

Mullen Gets the Land but County Don't Get the Taxes.

Buys Land From Owners After Commencing Foreclosure Proceedings But Fails to Pay the Taxes.

In The Frontier of last week we promised our readers to throw some light on that feature of the tax foreclosures that has afforded Mullen the greatest opportunity to grab land and thereby fill his pockets with thousands of dollars of blood money wrung from unfortunate people who have committed the offense of permitting their taxes to become delinquent. Mullen and his gang of land pirates are making the same defence now that they made a year ago and contend now, as they did then, that not many people are losing their land by operation of the tax foreclosure system and as proof of this they point to the fact that but about sixty tracts have gone to sale out of all the 685 cases that have been commenced. The facts are that the land that has gone to sheriff's sale and bid in by the land syndicate but represents a small per cent of the land that County Attorney Mullen and his conspirators have got by the operation of the foreclosure system. Their most successful mode of operation is to start the foreclosure action unbeknown to the land owner, run up costs unnecessarily high—\$72.00 printers fee for instance—and then write to the non-resident land owner telling him that his land is about to be sold, and offer him a nominal sum for a deed. The owner in many instances is either unable to raise the money immediately for the taxes and the exorbitant costs, or is disposed of paying taxes for many years, and the palpably illegal and excessive costs that have been added by the action of the county attorney, and, rather than employ an attorney to fight the unjust action and costs that have been charged up to his land he deeds the land to Mullen or some other one of the land pirates for a nominal consideration. Many cases are known and of record where the pirates have obtained deeds in this way at a cost of from one to one hundred dollars, which they have sold to the farmers of this county as high as \$1,600. This is a striking illustration of how this system is benefiting (?) the farmers.

With the view of getting the land a great deal of sagaciousness has been used by County Attorney Mullen in picking out his lambs to be shorn. An examination of the list of foreclosure cases, published in our last issue, will show that but few are against land owned by loan companies. Most of the defendants are individuals. These individuals are, in most cases, not wealthy people, but people of small means who have, in many cases, the savings of a life time invested in this land. Out of the last 180 cases filed by Mullen in a period of thirty-six days, twenty two of the tracts were owned by women and we give below the numbers of the land, number of case and the name of the defendant in each case:

Case No.	Plaintiff.	Defendants.	Printer's Fees.
6678	County of Holt	Mary A. Byrnes, se¼ 10-31-16.....	30.00
6836	County of Holt	Ella Shoemaker, se¼ nw¼, s½ ne¼, ne¼ ne¼ 13-32-12.....	22.50
6685	County of Holt	Mary S. Cohen, nw¼ 13-25-13.....	15.00
6714	County of Holt	Alida F. Herchey, n½ sw¼, sw¼ sw¼ 10-29-10.....	17.50
6723	County of Holt	Janett B. Herbage, nw¼ 8-27-11.....	30.00
6671	County of Holt	Belea S. Harvey, sw¼ 9-32-16.....	12.50
6674	County of Holt	Clara A. Tuttle, sw¼ ne¼, se¼ nw¼, w½ nw¼ 6-31-16.....	32.50
6601	County of Holt	Mary B. Parker, w½ ne¼ and e½ nw¼ 23-27-11.....	37.50
6643	County of Holt	Elizabeth Collins, sw¼ 28-31-16.....	12.50
6562	County of Holt	Annie M. Davis, se¼ 32-29-14.....	25.00
6551	County of Holt	Delia E. Bucklin, se¼ 28-32-13.....	32.50
6573	County of Holt	Mary E. Wilson, sw¼ 18-25-13.....	30.00
6604	County of Holt	Arvilla P. Merrill, ne¼ 4-21-10.....	30.00
6608	County of Holt	Mary A. Linnell, se¼ 22-29-15.....	32.50
6623	County of Holt	Mary W. Volmer, ne¼ 21-29-10.....	30.00
6647	County of Holt	Lucy Johnson, ne¼ 34-31-16.....	12.50
6686	County of Holt	Annie James, sw¼ 20-25-9.....	15.00
6690	County of Holt	Elizabeth Walsh, w½ sw¼ 29, e½ se¼ 30-27-15.....	15.00
6555	County of Holt	Helena Fischer, nw¼ ne¼, n½ nw¼, sw¼ nw¼ 31-32-12.....	35.00
6547	County of Holt	Matilda Gardner, s½ n½ 28-26-11.....	30.00
6639	County of Holt	Mary E. Archard, n 25 acres ne¼ nw¼ 4-32, w½ se¼, se¼ 15-32-16.....	12.50

Doubtless many of these are poor widow women, factory girls, seamstresses and people in various walks of life who have their earnings invested in this land. It is with these unfortunate people the same as it sometimes is with the citizens of this county when they find it impossible to raise the money with which to pay their taxes when they become delinquent.

It is with this class of people that Mullen uses the county foreclosure case as a club to intimidate, terrify, daunt and

frighten into executing a deed to the land either to himself or some member of the land syndicate for a nominal sum. It is by this means that Mullen and the gang have got title to thousands of acres of land in this county. Lack of space prevents us from giving the numbers of all the land they have obtained in this way but we give below the numbers of but a few of the tracts that have gone direct into Mullens hands, just to show how the graft operates.

The case of Holt County vs. Emma J. Goodyear, case No. 6565, for the northwest quarter section thirty-four, township thirty-one, range nine, was commenced by Mullen and on August 6, 1902, the defendant deeded the land to Mullen for a consideration of "one dollar and other valuable consideration." A record of this deed can be found in Deed Record 64, at page 461.

Case No. 6036 of Holt County vs. William A. Frye for the southwest quarter section two, township twenty-nine, range thirteen. Frye deeded the land to Mullen on March 1, 1902, for a consideration of "one dollar." The deed was recorded August 13, 1902, and can be found in Record 55, at page 457.

Case No. 7606 of Holt County vs. Peter C. Carberry for the west half northeast quarter, southeast quarter northeast quarter and northeast southeast quarter section twenty, township thirty-two, range fifteen. Carberry deeded the land to Mullen on August 27, 1902, for a consideration of "one dollar." A record of this deed can be found in Deed Record 65, at page 559. Carberry is in the penitentiary in South Dakota and of course Mullen did not have much difficulty in making him understand that he had better take what he could get for a deed rather than let the land go to sale and get nothing out of it.

Be it remembered that pretender Mullen is claiming that his only object in starting the above named cases, as with others, is for the purpose of collecting the taxes. To show how absolutely false he is in his hypocritical pretensions any citizen of the county has but to examine the tax books to ascertain that Mullen is not paying the taxes on the land he is getting by this system of legalized robbery. The taxes that are now delinquent and unpaid on the three tracts above referred to, now owned by County Attorney Mullen, are as follows:

West half northeast quarter, southeast quarter northeast quarter, northeast quarter southeast quarter, section twenty, township thirty-two, range fifteen:

1893 tax.....	\$ 7.76
1894 tax.....	6.72
1895 tax.....	6.91
1896 tax.....	7.60
1897 tax.....	10.59
1898 tax.....	7.53
1899 tax.....	5.83
1900 tax.....	5.28
1901 tax.....	4.56
Total.....	\$62.78

Southwest quarter section two, township twenty-nine, range thirteen:

1893 taxes.....	\$12.08
1894 taxes.....	14.64
1895 taxes.....	13.34
1896 taxes.....	14.22
1897 taxes.....	12.20
1898 taxes.....	12.92
1799 taxes.....	5.09
1900 taxes.....	11.78
1901 taxes.....	8.72
Total.....	\$105.09

Northwest quarter section thirty-four, township thirty-one, range nine:

1893 taxes.....	\$18.20
1894 taxes.....	14.84
1895 taxes.....	16.18
1896 taxes.....	16.65
1897 taxes.....	16.23
1898 taxes.....	15.64
1899 taxes.....	15.64
1900 taxes.....	12.23
1901 taxes.....	10.51
Total.....	\$136.12

This makes a total of \$303.99, without interest, that Mullen owes Holt county today in delinquent taxes on the three quarter sections above referred to.

This is by no means all the land he has obtained title to by the foreclosure system on which the taxes are delinquent and unpaid. To furnish a complete list of the lands owned by Mullen and the rest of the land syndicate on which the taxes are unpaid would take up more than a column of space. If Mullen is sincere about the collection of delinquent taxes, will some one explain to the voters why Mullen does not commence an action against Mullen to compel Mullen to pay Mullen's taxes? The facts are that Mullen and his gang are getting all the land they can bamboozle people out of by this hocuspocus foreclosure process and letting the county, township and school districts wait for the taxes until they can sell the land to some farmer in this county at many times what it has cost them. But recently Mullen sold for \$6,500 land in Rock Falls township on which he commenced tax foreclosure and then bought the land from the owner. In this one deal it is said he cleared about \$4,000. Mr. Tax Payer, don't you think it time that Mr. Mullen should be retired from the office he has so dishonored by using it as a means of plunder and personal gain?

Mullen As a Stretcher of Legal Notices is a Success.

A Foreclosure Notice That Can be Printed for \$7.50 Stretched to Make \$45.00.

The tax lien foreclosures was the issue last fall and on account of the official actions of County Attorney Mullen, as well as the populist members of the board of supervisors, it is again necessarily before the people.

The voters set their seal of condemnation on the system last election and elected a republican sheriff and county clerk and a majority of the county board. County foreclosures were inaugurated by the Harrington-Eves-McCarthy Land Trust, with headquarters in O'Neill. The county attorney had a contract with the populist papers whereby he received a discount, or more plainly speaking a rake-off of twenty per cent. on every notice published; this has never been denied.

In these cases, where the owner of the land is a non-resident of the state, the law requires that notice shall be given parties interested in the land by publication in some newspaper published in the county. It is through these notices that the leading lights of reform which dominate the Holt County Independent and Ewing Advocate have been doing business; the fee established by statute for publishing these notices is one dollar for each ten lines or fractional part thereof for the first publication and fifty cents for each subsequent publication, the notices are required to be published for four weeks, a notice which would amount to ten dollars the first publication would be five dollars for the next and so on until complete or twenty-five dollars for the four publications. The cost of publication depends upon the number of lines, it is then understood that the more lines the more money for the publisher and here is where the pop papers of Holt county along with the county attorney have worked the people out of thousands of dollars.

Mullen's induction into office revived the tax-lien foreclosure system inaugurated by the land syndicate. The board of supervisors was composed of four populists and three republicans, the procedure as carried on by Mullen was condemned by all except the populist newspapers and the land syndicate; the board although populist, saw that the people and the land owners were being stolen blind by this unholy combination, yet they permitted actions to be brought and sought to protect the county from this gang of Pirates by the passage of the following resolution, on April 24, 1901, the same will be found on the supervisors record "F" page 525.

"I move that the county attorney be authorized to bring foreclosure suits on the tax-liens against any lands in Holt county in all cases where some responsible person agrees in writing to pay all taxes and costs of suit."

The system was becoming unpopular with the people and the syndicate heard the voice of the people crying out against it, the populist papers were kept full of notices and Mullen made them longer than any of his predecessors. Things continued to grow from bad to worse until the board met in September 1901 and again undertook to control Mullen when, on the 28th of that month the board passed the resolution which was published in our issue of last week. In the face of the instructions contained in that resolution, Mullen began one hundred and eighty cases in thirty-eight days from November 26th to January 2nd, 1902, the printers fees amounting to the enormous sum of \$4,585 (Four thousand five hundred eighty-five dollars) as shown in our last issue and ranging in amounts from \$30 to \$45.

Mullen knew that the board could not meet except in special session before January 2nd and this gave him thirty-eight days to do business. During that period every member of the land trust was working overtime in assisting Mullen in preparing petitions, each member of the combine selected what he wanted and Mullen began the suits that was to assist them in forcing the owner to sell to them or pay from thirty to forty-five dollars for publishing a notice that should not have exceeded ten dollars. The intended plan was, first, to get the land, failing in this, then to rob the owner or the county out of from \$20 to \$35 in each case. When the board met in January they became alarmed at the number of cases Mullen had commenced and called upon him to produce and file with the county clerk the guarantees that he had been instructed to get in each case, the request to Mullen being in the shape of a resolution passed January 2, 1902 and found in supervisors record "G" at page 564, as follows:

(Concluded on Page 4.)