjourn and as the different parties owning lands in that vicinity were not present and had not been notified, it was my understanding and impression that the court assessed all lands there at \$20.00 per acre, and I noticed this change upon the original assessment lists of Beyer, Blinka, Kallas, and all the rest and so carried it into my assessment rolls of Colorado county for the year 1912; as the same now appears on record, which record and original assessment lists were introduced in evidence and stand undisputed and unfiled.

In this connection Beyer testified that he appeared before the board of equalization at that time, and over his protest the court raised the valuation of his land to \$22.50 per acre, and that it was left at that figure, and that the first time he knew of the change being made was when he claimed that I told him I had made the change. During the deliberations of the board of equalization, and they had this matter under discussion possibly upon two different times, I obtained my impression that Beyer's land was left at \$20.00 because of the fact that a majority of the board, to wit, Judge J. J. Mansfield, Mr. Johnnie J. Brod, commissioner of precinct No. 3; and T. J. Roberts, commissioner of precinct No. 4, were in favor of rescinding some action they had taken the day before and placing Beyer's land at a valuation equal to that of all other lands of equal value in that neighborhood, which to my mind was the only just and right thing they could do. Consequently I placed the valuation of \$20.00 per acre on Beyer's, Kallas', and the other property owners in that vicinity. It is true that the minute book of the board of equalization shows an erasure in the valuation of R. H. Beyer's assessment, and this valuation now shows a value of \$20.00 per acre. And while it is there that Mr. Henry Hastedt who kept

Continued on page four

WATCH US GROW!

Condensed Sworn Statement of the
First National Bank, Eagle Lake, Texas

September 30th, 1912

Resources	
Loans & Discounts	\$264,077.00
Banking House & Fixtures	14,993.36
Bonds	21,000.00
Due from U. S. Treasurer	1,000.00
Real Estate	671.00
Cash & Sight Exchange	131,998.79
	\$433,741.14
Liabilities	
Capital Stock	\$ 75,000.00
Surplus and Undivided Profits	19,246.44
Circulation	20,000.00
Reserve for taxes and insurance	510.00
DEPOSITS	301,984.70
	\$433,741.14

Deposits September 30th, 1911..... \$158,470.57
Deposits September 30th, 1912..... 303,984.70
GAIN IN PAST TWELVE MONTHS..... \$145,514.13

On the showing of the above statement we solicit your business.
FOX STEPHENS, Cashier

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LYLE T. PHILLIPS, Asst. Cashier