

Title News

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of
**Mid-Winter Business Meeting and
Joint Conference of State and
National Officials**

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March 15, 1927

Fellow Titlemen:

It becomes more apparent every day that the title business, both abstracters and title insurance companies, must accomplish something towards uniformity of practice. Uniformity and standardization are undoubtedly over-stressed in some cases, but every business should have some similarity in methods of doing business and things produced. Practically all businesses, trades, professions and producers of things have accomplished much in these and as a result have lowered costs, popularized their services or commodities, arrived at an understanding with and elevated themselves in the mind of the public, solved the problem of efficient employees, earned more return on the investment and made the operation of their business easier and more satisfactory.

The title business is an exception and there are just as many ways of doing business, methods of service rendered and other things pertaining thereto as there are those in the business. Many of the problems of the abstracter and the title insurance company would fade away were there some degree of understanding of business conduct and stabilization of procedure.

It is ridiculous to think that where conditions are the same in a number of adjacent counties, in some places identical throughout an entire state, there are a variety of charges for the same things and services, or both a variety of charges and ways of handling the same services, and that this condition actually exists in some cities among the few titlemen in each who may be but a few doors distant from each other.

Certain it is that uniform procedure and practice as well as a general stabilization of things in general is possible within the same city, and generally throughout the various states. Uniform certificates, abstracts and title insurance policies are likewise possible within the various states, and could not a uniform mortgagees policy of title insurance be drafted for general use throughout the entire United States?

Sincerely yours,

Richard B. Hall

Executive Secretary

TITLE NEWS

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Editor's Page

How do you like our little surprise? Spring is here and TITLE NEWS blossoms out in a new cover. Thus is another ambition realized for long have we wanted to add this last touch that would make it the real publication you have anticipated. No apology is in mind for any of the contents of former issues, and we feel this good appearing cover gives the final thing needed to place it in the first rank of business publications. The idea comes from McCune Gill, who suggested a reproduction of the old Indenture and sent a copy of one to be used. Ye Editor would like to know what you think of your magazine as now presented in complete form and make-up.

Your attention is called to the Detroit Convention Announcement appearing on the back of the cover. Wayne Putnam and his Department of Public Relations of the Union Title & Guaranty Co. are going to give the coming convention a large amount of real publicity. This is a second of a series that has been prepared for TITLE NEWS, the first appearing in the January issue, and one will appear in each number until the meeting. Look for them and read each. They will tell you of the convention, make you want to go so bad you will not miss it and studying them will give you an opportunity of seeing some clever publicity. Our Detroit Hosts, the two title companies of that city, the Union Title & Guaranty Co. and the Burton Abstract & Title Co., are certainly expending every available resource and idea to make the 1927 Convention the greatest ever.

Everyone is urged to read every word of this report of the Mid-Winter Meeting. No matter what branch of the business you are most interested in, or your capacity as a worker, you will find every one of the matters presented were of vital interest and concern because the title business by reason of its various branches of work, constitutes an industry. As explained, the address of Mr. Johns will be produced in pamphlet form and sent to every member, otherwise this report is complete.

Title Insurance Executives will find Mr. Stoney's Address on "What a State Association Can Do for Its Members" very interesting. They should carefully study and consider the ideas expressed. A pamphlet is being prepared that further explains these things, and gives an outline and plan, which if adopted by the various title companies in a city, state or the entire country, would stabilize and so benefit the title insurance business as to bring it to that desired stage of development. This pamphlet will be mailed shortly.

The Directory will make its appearance early in April and will constitute the April issue of TITLE NEWS. You can expect the most complete and attractive book of this kind ever issued by the Association.

Mid-Winter Business Meeting and Joint Conference Generally Credited With Being Most Profitable Session Ever Held

Crystallization of Many Efforts Seen and Accomplishments Will Result

A most representative group from the title business assembled in Kansas City last month for the Mid-Winter Business Meeting and Joint Conference of State and National Officials. There were officials and members of committees of the American Association, officials of several state associations and others just naturally interested in the title business and association affairs generally. The group included "simon pure" abstracters, title insurance executives and title examiners. These examiners are becoming more and more interested in the title associations and an increasing number of them are found in each gathering.

The roll call showed that sixty title folk from nineteen states were in attendance. Everyone was there because of his interest and took part in the proceedings so the sessions were made very profitable and as usual in a title meeting, "a good time was had by all." There was much evidence of a seriousness of purpose. Everyone seemed to feel that the meeting was intended for some actual and most effective benefit that could be done for the title business by reason of the presentation and discussion of the existing problems confronting it. Every paper had been carefully prepared and each presented some very interesting things. There was much discussion of each, and definite steps taken to accomplish the things that were shown needed to be given attention.

An idea of the impression gained by those in attendance can be had from the expressions of those present. One who is a charter member of one of the largest and oldest state associations and a faithful worker in it, and who has likewise been regularly enlisted in national association affairs since its organization enthusiastically declared it was the nearest "honest-to-goodness real title meeting I have ever seen and more actual things presented than any other time. There was more spoken out here than any meeting ever held and these things are going to have a telling effect on the business. I mean both the abstract and title insurance."

One of the early workers of the American Association said that he could see the efforts of twenty years were crystallizing and that for the first time he could see a great change was coming for the benefit and advancement of the business.

Many expressed the opinion that it was the most practical and profitable

meeting ever held by the association; that a real diagnosis was made of the business and the wheels set in motion to make things as they should be.

Several state officials frankly admitted they realized as never before that the state organizations were the very life of the business; that there was an unlimited field for them to work in; that they must work and that most of all, the state official had a real responsibility and job.

The meeting itself, with the general atmosphere created sharpened everyone's train of thought on title matters and there was a constant buzz of various groups assembled around between times, talking, discussing matters and exchanging ideas. There is not a person present at the meeting who cannot conscientiously say that he went home with a wealth of information, data and assistance that would personally pay him many times.

There was much interest in the Association's office and headquarters. Everyone seemed greatly surprised at the extent and fitness of the equipment and arrangement and justly proud that it possessed such facilities.

The crowd had a dinner together the first evening, made more entertaining by some special music but especially by the appearance of John Scott, Chairman of the Title Examiners Section in a portrayal of Ole Olson, representative of the representative people of a most representative state. John has few equals as an entertainer, amateur or professional. After the dinner the crowd attended various theatres.

The meeting also proved the medium of a happy occasion for President Woodford and his mother, Mrs. Ella Woodford who came from her home in Burlington, Kansas, to be with her son during the time.

The Illinois Abstracters Association is the only state organization having a Title Examiners Section and the President of that Section, R. Allan Stephens of Springfield was an interested attendant and took an active and valuable part in things. He likewise constituted the sole representative of his state association.

Another Examiner, V. E. Phillips, of Kansas City, and an active member of the Missouri Title Association, proved valuable in many ways. He was one of the local Kansas City hosts, self appointed and acting house detective, and the author of what was acclaimed to be the best report and speech ever delivered by Paul Jones.

Officials of many state associations were present, one of some, and both president and secretary of others, while Kansas had its entire executive committee on hand.

There was a noticeably admirable spirit of friendliness and good will among those present, which was added to by reason of the meeting being held in the actual home of the association, where also live some of the associations "stand-by" titlemen. All things combined influenced its being a success in every way.

These Mid Winter Meetings are proving to be great influences on the title business, as a benefit to the state association in their work and as a source of ideas and impetus for the work and the activities of the national.

Review of Program.

Walter M. Daly, Vice President of the American Title Association, and Ex-officio Chairman of the Executive Committee, called the meeting promptly to order at nine thirty o'clock on Friday morning, February the 4th.

He explained that the purposes of these Mid-Winter Meetings were to provide a medium for the presentation of the actual problems of the title business, for their discussion and the formulating of such plans and action as would accomplish the necessary results in overcoming them and advancing the title business; to further provide for a gathering and conference of the state and national title association officials for the exchange of ideas in order that they might do more effective organization work and cope with their many local problems; and for the transaction of the general business of the national body.

James W. Woodford, President of the American Title Association was then introduced and presented to the meeting.

Probably the most effective work ever done by a state association was accomplished by the Oregon Title Association this year with its Regional Meetings, and the opening address was given by James S. Johns, President of the Hartman Abstract Co., Pendleton, Oregon, and Chairman of the Abstracters Section who told of this work. More information on this address is given later, but this "opener" proved to be an eye and a mind opener and gave the meeting a good start.

Donzel Stoney followed with what was expressed as being one of the best "booster" talks ever given at a meet-

ing. His subject was "What a State Association Can Do For Its Members." Mr. Stoney is Vice President and Manager of the Title Insurance & Guaranty Co. of San Francisco, California, a former President of the California Land Title Association, and has been one of the active officials of the national association for a number of years. He filled the place on the program to have been occupied by Benj. J. Henley, President of the California Association who was unavoidably detained at the last minute and not able to attend.

Henry J. Davenport, President of the Home Title Insurance Co. of Brooklyn, New York, and President of the New York State Title Association was next with a paper on "What the American Title Association Can Do For Its Members." He gave some valuable and practical suggestions, more applicable because his state organization is setting the example.

"Building Attendance and Interest in State Associations and Their Meetings" had been assigned to Fred T. Wilkin, of the Security Abstract Co., Independence, Kansas, and Secretary of the Kansas Title Association. The Kansas Association does not step aside one bit to any other organization in the effective work it has been doing and particularly in the interest it has cre-

ated among its members in its work and especially the state conventions. Much of the success of the programs and meetings have been due to Fred Wilkin and he is certainly setting a pace this year in work for state secretaries. He was therefore well fitted to handle his subject.

Uniformity came in for its usual and due share of consideration. Harry Bare, Vice President of the Merion Title & Trust Co., Ardmore, Pennsylvania, and Secretary of the Pennsylvania Title Association has gotten to be considered as the one to handle this subject from time to time. He is now an authority, and although primarily a title insurance man, certainly covers every point concerning abstracts as thoroughly as though he were a dyed-in-the-wool abstracter. The subject seems inexhaustible to him as he always presents something new and more thorough than in his previous appearances.

"What the Abstract Business Needs and Suggested Remedies" was presented by O. N. Ross, President of the Sioux Abstract Co., Orange City, Iowa, and President of the Iowa Title Association. He expressed some interesting things, worthy of accomplishment.

No one understands the many things involving the abstract business any better than Hugh Ricketts, Secretary of

the Guaranty Trust Co., Muskogee, Oklahoma, and Secretary of the Oklahoma Title Association. He has the faculty and ability to tell of them, too, and gave an excellent treatment of "State Regulation of the Abstract Business."

A breakfast conference was held on Saturday morning, and the number attending at the early hour showed the interest had. The general situation of the title business was bared and a frank free-for-all indulged in. It proved a worth while session.

Following this conference, the general meeting again assembled and the various reports of the committees and sections given. These brought forth so many ideas, declarations and proposals that everyone had a feeling of surprise so much work had been accomplished, was under way and needed to be done. All the various enterprises were given impetus and further support by motions, resolutions and provisions making for their continuance upon a larger scale, or the inauguration of new activities.

Plans for the Detroit Convention Program were reported, and Ed Lindow and Larry Diebel of the local convention committee were on deck to tell of the arrangements our hosts were making. It is promised that the Detroit convention will be the greatest ever.

THE VALUE OF REGIONAL MEETINGS WITHIN STATES AND REPORT OF ABSTRACTERS SECTION

One of the big features of the Mid-Winter Meeting was the two reports of Jas. S. Johns, Chairman of the Abstracter's Section. These reports in fact can be considered one of the outstanding presentations brought out by any title meeting, state or national, ever held and if the state associations who operate as organizations under the stimulus and with the backing of the individual abstracters of the country, and put into active operation the things outlined by Mr. Johns, the abstract business will reach that place and standing everyone in it knows it rightfully deserves and should be.

Every abstracter and the state association officials, especially, are urged to carefully study these things and then actually undertake some concerted effort to accomplish them. As Mr. Johns says "they are possible of achievement because they have done in some instances already." Immediately following the Mid-Winter Meeting two other states undertook such a program as suggested and report wonderful results. The state association officials and some of the individual abstracters from these two states were present at the Mid-Winter Meeting, got the idea and spread their enthusiasm among the abstracters of their states who became sufficiently interested to get together and accomplish them.

It appears that for the first time in the history of the abstract business and the associations, state and national,

representing it, that the things it leaders in the associations have so long worked for to direct and develop the abstract business are materializing. Added to this crystallization of effort is the fact that the means of better directing the work are available through the mediums of the now many active state associations and the Abstracter's Section of the National. The Chairman of that particular group is not only greatly interested but actually engaged in leading the work by studying the abstracter's problems, formulating definite plans for their solution, and thus having proved it by an actual accomplishment.

The first of these reports is that on the "Value of Regional Meetings Within States." The second is a formal "Report of the Chairman of the Abstracter's Section." It was enthusiastically agreed that these be printed in pamphlet form and given a special and more direct distribution. Copies of these particular addresses will therefore be available for distribution. These reports do not appear here but will be mailed to every member of the association immediately.

The first of these addresses treated with the successful meeting of the abstracters in certain states by means of sectional meetings, the sole purpose of which was to agree upon certain definite practices and to generally stabilize the business in the respective regions where there was every reason and oc-

casional for similarity and uniformity of method and practice. This was an intimate success and the results exceeded every expectation that was had of what might be accomplished. It has been said that the abstracter is the only class of worker who had not gotten together for the good of his own welfare and advancement in activities and service. This report shows that such is no longer the case but establishes a precedent for all of the abstracters in the United States.

The second address tells of the work of the Abstracter's Section and treats of the information and facts disclosed by the questionnaires sent out early in the year. It gives a vivid and first hand picture of the conditions of the abstracter and abstract business, his problems and suggested remedies for overcoming them. It is here suggested that the officers of the various state associations whose memberships are composed, in a large majority, of abstracters, make these matters their first considerations for their association's activities and particularly to give them their due place in being considered at their next state meeting. Most of the state conventions will be held within the next few months. There is ample time between now and the dates of these various sessions for these matters to be studied by the members and officers of the state associations and something definite planned. The state associations are the instrumentalities

for doing the work, but every individual abstractor will have to concern himself with it and lend his actual and active support.

As stated by Henry Baldwin, "these matters presented by Mr. Johns are the nearest honest-to-the-highest, most real and constructive things and facts ever spoken out in a meeting," and he felt

qualified to judge since he is one of the first members of the national and his state associations and has been present at many title meetings.

It appears that it is the opportune time for the abstractor to come into his own. He will have to do his own lifting, however, but that will be easy as the means is at hand. Every assist-

ance is available in the help which will be given by the entire organization of the American Title Association, especially the Executive Secretary's Office and the Abstractor's Section, and particularly the Chairman of the Section himself.

Study and consider these pamphlets carefully. Copies will reach you soon.

WHAT A STATE ASSOCIATION CAN DO FOR ITS MEMBERS

By Donzel Stoney, San Francisco, Calif.

MR. DONZEL STONEY (San Francisco): I am wondering if there is any politics connected with the American Title. I happened to notice that the first three speakers this morning belong to the same fraternity and I didn't know whether this was a convention of the American Title Association or of a college fraternity.

I wish to state, however, for the benefit of you all, if you will go back on the train with me, you will hear a better speech. One always makes his best speech going home on the train.

Mr. Henley who was to appear on the program at this time, called on me and said he regretted very much he was not going to be able to attend the convention, that he was down for a speech and wished I would make it. I said if he would give it to me I would read it. He said, "I haven't written it yet, but it is about the formation of the Board of Underwriters; you know all about it so you don't need my speech." And so I am going to try to tell you about the achievements of Ben Henley, this past year, as President of the California Land Title Association, and they have been some.

I remember an address I was called upon to make before the California Real Estate Association just after I had been elected President of the California Land Title Association. I had attended some of their meetings, and when called upon for an address, I told them I had heard a good deal about their activities; that their membership in the past year had increased very substantially; that their income had increased likewise; that they were building up a large surplus of money, and after that there was a period.

It reminded me of experiences I had had in reading some stories in periodicals where I got to the end of the page and turned over and found that the story was ended and I was left up in the air.

I told them that an association such as theirs had no justification in existing unless it could make some money or save some money for its members, that the business people had no time to waste attending conventions if they were nothing but social gatherings and a pleasure to attend, because each man could get his vacation in his own way to better advantage. I said that I would like to have the Real Estate Association decide what they were going to do

for the benefit of its members.

Somehow that idea permeated into my system. After making the speech as President of the California Land Title Association, it was up to me to do a little practicing. In looking over the field in California, I discovered that outside of San Francisco, where title insurance prevailed, in most of the counties, business was being done on the abstract and certificate basis. These people had plants, had investments, and none of them, practically, were making money on the investment. They were making wages, possibly, but they weren't making anything on the plant, weren't making profits.

It was with that idea in mind that Mr. Chilcott and I got together with a view of extending title insurance exclusively throughout northern California. You have heard of the progress we had made when Mr. Henley came upon the scene some few years ago. We had succeeded in getting a fairly uniform rate of charges in the northern part of the state, with the exception of four of our nearest counties, Alameda, San Joaquin to the east of Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara to the south of San Mateo. We had worked for a year trying to line those people up without success.

Mr. Henley got into the title business about two years ago and after a look around, we found that he was loyally supporting what we were trying to do, and at our meeting last year in the southern part of the state we drafted him to act as the president of our association.

Mr. Henley's vision was a little broader than ours. He went us a few better than we had been trying to do. Being the president, he first had the selection of an executive committee. In California we alternate between the north and the south as to the president and executive committee. The northern part of the state has the president and executive committee during the time the legislature is in session because the legislature meets in the north. Our executive committee generally contains one member from the other part of the state who attends the meetings as they take place.

Mr. Henley must have had some political experience in Nevada, where he came from, because when he selected his executive committee, he selected one from Santa Clara county, one from

Alameda county, one from San Joaquin county, and then filled up the rest with the good old staid stand-patters, or blue-writers, or whatever you may call them.

Thereupon he called a meeting of the executive committee and told them the most important thing to do was to try and standardize rates in the north, and before we knew about it, we found these outstanding counties were favorable to it although we had worked on them for two years without making the slightest impression.

I had individually thought it was a little dangerous for title companies to raise the rates but we had some experience that indicated our rates were not what they ought to be. We had a strike in San Francisco in the building industry. It commenced on the first of April and lasted until the end of December. Just as soon as business got subnormal we discovered that our schedule of rates was not a scientific one. I think you got a reflection of that in Mr. Henley's address at Atlantic City.

A survey showed that eighty per cent of the orders that went out for continuation policies were issued at less than actual cost. Our continuation policy is one that is issued to a man who already has a policy, changing the mortgage or doing something in connection with a loan without any change of ownership.

We found that twenty per cent of our orders that went out in owner's policies in case of sale went out at less than cost. We had not noticed that during the period of activity because during that period there was a large business that carried the whole thing along. We were confronted with this as soon as conditions were subnormal.

The schedule we had adopted was not a scientific one, you might say. We had a minimum rate, plus four dollars and a half per thousand up to \$10,000. We increased it to five dollars a thousand. From there on we increased it to four dollars a thousand up to \$50,000, and then jumped down to two dollars a thousand for the next bracket for some reason.

Mr. Henley prepared a schedule minimizing our work that was going out at less than cost by raising the price and made the jump from four and a half to five, then to four dollars a thousand, then to three and a half and

so on up the line so when we came to a policy of a million dollars there was a difference of about \$300 in the old schedule and the new schedule.

If you will go back to the foundation of the title business in San Francisco and the conditions that existed before that time, you will find that our present schedule today is substantially the charges which a lawyer will make to a bank for examining an abstract of title to real estate. Should read "for examining an abstract of title to real estate." It is no higher and in addition to what the lawyer used to do there is a very substantial service added in that our schedule includes the handling of all escrows. Considerable responsibility and liability is assumed by the company which the lawyer never had and we have eliminated all the expense of the abstract so that our schedule today puts the business on a better rate than they were getting under conditions when certificates and abstracts were in vogue. What we have done is simply eliminate the lawyer and take his money.

Some of the people were afraid of having the company say, "We have raised the rates," and somebody suggested that the Land Title Association do it. As we only represent the portion of the state that was in this movement, we could not. The suggestion was made, "Our insurance companies regulate rates by a board of underwriters. Let's form a board of underwriters to do the raising of the rates," and there sprang into existence the Board of Title Insurance Underwriters of Northern California. Its members are all the title insurance companies of Northern California. It has added to it other members, any man in the business who wants to join and take part in its affairs, so that schedule was then put out to the public as a schedule of the Northern California Title Insurance Underwriters with a list of the counties and companies that were affected by it.

Mr. Henley conceived this idea, which is perfectly sane and logical—you haven't a standard rate, although your charges may be the same, unless your services are the same. If one title insurance company is assuming risks that another doesn't want to assume and charging the same rate, you haven't uniformity of rates or uniformity of practices, and he conceived the idea of the possibility of laying down certain elementary principles and getting as many of them as possible adopted by an organization of the people in northern California.

There was nothing compulsory about it, but when he formed his board of underwriters of title insurance and the representatives were selected, he arranged so that after each meeting of the executive committee, the board of underwriters should meet, and members of the title companies all over the northern part of the state should also be invited.

We have had meetings at least once

a month, in some cases twice. We have had two or three in San Francisco, one in San Jose, Oakland, Sacramento, and at those meetings, when the business of the association executive committee was over, the board of underwriters went into session.

It represented a great deal of time and a great deal of work, but the results have been rather satisfactory. We now have a code of practices made for the purpose of standardizing business and mutual cooperation.

It provides for the courteous and considerate cooperation between all members of the board for the general benefit of the business itself.

When you adopt a schedule of prices, conditions have often arisen that may be strange or unusual, or you may not know how to apply your principles, and he appointed a standing committee of three members to whom all questions of that character could be submitted for decision. If their decision is unsatisfactory, the matter is taken up at the next meeting of the Board of Underwriters.

It provides certain forms of title reports which shall be issued by regular members of the board in specified counties; it provides the amount of title insurance policy to be issued; it specifies the charges that are to be made for service. In the event the circumstances of a transaction are not provided for in the code, it provides that the matter may be discussed by competitor members in the county in which the property is situated and such departure from the code may be made as may be approved by these competitor members.

There is a provision that we make no concession to subdividers. I think there was a consensus in the northern part of the state that whenever we did it we got stung.

It provides further in the event we are handling a transaction for sale and they have to do some temporary financing, we will hold the deal open for sixty days until the permanent financing is done, but we do not hold deals over for the purpose of perfecting a second sale.

There is no charge for handling of escrows, but where the escrow services are unusually large, it is permitted to make an extra charge commensurate with the service.

In order to head off a number of people who think they don't need title insurance, the code provides that if a man doesn't want title insurance and insists that he doesn't need it, he is charged at title insurance rates and we tell him he can have the policy or not, as he sees fit.

We make tax reports. In each of these cases a provision is made for the charges. The rules contain a proviso for charges for conveyancing. If you understand the situation—if one company charges for all the deeds, mortgages and other things they draw and the other company doesn't, it would

be a serious conflict with the idea of uniformity.

It also provides for the charges which we make as trustees acting as trustee under a deed of trust for reconveyance, for sales of property, and so forth, also for collections where there is not involved a title insurance transaction.

Then comes the saving grace. We have a half rate for churches and for charities and a rate down to nothing for our own employes.

There is a provision also for a condition that frequently arises and used to cause a great deal of unpleasantness, where several brokers might be involved in the transaction and two or three companies get the same order for the same transaction. This provides that whoever the owner has designated to place the search is the one who gets it and the others cancel their orders.

It further provides that we are to discourage taking risks in the case of mechanics' liens. If a man starts to build his house and finds he hasn't enough money, he promptly goes to the bank and says he wants to borrow some money, that he is putting up a building. The bank says, "Yes, we will loan you money if the title insurance policy will guarantee us against mechanics' liens."

That has been a serious cause of loss and annoyance to the title companies of San Francisco. We have sometimes tried to help them out and at the present time the California-Pacific has one investment of \$75,000 which it had to take in to save itself from loss. We are in on one to the extent of \$45,000 and we had a loss of about \$15,000 about two years ago from same thing.

We have now decided we will under no circumstances take that risk upon ourselves until the building is completed and then only in the event we get a bond to the extent of the face of our policy to protect us against the liens that might be filed in the future, or a man must convey real estate to that net value before we will proceed.

There is also provision for interchange of business. Any title insurance company can now handle business in any of the other counties with a strict understanding of division of fee and strict understanding there is a division of risk and responsibility. The San Francisco or Oakland title insurance companies in those cases get twenty-five per cent of the fee and the local company makes seventy-five per cent of the fee. The local company make the report and is responsible for the correctness of its vestings as per the record. The title insurance company handles the escrow, issues a policy which assumes all the risks including all of the latent liabilities that may arise that do not appear in the record.

Another provision: If you are examining a title and find a wrong vesting and you know one of your competitors has examined it and passed it, before the report goes out, you are

to get in communication with him, advise him of the facts, and find out what can be done to remedy it before any publicity is given to it.

There is also a provision that if we are examining a title another company has passed upon and find some objections, we can call upon that company for a letter of indemnity wherein they agree to save us, harmless, if we agree to pass the title and they proceed to clear up the title.

Another provision is that we will make no subscription or donation to any one under any circumstances without consulting with our competitors in that locality. For years our company has been setting up what we call special reserves for donations for community chests and all of the various things that come around during the year, and year after year they mounted from almost nothing up to four and five thousand dollars a year. In 1925 I remember, in December, we had to put in something like \$350 to mete out the necessities of that fund for the year. In 1926 we threw \$300 back into undivided profits because we hadn't needed it.

I think all of you people in the large cities have met with experiences where a group is going to form a mortgage company or a mortgage guarantee company or some other kind, and they tell you if you will invest some of your money with them, they will give you all their business. We have been pursued by that class of solicitation for a great many years. We now have a proviso that we will not make any investments of any kind for the purpose of getting business or for the purpose of holding business. So when a man comes in and tells us he wants us to make an investment in his company and he will give us all the business, we tell him it is impossible for us to invest. We have an agreement not to make investments under any circumstances that do not comply with the laws of the state of California. The insurance commissioner examines your affairs and if you have enough assets to represent your capital and surplus, he doesn't pay any attention to the rest of it and you could invest in what you please. But we have agreed not to make any investments which are not legal for the purpose of getting business.

It very frequently happens that there is difficulty in closing a deal because somebody is short. It is perfectly proper to make a loan on a first mortgage on the real estate up to sixty per cent, because that is a straight investment.

Mr. Henley isn't through. We have made some progress. We have interested the people in the south in the situation as it exists. We have a contact with the people in the south by having what are known as regional meetings. There is an advisory committee of the executive committee which meets in the south when the executive committee is in the

north, and vice versa, and the representative from the south attends our directors meetings and attends those meetings, and there is a contact between the two.

It is going to be a difficult matter to make these practices uniform throughout California because the methods of doing business are very seriously different in the north than in the south.

In the north, in addition to these things, we have adopted a uniform form of title insurance policy. In that form of title insurance policy we have eliminated all exceptions that could safely be eliminated. We have stated clearly and plainly just what our liability is.

Take a case where there is a loan connected with it, with liability running both to the owner and to the bank or other persons making the loan. It insures marketable title and insures the owner against loss or damage that might arise from any misstatement of fact in connection with title insurance, the validity of the mortgage, and insures the priority of the mortgage as therein set forth.

There are some things you have to look out for. If you have a usury law, you can't safely insure all mortgages and deeds of trust. Our policy contains an exception of violations of the usury law. A person who loans money knows whether the usury law is violated, but we don't.

It also provides that these policies, *ipso facto*, run in favor of any assignee of the note in cases of mortgages or deeds of trust.

In cases where we are insuring bond mortgages, it requires that we examine the proceedings to determine whether the bond issue has been legally authorized, in which case there is a schedule charge of one dollar a thousand with a hundred dollar minimum for examination of those proceedings, with the result that during the past year I think we have added about an average of ten dollars per order on the returns that come from the title insurance companies in northern California. That is one financial benefit which has sprung from the California Title Association Executive Committee.

Furthermore, we have, in the past few years, found it to our advantage to line up very closely with the real estate boards. The San Francisco companies advertise in the state journal. We are on their committees. They are a powerful political influence. They can flood the legislature on twenty-four hours notice on any bill they want to stop or put over, with very substantial results.

Four years ago the legislature, composed mainly of lawyers, undertook to adopt a lawyers' bill. The legislature was flooded. The lawyers' bill was promptly amended to eliminate its effect on the title insurance companies and real estate companies. The bill was passed but when it was put up for a referendum, it was beaten by over a hundred thousand majority.

When we were early in the business we were up at the legislature every session fighting bills aimed against us. We are now at the legislature proposing constructive legislation. In fact, we have had a great many bills, valuable for the business, generally, and for the public, which did not in any way directly affect our interests.

This year we have actually got a bill that will save us some money if we can get it over, and that is a bill with regard to judgments. You all know a federal judgment normally is a lien upon all property in the district. A federal judgment can be likened to a judgment in the state if it is put on the same basis as their own judgment and then treated all alike. We thought that had been done in California for a good many years, but one Federal judge held that it was unconstitutional because of some slight discrimination against the federal judgment.

We are taking off the federal judgments in Sacramento and San Francisco and if we have searches below Fresno we have to get them from Los Angeles, and we now have a bill providing that no judgment in California is a lien unless a transcript is docketed with the recorder in the county where the real estate is situated. This condition has been made most advisable at the present time because at the last session of the legislature they had created some municipal courts whose judgments were liens. I think there are twenty-seven or twenty-eight of them scattered around in different parts of Los Angeles already, so in searching judgments you see the work they are up against.

If we can get that over, we stop taking judgments off altogether, both court judgments and federal judgments.

The California Real Estate Association publishes a monthly periodical. Instead of getting out one ourselves, we use the space in that paper for dissemination of news and for articles our members may write. That also gives big space to the California Land Title Association and also the American Title Association. Each month there is a review of the decisions affecting real estate and they are published in that journal.

The California Land Title Association is at this time arranging to have a course of lectures prepared for title employes. Mr. Snyder, who has been delivering lectures at the University of Southern California for some time on the subject of real estate and in connection with real estate has gone over into the question of land titles, has been asked to prepare those lectures and we hope to have them started so that every land title man will have instilled into him the nature and object of our business.

We used to hold our conventions in conjunction with the national conventions, that is, have them arranged so that when we started for one we could

go to them both. The idea got started that it would be of value to all of the members if the convention could be held at such a time in the odd years that we could review the new laws that had been passed by the previous legislature.

Our legislature is now in session. It will adjourn in April or May. The laws will go into effect three months afterwards and the governor has a certain number of days in which to approve bills and if he doesn't approve them, they die. At our state convention this year we will have our legislative committee make a complete report on all bills that have become laws that will affect our business.

We know the advantage that comes from meeting frequently and getting acquainted with the members in other counties. That is a small matter, but it is a matter in which there is some compensation. If there are two title people in the state and one of them attends the state conventions and the other does not, the man who attends them will find a lot of feeders that will fall his way if he keeps in touch with people in the business. In addition, he picks up ideas in the convention.

We haven't forgotten the remark of Worrall Wilson that the title company ought to have something to add to its income. Mr. Henley has just gone into the trust business and I believe our company will be in the trust business forty-eight hours after I return from this trip. I believe there is no reason why Mr. Henley should not be able to have his title insurance policy made universal in California. Of course, there are a lot of people who hate to change something they have been using for a long time, but he seems to have gotten so much impetus behind his movement, if he can keep it up, we may get that far.

I can't see any reason why, if you will go over those rules of practice, it isn't possible anywhere in the United States to have some of those fundamental ideas adopted as a basis of operation and uniformity throughout the community in which you live.

Our experience in California, after hard work so far having lined up a portion only of the northern part of the state, makes the task of trying to line up the United States of America loom up as a most gigantic one. It is possible in the various states something of that kind can be accomplished, but you will have to have a very active president of your association, a very active executive committee, if you are going to put over such a broad program as universal uniformity throughout the whole country.

CHAIRMAN DALY: We have all heard many times what a wonderful association California has and I think we really appreciate that condition more now than ever before. I don't suppose there is a state association today that is doing as much in a prac-

tical way as the California Association is doing.

We have a little time for discussion and would be glad to have anybody ask Mr. Stoney any questions. They have certainly thrashed out the title insurance question out there and the matter of cooperation.

MR. MARK M. ANDERSON (President, Title Guaranty Trust Co., St. Louis, Missouri): I would like to ask Mr. Stoney, he mentioned the matter of mechanics' liens, what he did to protect himself on account of those mechanics' liens and how that method of protection failed.

MR. STONEY: The first one was a mistake of a counter man. They didn't anticipate any difficulty. The work had been started and the mortgage had gone on to the bank for some \$15,000. The man's brother-in-law had come in and put on a second and put in \$10,000, and the man who was handling the transaction believed that with \$10,000 behind this risk and at the head of any liability we might be subjected to, he thought it was reasonably safe and didn't take any reasonable precaution to get any protection.

MR. ANDERSON: Do you require a waiver on all transactions, and if so, how do you protect it?

MR. STONEY: We have a difficulty there because there is a difference between the case where a man builds his own buildings and where he makes a contract for the building. If a man makes a contract for the building, we know that thirty-five days after the completion notice has been filed the material men and laborers cannot file liens. The only person who can file liens then is the contractor himself and if there is a lien filed there is only one man to look out for. We have no way of assuring ourselves of that fact before thirty-five days, except in extreme cases where we check up everything and find the bills are paid and take such security as we think is adequate. Each case depends on the other and we are now, as I said, eliminating it and getting a surety bond.

MR. HENRY CHITTICK (New York City): Do they have a system in California of bonding the mechanics' lien by legal proceedings?

MR. STONEY: There is no legal proceeding. At the time the specification is filed, a bond is also supposed to be filed, but I don't believe one bond in five hundred is filed, as a matter of fact.

MR. CHITTICK: I don't mean that. You can go to court in New York and have that lien bonded.

MR. STONEY: We can't; we have no such provision.

CHAIRMAN DALY: As I understand it, this Underwriters' Association covers twenty-four counties in central California. In other words, there is complete cooperation between all of those counties in one district, a wonderful example of what title companies can do by cooperation with each other.

MR. ANDERSON: I am very much interested in this mechanics' lien proposition. In writing title insurance for eastern companies we are required by the state law to cover that question. I would like to ask if the same requirement is made in other communities. Mr. Stoney, are you asked to cover the possibility of mechanics' liens being filed after the mortgage is filed?

MR. STONEY: We put it the other way. We tell those companies before we issue the policies that we want them to get the mortgage on and take a photograph of the ground and see that nothing has been started.

MR. ANDERSON: Our law is different. If a building loan is made, even if the mortgage is of record before the building is commenced, the mechanics' lien takes priority.

MR. J. H. SMITH (President, Kansas City Title & Trust Co., Kansas City, Mo.): In Kansas City if we can prove there was no material delivered on the ground before the mortgage is filed, there is no priority.

In connection with this mechanics' lien subject we have a nefarious mechanics' lien law that if the material is delivered within six months of the completion of the building, they can have six months to file a lien. Of course, many liens are filed during that six months. We have often thought, here in Missouri, of calling the material men together and try to abandon and abolish that law.

I could make it clear if I could have a chance to talk before the material men of Kansas City that there are hundreds and thousands of dollars in judgments today that have been rendered in our circuit courts that are unpaid, not a dollar paid on them. They depend upon the mechanics' lien law, they make it their collection agency, instead of investigating your credit and my credit before delivering the material.

It would be a great thing if the American Title Association could get some uniform mechanics' lien law throughout the United States, and there is no reason why a builder or a contractor, if he has a bill, should not file that bill in the county recorder's office as constructive notice against that property.

I think this is about the first time I have heard of losses. We once had a loss of six hundred dollars that our policy didn't cover but the man bought the property and he didn't know anything about the mechanics' lien law.

If we could get a uniform mechanics' lien law and make the contractors file their bills in the recorder's office as constructive notice, it would be of immense benefit not only to us but to the public as protection.

MR. VERNON DAY (Title Guaranty Trust Co., Tulsa, Okla.): There is before the United States now and already drafted a uniform mechanics' lien act. I have a copy which I turned over to our attorney the other day.

The National Association of Real

Estate Boards is working out a law that will be submitted to the legislatures but will have to be adopted by the various states.

CHAIRMAN DALY: The question of mechanics' liens is, of course, an inexhaustible subject. In most states the title companies have an exception in which they do not cover them at all. I suppose it arises in some states in cases of mortgage policies, as it does with us.

MR. H. J. DAVENPORT (Brooklyn, N. Y.): I want to congratulate Mr. Stoney and the California Association. It seems to me they have pointed the way for the associations all through the country in taking the broadest kind of view as to the job of the state associations, showing the practical and theoretical advantages to be gained with the state association work.

It was illuminating to me and I am going to carry back to the New York Association some ideas which I hope to be able to put into effect. Mr. Stoney's method of presentation was delightful, also, as I think we will all agree.

Mr. Stoney's discussion as to the mechanics' liens in California and contribution of other members from other states makes it perfectly obvious how the national association can function.

It seems to me that the provision of law that we have in New York state covers that subject with entire satisfaction to every one concerned. It seems strange to me that the national association hasn't long since passed along to those states that were in difficulty just what the New York state law is and why they don't cooperate to get a law which will be practical and workable.

In New York state when a loan is made upon an uncompleted property, whether the construction on the property has been begun or not, a building loan agreement is filed which states the amount of the loan and the fact that it is to be advanced and how it is to be advanced. That is a notice to all those dealing in this operation, and every advance made upon that loan, so long as at the time of the advance there are no mechanics' liens on file of record, the mortgage up to the amount advanced at that time is prior to any subsequent liens filed. I should think that would be a disposition of it. Anyway, it seems to work.

There must be many other similar situations where things are not comfortable in some states and in other states they are worked out very pleasantly, and if the association is going to be valuable, it certainly must serve as a clearing house for that kind of work.

MR. E. C. WYCKOFF (Newark, N. J.): The mechanics' lien situation with large money lending companies operating from the home offices all over the United States would seem to me to lend itself particularly to national association work. I understand that the mechanics' lien bill is intended to be put forth as a uniform bill and is one drafted and backed by the Realtors. Is that right, Mr. Day?

MR. DAY: Yes.

MR. WYCKOFF: I have heard no suggestions that we had any committee of this association working on a uniform mechanics' lien bill, nor have I heard any suggestion that the National Board of Uniform Laws has been consulted and its aid solicited by the Realtors, although I presume that has been the fact.

I would recommend that it is the sense of this meeting that a committee of this Association be appointed to work with the committee of the Realtors' Board and the National Uniform Laws committee for the drafting and the procuring of the passage of uniform laws on mechanics' liens throughout the United States.

MR. CHITTICK: A "uniform mechanics' lien law"—I don't understand exactly what is meant by that. Any mechanics' lien law passed would have to be passed by every state. It is the idea to get every state to pass a similar law.

MR. WYCKOFF: That was the purpose of my suggestion, to get the various state legislatures to pass uniform mechanics' lien and other laws of that nature. There are some five or six uniform laws such as our bulk sales, which doesn't affect us as examiners of title, but beneficial to business. I think the mechanics' lien situation is serious with the investing public, interested as it is in mortgage investments today.

It has been shown by our comments here that there is a vast irregularity of practice in the various states. For instance, in our state we have not the advantage of the loan agreement which New York has. We have an advantage of a requirement that a contract may be filed with specifications attached, and in that case no one can file a lien but may serve a stop notice upon the owner, but it leaves various questions open. Our law is, if you don't follow the money into the building, even though the mortgage is on record, prior liens may come in between payments made.

We are today facing a substantial loss on one of our loans because instead of paying the money to the contractors, the owner had paid the contractors and we had to reimburse him for the payment and that has been held not to be following the money into the property.

It does seem to me there is considerable equity in the New York practice and it indicates that there is a common practice which can well obtain throughout the United States. It seems to me it would be of material benefit to all insurance companies to have such uniformity. Then we would have uniformity of decisions both in our states and supported by our federal courts. I believe it would be of such substantial benefit we ought not to delay the appointment of such a committee.

MR. CHITTICK: Some years ago we had titles examined in Jersey. We employed one of the Jersey companies

to examine for us—we don't go into other states. This very question of mechanics' liens came up. That Jersey company declined to insure against mechanics' liens. It was a building in the course of construction.

This occurs to me—the bar of New Jersey and the title companies of New Jersey have been up against this situation for a great many years. How is it that no effort has been made locally to remedy the situation?

MR. WYCKOFF: In the first place, there has been until recent years no organization of title men in New Jersey. Up to this day we have not close cooperative feeling between lawyers' clubs, the realtors association, and the title association, and it is that close affiliation which our state association is now hoping to bring about. We think that the experience in other parts of the country has demonstrated to us that our state association, with its national affiliation, can bring about that condition which, happily, obtains in other states.

MR. CHITTICK: What is the attitude of material men and associations to the amendment of the law in New Jersey?

MR. WYCKOFF: Not having attempted any tinkering with the mechanics' lien act as an association, I have not been able to get any response of that kind from the associations. I will say, as title companies we endeavor to closely cooperate with builders. We are continually keeping the closest kind of contact with them wherever we are interested in a title in which they are interested. Except to that extent we have no indication of their favor, but believe that if the material men were protected by uniform legislation, they would be glad to come in and help us put it over.

MR. V. E. PHILLIPS (Kansas City, Missouri): As a matter of information, the American Bar Association has expended a great deal of energy for several years in the interest of uniform legislation and the committee of that association, at its last meeting, submitted a very extensive report recommending the passage of twenty-seven various uniform bills. I have a copy of the proceedings in my office and it has not been called to my attention that there is a uniform mechanics' lien bill. There may be.

I know there is a uniform mortgage law, and of course, a portion of the states have uniform negotiable instruments, sales, and so on, but there is a determined effort among lawyers to have uniform legislation and the American Bar Association is very vigorously behind such effort. However, the legislatures invariably look at it with a good deal of discredit. Our experience here has been very unsatisfactory with the legislature.

MR. CHITTICK: The legislatures supported the uniform negotiable instruments law and there is no reason why they shouldn't support a uniform mechanics' lien law.

MR. WYCKOFF: I made the mo-

tion that it be the sense of this meeting that a committee be appointed to work with the Realtors and National Uniform Laws committees to procure uniform mechanics' lien laws. I did that

with the idea that Mr. White's committee at the Omaha convention was discharged after the uniform bills had been recommended. If there is a committee, it would be entirely agreeable

to me that the matter be referred to that committee.

MR. CHITTICK: I second the motion.

It was passed.

WHAT CAN THE AMERICAN TITLE ASSOCIATION DO FOR ITS MEMBERS?

By Henry J. Davenport, Brooklyn, N. Y.

I assume you want me to suggest lines of activity not now followed by members of the association and perhaps to point out how in the opinion of our members in New York the national association can improve its present services. This is no easy task. The American Title Association has been in existence for more than 20 years and in that period of time possible activities of an organization are boiled down to an effective routine. The inspiration and energy behind the association has been distinctly Western and the Easterners have had to have the way to progress pointed out by the good people of the West.

I will endeavor to think not alone as a representative of the State of New York, but with due consideration for the fact that this is a national organization, that New York's problems are not always those of Kansas and that our organization is made up not only of title insurance companies, but also of abstract companies and individual title examiners. In New York State, by the way, we have all three classes. In New York City it is title insurance exclusively. Up-State, as we say, it is mixed. In the cities of Buffalo, Rochester, Utica and Albany first-class title insurance companies are in operation and in one of our rural counties, Sullivan, a title insurance company has been doing good work for nearly five years. It was only a few weeks ago that in the city of Utica our good friend, John Seifert, combined the Central New York Abstract & Title Company and the Syracuse Abstract Corporation into the Central New York Mortgage & Title Company with a capital of \$150,000. In the rural counties and small towns of New York real estate is transferred in the old way and abstract companies generally do the work. We are, however, all title men, whether individual examiners, abstract companies or title insurance companies, and whether in New York, Kansas or California, and it may be possible to think out some basic theories of our association work.

The medical associations are rightly considered the authoritative bodies controlling the conservative progress of medical and surgical matters in their communities. The bar associations are probably looked upon as the directing authorities in legal practice and procedure. Architects within the past few decades have by banding together raised their trade to the level of a true profession. The real estate men are now in the throes of an effort to place

themselves upon a professional basis and are making through their local, state and national organizations considerable progress upon this road.

Of course the practical incentive which holds the members of these groups together is personal advantage, better earnings, restricted competition, scheduled rates, an enlarged demand for services. Those are things that the associated members of a profession get out of their associations in addition to technical news and information, good fellowship and inspiration toward a continually higher and better standard of professional work.

Now, as it is entirely true that we get out of life only as much as we put into it, that from any human relationship we may not possibly receive more than we give—so any association, trade or professional, cannot hope to succeed and to be of value to its membership to any greater degree than it makes itself of true value to its community, state or nation.

I am certain that you will all agree with the basic truth of that proposition. It follows, then, that not only must our individual members give of their time and energy to the development of the association but the association and its constituent state associations are compelled by an inevitable social law to justify their existences by services, within the scope of our interests, which will be of practical and, if possible, of popular or at least distinctly noteworthy service to our communities. May I tell you what we are just now driving at in New York State? Not that it would be exactly appropriate in every state, but as a sample of the kind of service I have in mind.

We inherited our system of land tenure and the law of intestate succession from England. In New York and in most of the states the law of real property was brought over almost intact by the colonists. In spite of legislative reforms many features of our real property law are still obsolete and unfitted to meet modern conditions. In legislative reforms England has far outstripped our states toward modernization of real property law. You are all familiar with many of the features of that law for which there are no present reasons and I would like to speak about the four definite remedies which we propose in New York State. They are astoundingly simple and if it were not for the dead weight of precedent and for the fact that no one is to be an immediate financial gainer

by the changes suggested, these amendments would be comparatively easy to obtain. It seems to be no one's business in particular, and it remains, we think, for an association such as ours to take a broad view of things and to furnish the necessary momentum to produce reforms, against which there seems to be no opposition or argument.

Here are the four proposals:

First. The difference between the rules of the inheritance of realty and the distribution of intestate personalty should be abolished and one rule of succession adopted and made applicable to all forms of property.

Second. The archaic rights of dower and courtesy should be abolished and, as a substitute therefor, the present unlimited power of a person to dispose of his property—real and personal—at death should be limited. Certainly husband and wife should receive statutory protection by entitling them to take specific part—say, one-third—of the estate against the will.

Third. The technical and expensive judicial proceedings for the sale of real estate should be dispensed with, by reading into wills a power of sale in the executor over real estate.

Fourth. The administrator should be given supervision over realty as well as personality, with a similar power of sale for estate purposes.

It is along such lines as these that I think the American Title Association ought to exert itself unselfishly and continuously; that the American and the State Associations should consider themselves the guardians in whom the public will come to place responsibility for the development and progress of real property law, and I suggest that while continuing the good work in other lines, which the association has promoted, the officers and committees should increasingly minimize destructive effort and stress constructive work; that, while continuing to obstruct improper and unwise legislation, we develop and increase a creative spirit. Except in one or two of our states the real property law is basically alike and a study of changes looking toward modernization of the real property law may be carried on by the American Association and the results put at the disposition of the State Associations, such work as this, wisely considered and actively prosecuted, while at the same time being widely advertised, will certainly tend to strengthen the position of title men and title associations as valuable members of our communities.

BUILDING INTEREST IN STATE ASSOCIATIONS AND ATTENDANCE AT THEIR MEETINGS

By Fred T. Wilkin, Independence, Kas.

Dick Hall used to attend our meetings and he always carried the American Title Association around with him in a little portfolio. At this meeting we have every member of the executive committee of the Kansas Title Association, and this is the Kansas Title Association in this bag (indicating portfolio). I will ask a couple of the fellows to pass around these copies of "The Kansas Abstractor," the monthly bulletin of The Kansas Title Association.

"Building Attendance and Interest in State Associations and Their Meetings." This is purely a shop talk subject. I hardly believe that I could qualify as an expert on the subject, but will confine myself more to our own state association, which, I believe, holds the record of second in membership and first in attendance of the various state associations.

The whole subject suggests to me the story of the fellow who found the mule because he figured out what the mule would think about and then he went where he thought he would have gone had he been the mule.

Attendance, of course, in a state association, depends wholly upon the interest that the various members have in the meetings. If they have no interest in the meetings, it is only natural that they will not attend.

The Kansas Association holds a three day session. In our Association we hold an annual school. I might say, in the way of enlightenment or information, that Kansas is purely an abstract state. Kansas has one hundred and five counties. There are four trust companies allowed to do title insurance in the state, but only one of the four has a title plant in conjunction with it or in the same office. So title insurance is something that is always discussed but is not really in vogue in Kansas.

For the regional meetings Kansas some three years ago asked the district vice presidents to attend. We have eight congressional districts in the state and each district has a vice pres-

ident of the Association. We ask those eight vice presidents to hold meetings of their districts so at those meetings they might discuss such things as rates and discounts and various other intimate topics that we hesitate to discuss at our annual meetings.

We have tried in every way to render the greatest amount of assistance to our membership and that perhaps can be better illustrated by reference to our state bulletin, copies of which you have in hand. This bulletin is purely a state association bulletin, and each month on the second page we have a report of the supreme court decisions of our state on everything affecting land titles. Also on this page we have what we call "The Question Box" so that any abstractor in the state may send in inquiries relative either to points of law that are yet undecided by our supreme court or relative to the general practice in abstracting, and the Association will endeavor to guess at the points of law and accurately answer all points raised about the abstract business or title business.

We have found the use of an abstract contest to be extremely beneficial in the creation of interest among the members and increasing attendance at our state conventions. The contest is conducted by a committee of three, who prepare a list, or the actual instrument, those which we call "file." They also prepare one ordinary probate case and one ordinary district court case. These files for all our members participating in the contest are sold at a very nominal fee to cover the cost of preparing the title. In that way each abstractor participating in the contest has the same identical instruments to abstract, he has the same court case or court files to abstract, and of course, the same title.

Those are judged by title examiners, who pass upon them and grade all of them. At our last contest we found there were some fifty members participating and the interest was very gratifying.

I believe that the whole question is this—if you will use topics of interest

to the abstracters, or as in the case of a good many states, of interest to the title companies of the state, there will be very little question about your attendance.

I want to state again, referring to the bulletin. I have been accused by several people here of running a large bulletin for a state association. If the parties who publish the bulletin are willing to devote the time necessary to the soliciting of advertising from people who do business with you or abstracters or title companies within the state, there are hardly any bounds which you cannot make the bulletin reach.

This bulletin cost the Kansas Title Association the sum of \$8.75 last month, and I do not believe and our executive committee does not believe that so long as we are able to keep our bulletins within that price that we are likely to bankrupt the association. You understand that the difference between the cost of printing the bulletin and the cost to the association was paid by the advertising.

There are a great many ways in which associations can increase their membership, but the largest that we have found is to openly discuss the problems which interest the abstractor, give him ten dollars' worth of service for every dollar that he has paid in dues at your district or regional meetings.

CHAIRMAN DALY: We thank you very much, Fred. We have listened to your talk with a great deal of interest. Is there any discussion on Mr. Wilkins' paper? We will be very glad to have any one suggest anything he likes at this time.

One topic that we had this morning I should like to hear more discussion of and that is in connection with Mr. Davenport's paper on what the American Association can and ought to do for its members. I wish each one during the noon hour would think over that subject and some time during the afternoon let's have an open forum on it so that each one will have a chance to express himself.

OPEN FORUM

FRIDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

February 4, 1927

CHAIRMAN DALY: This morning Mr. Davenport discussed a paper on "What the American Title Association Can Do for Its Members." I told you just before lunch I thought that matter was worthy of serious discussion among the members as our office here is anxious to do everything it can for members scattered throughout the country, for those who are not able to attend meetings and don't come in contact directly with the Association.

At this time I am going to take the liberty of calling on a few of those present and ask them for any ideas they may have as to what the Association really can do in a practical way that will help these people scattered throughout the country. First I will ask Mr. Condit to talk. Mr. Condit was president of the Association and should have reaped a good many ideas and he might tell us many things, and make suggestions as to how Dick can

be of more service to the members throughout the country.

MR. FRED P. CONDIT (Vice President, Title Guarantee and Trust Co., Member of Executive Committee, American Title Association, New York City): I don't know as there is anything very new that I can add to what has been said already along those lines.

The executive secretary's office has, to my mind, never been used by the members as much as it should be. The

secretary is equipped to give you information which will be very beneficial to secretaries of state organizations and to members in cooperating one with the other, especially on legislation. If any of you are threatened along the Torrens line, he has asked you to be sure to call on his records in that regard.

The whole system we have built in the American Title Association is, I think, based on the activities of the state associations. If each one of the state secretaries, or any one of them, falls down, doesn't carry out his work, there is no chance of the American, or parent, Association being a success. One of the chief duties that the American Association has is to see that the officials, especially the secretaries, of the state association function. He tries to get out notices to all the members urging them to attend their state meetings and showing why they should attend. I had the pleasure last week of attending the Jersey Association meeting. It is three years old now. Heretofore, the members had staged dinner meetings, but this year they had a one day convention, a wonderful meeting. There was a lot of interest. I think there were about a hundred there; the speeches were good, and I think it shows that there has been a lot of work put in by the state officers.

Those are the principal things that the executive secretary's office has to do. I have always had more or less of an idea that the directory was a means of cementing friendships.

I suppose a majority of you have opportunities of sending business to other companies in other states, and when you do that, don't be content to send the letter of introduction by the man you give it to, but write the officer of the company, the man you have met at the conventions, and let him know you are taking an interest. I think there is a good deal of work we can do in that way, back and forth, and I think it will be appreciated.

MR. GEORGE N. COFFEY, (Secretary, Wayne County Abstract Co. and Ohio Title Assn., Wooster, Ohio): I suppose the reason I was called on was because of a conversation I mentioned to Dick Hall that I had yesterday when stopping off in Chicago.

I understand the American Farm Bureau Federation is arranging for a publication that will go to several hundred thousand farmers in this country. I was talking with some friends of mine in the Illinois Agriculture Associ-

ation. I know the secretary very well personally, and he asked me if I would meet the attorney for that organization and talk with him. He was telling me about this publication and he suggested that he believed it might be possible to get some articles in that publication on title matters.

I was telling him a little of what we had done over in Wayne county, Ohio. Last year, in cooperation with the county superintendent of schools and two newspapers in the county, we prepared sixteen lessons on land surveys and land ownership. These were published once a week in these two county papers and were used in that way by the county superintendent in the schools of the county. A very large percentage of the schools are using them.

We have also gotten in touch with the county agent. It happens that I was connected with county agent work for several years in Illinois and the county agent's office was just across the hall from mine.

Soon after we started the title business, I made an abstract for one of the men who was at that time a farmer and vice president of the farm bureau in the county. We showed him such interesting things about his title which he didn't know that he wanted to know if I would come over to the farmers' institute and talk titles at the institute. As a result, I have been to a number of farmers' institutes and a number of the grange meetings in the county.

Last week they wanted me to attend the institute in the adjoining county. I found several of the women folks in that institute were very much interested in the question of titles. Several of them stayed there after the meeting to ask questions in regard to what would become of the property if their husbands died without leaving a will, or if they had a will, and several matters of that nature.

I told this attorney in Chicago I thought it might be possible for some general educational articles about titles to be prepared. These would be of value and interest to the farmers. I understand that the Illinois Agricultural Association has made arrangements to have the articles sent to sixty thousand farmers in the state of Illinois.

So you see that would furnish a medium through which a large number of people could be reached with information in regard to the question of titles and their importance.

It happens, also, over in Ohio, that the man who has charge of the farmers' institute for the Ohio State University is a good friend of mine, and he told me that if the Ohio Title Association would agree to furnish the speakers, he would insert a statement to the effect that speakers could be secured to talk on title subjects through the Ohio Title Association, just as he had done for the Bankers Association.

I believe that there is a possibility there for the National Association, perhaps through cooperation with the American Farm Bureau Federation, to get some articles into that publication and perhaps other publications; and I believe there is an opportunity, particularly in the rural counties, for title men, in cooperation with the county agent and others, to get an opportunity to present to the farmers the importance of title matters.

The people at the institute I attended last week said it was the first time in the history of their institute that they had had a talk along that line. They thought it was a very important subject and appreciated having some one talk to them on it.

MR. JOS. P. DURKIN (Secretary, Title and Trust Co., Peoria, Ill.): The thought that struck me is that in several of the issues of the bulletin, TITLE NEWS, request has been made to different abstractors and title men throughout the country that if they have any problems they desire to solve to submit them to the executive office of the Association. I think that a plan should be adopted by the executive secretary to enforce that idea more strongly than it has been done, and try to impress upon the members at large that they should submit any questions they have, that bother them in the way of organization or in title matters in any way.

There are so many of the members who never attend the conventions and have no occasion or opportunity to reap the benefits they would if they were present. If they were shown, all their questions would be answered and that the officers of the Association were glad to answer them, it might induce them to submit the questions to the Association.

CHAIRMAN DALY: I think we will revert to our regular program. The next paper is entitled, "Can Title Insurance Policies and Abstracts be Standardized for All States?"

UNIFORM ABSTRACTS AND TITLE POLICIES

By Harry C. Bare, Ardmore, Pa.

It is my hope that these few notes I have will have the effect of inviting the initiative, the thought, the genius of each one of you as to whether or not abstracts and policies may be made a standard uniform form.

Mr. Davenport said this morning that you don't take out of any organization any more than you put into it,

and unless each one individual who takes the time, trouble, and expense to come to these meetings will give the best he has, the best effort and his own analysis of the questions, it is absolutely impossible for any organization to properly function or to help those members who were discussed a moment ago, those who are not able to come to the convention.

It was said this morning that it was a gigantic task to consider achieving the uniform form. That is true; it is a gigantic task.

Is it possible to have uniformity in forms of abstracts and title policies?

This question should be considered from two angles: (1) Is there a definite, specific advantage to be derived from uniformity? (2) Can such uni-

formity be secured with safety to those making any degree of departure from present forms?

Whether the result of the examination of title be expressed in the form of a certificate or a title policy, it is a fact that both are a declaration as to the status of title and should show thereon such encumbrance or title objections as should properly be excepted.

I do not believe that there is any substantial number of our members who would refuse to seriously consider the question of uniformity through a feeling that their particular form is so perfect as to not permit of change, and it would seem that the consideration of a standard form by a competent committee would bring out such careful analysis of the parts of the forms that general benefit would ensue to all members.

I discussed this question at the Atlantic City Convention, and there committed the error of assuming that all our members were in accord with the thought that uniformity is desirable.

Title men should consider the needs of their customers and endeavor to raise their standard of service to the highest degree of usefulness. The principal part of our business comes from real estate dealers, lenders of money, and lawyers, and it is quite apparent that our relations with these interests should be friendly and our contractual relations based on simplicity and candor. Whether or not the results of our work are evidenced by an abstract of title and accompanying certificate, or by a policy of title insurance, the fact remains that it is our declaration, our contract, as to the condition of the title and a statement of our obligation.

All life is full of evidence of the attainment of the seemingly impossible, by reason of the value of the results to be attained. An intelligent consideration of whether or not any given proposition is possible must needs be considered in the light of what benefits will result.

It is quite natural that many abstractors and insuring companies hesitate to depart from a customary form of expressing their certificate or policy. Not necessarily that such certificate or policy is considered by them superior or more safe than another, but that custom and successful practice having given its prestige to the form used makes a change undesirable. This would seem to lead to the conclusion that no such change will be considered unless a very definite benefit is to follow.

If we agreed upon a uniform, a standard form of abstract or policy and all our members followed the use of that standard form we ourselves would profit from the increased efficiency produced and, further, that universal approval gives our work a higher degree of acceptability to our clients.

It is a logical sequence to then urge, and reasonably expect, that contracts

or agreements of sale would provide that standard form of abstract or policy be furnished by the American Title Association members. This would be a severe blow to the pernicious practice of the irresponsible abstractor.

If it were possible to always have highly efficient abstractors, abstracts could be reduced to the elements literally necessary to determine the status of the title. There is always, however, a difficulty in securing competent help in making abstracts, and it's inevitable that marked variation in the form of making abstracts results in uncertainty and inefficiency in many cases. If you can place a definite standard form under which the abstract should be stated, you place a definite objective to which all well-intentioned abstractors may direct their efforts.

The abstract of title and the policy of title insurance that you issue are both based upon the record evidence of title and these evidences of title have the same elements, no matter where found. In case of deed, mortgage or transfer of title by any form of contractual agreement, there must be present the dates, the parties, the consideration, the property forming the subject matter of the conveyance, the warranty, and any additional grant passing with the conveyance or restrictive reservation withheld therefrom. There would seem to be no occasion for question as to the form of stating the dates, the parties, consideration, property being conveyed or encumbered, and warranty—any additional grant, restriction or reservation, by its very nature required the analysis of the examiner or counsel giving the certificate or opinion on the title. That reason, if for no other, warrants the recital in full of such additional particular clauses.

Opinions vary as to what part of a will, forming a link in the chain of title, need be abstracted. Many conditions enter into the determination as to what part of a will is necessary in a title—show the date of will, the name of decedent, date of death, the time and place of probate and granting of letters Testamentary, and such provisions of the will that have relation to the title being examined. I see no departure from uniformity if one abstractor or insuring company requires a more voluminous reference to a will than another.

The abstract of judicial proceedings, forming a link in the chain of title, may be brought within uniform lines by showing therein, in an orderly sequence; the various steps of the proceedings—jurisdictional facts—necessary service—judgment on decree—actual sale; etc.; all accompanied by full copy of court docket entries.

The large insurance companies investing in mortgages, important as that phase of our work is, is but typical of the general impression produced by the many forms of inducing our work and of expressing the general condi-

tions of our policies. In that variation we leave the door wide open for general surety company form of title guarantee.

Ray McLain of Oklahoma City, made the very pertinent remark that "title insurance may reach, and I expect it will reach, every country in the United States, but it will reach those countries through abstractors in those countries."

The difficulties in securing title insurance throughout a given area by a central title insuring company is materially lessened if there is a standard form of abstract or certificate issued in that area. A properly prepared abstract of title must necessarily disclose all the defects and weaknesses in that title. And while the law relating to questions arising in a title will vary in different states and a wide variance in the practice applied to the disposition and treatment of such questions, there is in the last analysis a definite contract between the insuring company and its insured that a definite entity has a specified interest in the real estate in question, subject only to definitely stated exceptions.

1. The basic elements of this contract of guarantee are the same. The insuring company, for a consideration, agrees to insure a particular person or other legal entity, and persons properly claiming under the insured, against loss not exceeding a stated amount which the insured may sustain by reason of defects in the title not specifically stated in the policy.

2. The estate or interest in the particular real estate that is the subject matter of the guarantee.

3. A schedule or statement is made of the objections of title which are excepted and not insured against. It is here that the particular exceptions required by particular location may be stated.

4. Statement is shown on the policy of the general conditions under which the policy of that particular insuring company is issued, and the general rights thereunder.

It is the practise in some companies to use one form to cover the interest of an owner, another that of the purchaser, and still another that of the mortgagee. On the other hand, there are companies who issue one form of policy and provide for the difference in the interest of the insured by appropriate phrasing in the language of the policy.

If you are convinced that it is desirable to have uniformity in the policy, you have the practical experience of companies with years of successful operation to cover all these various interests—owner, purchaser or mortgagee—all in one form of policy, and cover the various phases of those interests in the general language of the policy.

It has been stated that uniformity is not possible by reason of the variation in the laws and practise of differ-

ent localities, it is well to consider that the treatment and disposition of questions of title have their application in each particular matter prior to the actual insurance of the contract of guarantee.

I am fully aware of the difficulty in getting action on the question of standard forms in each of the state associations, and I think I see a major difficulty in securing national uniformity only as a sequence to state uniformity. There is no uncertainty in my mind, little difficulty in getting the smaller title companies and abstracters to agree to a standard form which receives the stamp of approval of the outstanding, recognized companies. But from a practical point of view, consider the large Pacific Coast companies with policies approved by highly competent legal advisers and from which, in their wisdom, is complete, and has withstood the onslaughts and attacks of various conditions. Take the Mid-west companies, all with policies in a form which have been approved by highly competent legal advisers—and the Atlantic Coast companies, also with policies carefully prepared, and all of these different policies having particular pet phrases which came into being as a result of some particular question—probably in the past, and it is a real practical question: Will these various companies permit a change in their form, even though convinced of the safety in principle of such change?

A very real obstacle is the fact that these outstanding companies, leaders in title work, are asked to make changes in a form of policy which they have had built up as a result, in some cases, of many years of wide experience, and the legal advisers of such companies would be most reluctant to advise their Boards of Directors to make changes in the particular phrasing of their forms.

The matter has been the subject of controversial discussion for such a length of time that it seems needless to prolong the question further. It is, however, of such importance as to merit proper attention, and I earnestly recommend that this attention take the form of the appointment of a committee of five, the members of such committee to be selected from the larger companies in widely scattered areas. This committee to analyze the forms of abstracts, certificates and policies of their respective companies, and such other forms as they choose, and report to the Executive Committee prior to the next National Convention, whether or not they feel uniformity to be practical, and if so, to draft a form that would be acceptable to their particular companies, and this to then be the basis of recommendations to all members. If the result of this committee analysis is that national uniformity is not practical, then this Association to earnestly recommend and urge upon the state association to take the proper and necessary measures to secure state uniformity.

MR. ED LINDOW (Union Title and

Guaranty Co., Detroit, Mich.): Do the eastern insurance companies accept one standard form of policy from the Philadelphia and New York concerns? You mentioned that some of the eastern companies issue one policy which covers all forms of title insurance, no matter who might be guaranteed thereunder.

MR. BARE: The only variation in the Pennsylvania form is that some, more than others, include in their conditions, which properly should be, a statement of that company's policy of acceptance of liability. They include in those general conditions particular questions of exception, some greater than others.

Your question is whether the large insuring companies accept the general form?

MR. LINDOW: I am talking about one thing, whether the life insurance companies who loan a lot of money in your cities, as in Detroit, will accept a policy that is broad in its coverage and covers both an owner and mortgagee.

MR. BARE: Yes, sir, they will.

MR. JAMES M. ROHAN (President, St. Louis County Land Title Co., President, Missouri Title Assn., St. Louis, Mo.): Do they accept these all through the United States, the same requirements on their policies, the same exceptions, the same form of policy in Missouri as they would in California and New York, or do they make exceptions in the different localities?

MR. BARE: Each of the larger insuring companies has, in its particular legal department, particular thoughts as to how far the policy should go and in each instance where they make a loan they require the submission of the form of policy that particular company uses, and from observation I know there are companies who receive their policy as is. There are other cases where they require very marked changes in the phrasing of that policy.

MR. LINDOW: I would like to ask another question. Is it true that the eastern insurance companies all believe and they are getting a guarantee of title under a mortgagee policy, that the title companies are guaranteeing the validity of the mortgage?

MR. BARE: They do not guarantee the sense of its security. They insure the condition of the title upon which the mortgage is based and actually insure the forms and legal construction of the mortgage.

MR. LINDOW: Would that cover a forgery by a supposed owner? Suppose John Smith owned the title and you found the title in John Smith and I should walk over to some mortgage house or agent of the insurance company and say I am John Smith and make a mortgage.

MR. BARE: The company is liable.

MR. LINDOW: Would the insurance company interpret through the various title companies throughout the country that they are accepting that point?

MR. BARE: The point is covered by the policy.

CHAIRMAN DALY: Is it true the

Pennsylvania Association has been working for a few years on the standard form policy? I understand they have had a committee for a few years. What progress have they made?

MR. BARE: The Pennsylvania Title Association has a tentative form of policy which is to be standard and is now being analyzed by the various members of the executive committee of the Association and individual members.

CHAIRMAN DALY: Do you think that policy will be adopted and in general use throughout Pennsylvania? In other words, has Pennsylvania worked out a solution, a practical solution of the standard form policy?

MR. BARE: They have worked out a definite form which is now under consideration and it will come up at the next convention in May.

MR. LINDOW: May I ask if that is in accord with the New York Underwriters' policy?

MR. BARE: It has been a long while since I analyzed the New York form, but I think in general form they are very similar.

MR. HENRY CHITTICK: I would like to ask Mr. Bare whether in working out this form they are considering uniformity in language or uniformity in liability.

MR. BARE: Only uniformity in the basic elements that the form of contract of policy takes, not the form of liability. In other words, it seems to me, if you have a company on the Pacific coast and I have one on the Atlantic coast, when you keep in mind that you have a basic guarantee that is being given, I can't see why it would be impossible—difficult, I admit, but I do not see why it is impossible—to secure a particular phrasing in which you recognize your liability and I recognize mine.

When you come to the particular title you are insuring, you are going to turn up a lot of things I don't know about, but on your Schedule "B" in the form of your policy you can cover that. As Lindow just said, the big insurance companies make a loan in your section and in mine. They say, "What form do you issue your policy under?" You have the same basic obligation we have and I don't see why the phrasing can't be the same. The language doesn't vary particularly, and then when they accept the form the policy takes, you can put on your schedule the things that are an objection to that title, and the benefit is that the legal department that passes the matter only has to look at the particular title exceptions.

MR. DONZEL STONEY (San Francisco, Calif.): In other words, the New York and eastern life companies are looking only for a contract that protects them along the lines they are particularly interested. They themselves are not particular as to the language you use. What we are trying to get at is that if we are going to have the same legal liability, there are ad-

vantages in using the same phraseology.

MR. BARE: We are discussing that in the legal department. I would like to say this: When they became so active in this matter of loans they have naturally taken up some policies which were then being issued by outstanding companies, and from that they reached the form it should take, and unquestionably that form had a tremendous molding factor in determining their attitude toward what should or should not be a proper form of policy.

MR. CAMP: You might be interested in my experience in Tennessee. The Commercial Bank and Trust Company went into business about eighteen months ago insuring policies. I went to New York and there procured the New York standard form of policy. We issued only one form for the mortgagor or the owner. We write title insurance for life companies operating in Connecticut, four companies in New York City, one in Ohio, and two in Tennessee. We simply told those people that we wrote the New York standard form. None of them offered any objections to it and we didn't make any changes for those different states.

Our experience has been that the best thing to do is to have a standard form policy that is known to the people who handle it and in that way avoid a lot of trouble.

CHAIRMAN DALY: Mr. Condit, to what extent is the form used in the state of New York? Do you know in what respect your form is different than that of the Pennsylvania Association's standardizing?

MR. FRED P. CONDIT (New York City): The New York form was adopted for New York City purposes only by the New York City Board of Title Underwriters, but some of the companies—only a few up state in New York—have adopted practically the same form. I know that throughout the country where this has been under discussion they have written for our articles.

Mr. Bare had them and I think Mr.

Stoney had them, and we are always glad to help anybody who is interested in that particular thing.

We feel, just along the lines talked about here, an insurance company can take that one standard form and prove it for all times and not have to worry. It is headed, "Standard Form, New York Board of Title Underwriters." The minute they see it they know what it is; they don't have to read all that fine print, and each company gives the same policy another will, but naturally puts its various exceptions in typewritten form, but this only applies to the condition sheet. Does that answer your question?

CHAIRMAN DALY: Yes. My thought in asking that question was to see if Pennsylvania is making a real effort to standardize for that state, and New York for its state, and then make an effort to standardize between their states. That would be a real accomplishment so far as standardization is concerned.

Is there any other state that is making an effort towards uniform policy?

MR. E. C. WYCKOFF (Newark, N. J.): New Jersey has just had a very able discussion by Mr. Allin, the solicitor of the Title Guarantee & Trust Company of New York, at our convention and a committee is to be appointed by our president and we are just taking up the matter of uniform policies in the state of New Jersey.

MR. CAMP: It has been suggested by all the title companies in Tennessee that we adopt a standard form and I think that will probably be done in the coming year. I hope so.

CHAIRMAN DALY: I might say, the forms used by Oregon and eastern Washington are practically identical. The forms used in eastern Washington are not quite the same as the forms used in the rest of the state and in all of Oregon.

We have had considerable discussion on titles. What states are standardizing on abstract forms?

MISS VERA A. WIGNALL (Guaranty Abstract Co., President, Oklaho-

ma Abstracters Ass'n, Pauls Valley, Okla.): We do not have exactly a standard form, but our abstract contests show most of them do use practically the same thing. They are very similar. That is the only way we have uniformity, by common consent and conditions being similar.

We have our uniform certificate that is uniform throughout the state. It hasn't been adopted by all the members, but it has been adopted by the Association and the different members are adopting it as they run out of forms and reprint. I think nearly half of the membership is using the uniform certificate now.

CHAIRMAN DALY: Was it your intention to make a motion that it be the sense of this meeting, Mr. Bare, that a committee be appointed to report at the Detroit convention?

MR. BARE: It was not my thought to offer any motion, but if we are to get anywhere on such a question, it seems to me that it would be the logical plan to follow because the smaller companies, as I said before, will inevitably follow the lead that the outstanding, leading companies take, and adopt those things to which they give their approval. If a committee were appointed from these outstanding companies—I am thinking now of a wide area, for instance, five, or if necessary, seven, whatever the number would be—if they could draft what would be satisfactory to them, that would be a big step toward getting all the rest to come along.

Necessarily, their analysis would disclose whether or not it is in their opinion feasible.

As a matter of good order, suppose I do—I move that such a committee be appointed.

. . . The motion was seconded and duly carried.

CHAIRMAN DALY: I think this is a most important matter, both as far as policies are concerned, and also with reference to abstracts. There is a great opportunity to do some very constructive things.

WHAT THE ABSTRACT BUSINESS NEEDS AND SUGGESTED REMEDIES

By O. N. Ross, Orange City, Iowa

The papers and discussions had at meetings of the American Title Association may leave the impression that our recording title system is very complicated; that abstracts of title are very lengthy; that descriptions are always long and difficult; that crooked mortgages and fraudulent conveyances are common; and that curbstone abstracters are causing us great trouble, thereby making us do our work at a loss. A times some of these troubles appear and so are common matters for discussion at these meetings, but my personal experiences with them has been meager. Before going further with this paper I wish to give you some knowledge of the title situation

in Northwestern Iowa to explain some of my statements, which you might question without an explanation.

Iowa has had a live title association for 24 years and during all of that time, not one single piece of adverse legislation to the title business has been enacted into law and placed upon our statute books. My home County in northwest Iowa which is in the corn belt, is one of the larger counties in Iowa, has a very fertile soil—a rich black loam. It is very gently rolling prairie and requires no tile drainage. Descriptions are by government survey and there are public roads on almost every section line. Titles are reasonably short, less than 4% of our

abstract orders bringing in over \$30.00. We have very few old titles that are questioned. Whatever title complications we have are mostly caused by recent deaths or litigation. Difficult descriptions or descriptions by metes and bounds are not numerous. The attorneys at our bar who examine titles, pass them on their merits in a courageous manner, waiving technicalities, and are courteous gentlemen. If errors creep into estate papers or court procedure these attorneys thank the abstracter for calling the matters to their attention, correct the errors before the abstracts go out if possible, and acknowledge their appreciation of the opportunity given them. Fraudu-

lent transactions are almost unknown, as personal knowledge of the owners and people involved is usual. Less than 10 years ago the abstract plants in Sioux County, Iowa were purchased outright, consolidated and incorporated. The fact that there are no curbstone abstracters or other competition indicates that the prices and the service has been satisfactory to the public. We have no local demand for a change in the title system or change in manner of closing real estate transactions. What the abstract business needs with us is more business.

Please do not get the impression that I believe that the abstract business cannot be improved and that improvements cannot be suggested. I do want to leave the impression with you however, that we have the best recording title system in existence. One that is simple, safe and desirable. No filing system with certificates of title issued by public officers can fill its place. It functions well under the abstract-title examiner-plan and functions better in some cases under the abstract-examiner-title insurance plan. Propaganda for a change of our title system to a Torrens Plan is based upon mistaken ideas of the present system and a wrong conception of the results that would be obtained under that plan. The abstract of title business is a necessary part of our title system, and has for many years safeguarded the interests of property owners in a very satisfactory manner. Our title laws should be improved and simplified, examiners should make more courageous and simple requirements and title insurance and escrow arrangements should supplement the business and safeguard the public in a satisfactory manner in closing real estate transactions.

The abstract business has been an incomplete business from the first. The amount of detail work required has kept the abstracter busy but addition revenues have been required and so other lines were added. I have in mind a fine old gentleman who graduated in civil engineering in the early 80's. His first job was assisting the government in surveying the Missouri River. When checked up his triangles were not true and his work proved worthless. He became an abstracter, doing surveying on the side. He has retired on account of ill health. At the time of retiring in addition to running an abstract and loan and insurance business all alone, he did some surveying, was secretary of the county fair, elder in the church, director in the bank, collateral inheritance tax appraiser, city clerk and justice of the peace. That kind of title man has passed. The business has become more important and exacting. The title man must know his fellow abstracters, and co-operate with them. State laws affect his business seriously. He sees the necessity of joining his State Title Association and the American Title Association. He knows he must be awake to protect his large investment

in the business. He sees that the banker and realtor appreciate his services and he directs the title matters of his community. He must give complete title service and as that service must be satisfactory to the public he explains the merits of his business and toots his own horn. We say abstracting is a profession. To keep it so we must convince the public that it is a profession and specialize in it.

Iowa has an active title association which is working toward uniformity and simplification of our title laws. The meetings are well attended and the good the association does is appreciated by its members. The Iowa Title Association has been very effective in preventing the passing of bad title laws. It would be of more service if it also sponsored laws for the improvement of the business. The American Title Association is well managed and is of great assistance to all the state associations and to all title men in their business. Not many years ago this association procured a reversal of the ruling made by Federal Land Banks requiring Torrens Certificates on property covered by Federal loans. Last February at the Chicago Meeting I was surprised to have a Federal Title Examiner demand title insurance service where that service was not yet available. Publicity and research can be directed better by the national association than by the state association. I hope our officers will succeed in convincing the editors of the more reliable farm papers that Torrens Laws are a delusion and abandon the propaganda for it. We need to protect our business and more efficient organization is of great assistance.

Not many years ago the abstracts were meager and certificates short. The time for making incomplete abstracts is past. If you are an abstracter and dodging responsibility, I urge you to change your plan. Make your caption complete. Incorporate a plat with distances shown whenever possible. Abstract the record instead of copying it and shorten the older parts of the title to show only the essentials. Then certify it with a certificate that covers. If you have knowledge outside of the record that the one interested in the title should know see that he gets the information. Not long ago I picked up a bulky abstract and was surprised to find instead of a long title with complicated court procedure a so-called railroad title which I have seen properly abstracted on three or four sheets. It had been printed as it was a common title. It should have been rewritten. If you have any of these old bulky titles, rewrite them for the good of the business and eliminate the parts that it is not necessary to show. I believe in making abstracts as experience has shown me to make them and in the shortest manner. If additional unnecessary showings are required, show them but omit this showing the next time. I had a request from an attorney for a complete copy of a foreign will covering

eleven pages of record the essential parts of which had been quoted. I sent him the original will with request for instructions. He returned the original will and waived the requirement admitting that it should not be included in the abstract. The abstracter should *abstract briefly* showing all essentials to the title, working toward *uniformity of showings*. We should meet all problems squarely without evasion and completely certify our work.

The propaganda for a change of title system has been taken up by blank book men, political agitators, farmers organizations and farm papers. Little has been done to counteract this publicity and correct the misinformation supplied. I asked another J. P. what the abstract business needed. He replied, "I do not know but I do know that land owners need the Torrens Title system because abstracts are so long and expensive; titles are never good unless they are quieted and a Torrens Certificate is inexpensive and gives absolute title." Every one of these statements were erroneous as you all know, but he believed them. When he understood the matter he changed his decision. We are falling down on advertising our business. Even lawyers, bankers and realtors do not know enough about the merits of our title system to recognize the falacious statements in the public press. This should not be. The abstracter of titles, title examiners and title insurance men must get behind our title system. It is the best recording title system in existence. Our interests are all the same. The abstract must be looked up and title examined before a title insurance policy can be written. Let title men remove the just causes for complaint. Let abstracters show the essentials as briefly as possible without evasion and make complete certificates to their abstracts. Let title examiners make requirements of essential showings or corrections in the title, waiving immaterial matters and let title insurance and escrow arrangements give complete title service. Thus removing many of the real objections in title matters.

The abstract of title business needs co-operation among all people interested in titles so that the title laws may be simplified and real estate transactions liquified as far as the interests of the title owner will permit. It needs complete organization, together with uniformity of showings and methods. It needs adequate plants in each county under efficient management giving satisfactory service to the public. It needs an appreciation of the merits of our title system and our service by the public. This can be strengthened by publicity or advertising. And it needs title insurance and escrow service to supplement the abstract business and give complete title service. These needs can be supplied by co-operation among title men and efficient state and national title associations.

STATE REGULATION OF ABSTRACT COMPANIES

By Hugh Ricketts, Muskogee, Okla.

This is a subject which some of us in the profession may believe would be better forgotten, but, there seems always to be those outside the profession who are determined to make laws for our guidance, and we therefore must take heed. Only when we have reached that perfection of title service that no one inside or out the profession can find fault with it, will the time arrive when we may expect to be overlooked by would be reformers. Not only the abstractor himself, but all branches of the title business including the title examiners and the title insurance companies, are equally interested in this matter. If anything can be done to improve our title system by assisting the abstractors to produce better abstract service, all branches of the profession will benefit when that thing is done. The examiner is surely interested in hastening the day when nothing comes to his desk but well compiled abstracts, showing everything necessary for him to satisfactorily examine the complete record title.

The title insurance man is surely interested in any improvement in obtaining record title evidence. Those companies especially which contemplate extending their activities over new territory, must be interested in the sort of title evidence which can be obtained in that territory, and in anything which tends to improve the reliability and accessibility of that evidence.

Personally, I have never been one of those who believe in asking the legislature for help, and for sometime have been of the opinion that any condition in our profession sought to be corrected by legislative action is likely to be aggravated thereby, rather than helped. Many of us have seen carefully studied bills, which, as written, would be truly beneficial to the public—carefully drawn by excellent committees of a state title association—so changed in the course of consideration by a legislature that it made into law, conditions would be made worse than before. Further, there can be no doubt that all over the Country we now have altogether too many laws on our statute books. We frequently hear it said that we would be better off if legislature would put in their time for awhile in repealing old laws rather than in passing new ones. It therefore behooves us to be very, very careful to be right before we advocate the passage of any sort of legislation. And I take it that state regulation, if any such things is advisable, must be based on statutory law.

It should be understood that this discussion is from the standpoint of those states in which the abstract and examination system is or can be, used with success. I have not considered the matter in the least, as it may apply to those states in which private ab-

stract plants are not common.

From the material gathered by the Association, some interesting facts present themselves. We have reports of only seven states which have statutes directly pertaining to the activities of the abstractor. There are four principal points which are generally considered by both the profession and the outsiders who want to do something to or for us, and they are as follows: First, a bond requirement; second, a statutory fee scale or limit; third, a plant requirement; fourth, examination and licensing of abstractors by a board.

Of the seven states in which we find regulations, six, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, Kansas and Oklahoma, require a bond. Three—North Dakota, South Dakota and Oklahoma, fix fees. Two—North Dakota and Wyoming, require a separate index and one—North Dakota, provides a Board of Examiners who have charge of licensing abstractors. One State—Mississippi, has none of these, but requires an abstractor to have \$50,000.00 capital. There is one abstract company in the State with that much capital the others must have their certificates signed by an attorney. I will not now comment on any such situation.

There are, of course, reasons behind all of these points. They are aimed at the correction of some existing abuse or they are designed to prevent some unfair practice which might possibly arise in the future. Since we find the same items in different localities it must be that they are the best attempts at cures so far found for the sort of thing that needs or is thought to need, curing in our profession.

Let us consider them one by one. First—requirement that any individual, firm, or corporation engaging in the abstract business must give a bond. These bonds are generally conditioned for the protection of the county against damage of records by the abstractor and for the protection of the public against loss from omissions or errors in abstracts issued. These are the reasons underlying this requirement. It may also be said that a bond proves the abstractor's good faith, and he should therefore be glad to furnish it.

This bond may be all right—I won't quarrel with it—but it is in most cases unnecessary and in others, on account of the way it is handled by the county officials who must approve the surety, worthless. In many of our states with no bond requirement, the abstractors enjoy as high a degree of confidence from their customers and justly so, as do those in the states which require bond. Losses are paid just as promptly, the good will and known solid character of the long established plant cannot be improved by any bond

requirement. The mere fact that a man can make a bond certainly does not entitle him to enjoy the confidence of the public as an abstractor fully equipped to practice his profession, but that is exactly what some legislatures tell the people.

Second is the statutory fee scale, which is intolerable and impossible. Even if we grant that it is possible, on the floor of a state legislature where such bills generally reach their final state, or any place else for that matter, to arrive at a fair and just price for abstract service which can be applied to every county in the state today, tomorrow and next year, we still are confronted with the point that it is not a subject of legislation under the federal constitution. There are right now busy counties in which nearly all real estate transactions would cease for lack of proper customary evidence of title, if the abstractor were required to observe a strict interpretation of the fee scales on the statute books of the state. The fees or fee limits provided by the statutes of the three states which have so far passed such laws, are flat rates, with no exception nor provisions for special cases wherein they might be confiscatory. How many things are sold today at the same price which they brought a few years ago? There is not even a provision which authorizes a corporation commission or other state body to make changes in the schedule. It would be hard to find a parallel to this sort of law making. What the underlying reason of this legislation is I cannot say and will not attempt to guess. What profession has a fixed scale of charges—the same in city or village? How about doctors, dentists, or lawyers?

It seems to be conceded that legislatures have no power to regulate private business or fix the price of commodities or service or interfere with the freedom of contract, so long as the business is not affected with a public interest. Is the business or profession of abstracting land title effected with a public interest? Does the abstractors acquire from the state any of its governmental powers? Can he force anyone to buy his service? Is he not bound by the ordinary conditions of mercantile transactions? He cannot be said to have a monopoly. He has no right to the examination of public records than any one else. The privilege of examination of public records extended him by some state laws in connection with requiring him to make bond, is already his as a citizen. Even though there was a law requiring one to have an abstract plant before he could engage in the business, those already possessing plants would have no more monopoly than the grocer who has his stock. Another may open a grocery store in competition if he has the capital to buy a stock. Another

may start the construction of an abstract plant tomorrow under the same conditions.

Other points justifying legislative control of a business are probably the grounds of public morals, public health and public safety. I think we can disregard as irrelevant the questions of public morals or public health in this connection. Public safety of the pocketbook would be served by such regulation as would eliminate the curbstone abstracter, though public safety I believe is ordinarily meant to mean protection of lives and property from enemies, fire, famine, dangerous machinery etc. But this much regulation if in effect, it seems to me, would hardly create sufficient "public interest" in the business to warrant price regulation. The various states have laws requiring practicing attorneys, physicians, accountants and others to be licensed in a certain manner, after complying with fixed requirements, but do not attempt to thereupon impress on that profession the character of a "public business" subject to having its fees prescribed by statute. Even should we grant that such a regulation made abstracting a public business, we certainly cannot admit that a flat rate applicable to all portions of a state without regard to the volume of business or proportionate expenses of the individual business is not an inequality of law which is unfair, unjust and unconstitutional. This very fact, as it affects truly public businesses, as railroads, is probably the underlying cause of the creation of Public Utility Commissions as we now know them.

I will mention the fourth point next, before going to the third. The fourth is the establishment of a Board of Examiners who have authority to license abstracters. Not so bad. It has been long advocated by some able men in the profession. It may be hard to keep out of politics and will always be the subject of much criticism. The reason for it is the same that establishes Boards of Examiners in other professions, and is of the highest plane of thought, that is, to insure against incompetents foisting themselves on the public as experts. In some localities it may for a period be the only solution of present difficulties, but in the long run, I believe there may be another way to provide the same protection; and that brings me back to the third point, which I skipped—that is, a requirement that every individual, firm or corporation engaging in the business of making abstracts for the public must have a separate independent index to the county records.

Abstracters who have curbstone competition will probably agree that if the curbstoner should be required to make a real investment of capital in his business, he would no longer be a menace to the public and a profit stealer from the legitimate abstracter. And there you have the justification for such a regulation.

No matter how skeletonized the index, the simplest form that can be de-

vised costs money to build and maintain. If the curbstoner has sufficient capital to build a plant he will seriously consider the return on his investment and its safety before taking the plunge. If he has to be financed, it is certain that he will have to show that he intends to run his business in a safe, conservative manner and also show a reasonable chance for a return on the investment before he can raise the necessary funds to build his plant. Capital is much too easily impaired or lost completely, to be knowingly entrusted to those who are incompetent or irresponsible.

The abstract business which is built on the basis of a costly plant, is the business which continues indefinitely and is a real asset to its community. It has everything to lose and nothing to gain by careless methods. It has a pride in its record of service to the community and is constantly seeing to improve that service. Its methods and morale are not affected in the least by the fact that it is or is not required to furnish a statutory bond. It constantly and consistently stands behind its work, bond or no bond. Its manager is not the type of man who is a menace, even though there existed an opportunity for him to become so (which there most emphatically does not even though there is no statutory price bar). Does the public need price limit legislation for protection against him? If his numbers in proportion to the general population were one hundred times greater, he might well enough know that such a thought would be laughed down by the public, instead of placed on the statute books as the law of the land. Such laws surely must be bred of spite and passed in ignorance. I can conceive of no other way to account for them.

The foregoing is not a fanciful description of an ideal abstract office. It is a truthful statement which applies to a very large number of abstract offices now operating, as would be proven, I am firmly convinced, if we could have an accurate survey of all concerns actively engaged in the business. On the other hand—what of the so-called abstracter who attempts to operate without a plant. Is he thinking of the service he can furnish next year and ten years hence? Does he believe that he is honestly making the most comprehensive searches possible, as his customers are entitled to believe? Is he right and the one we call the true abstracter wrong? Is the additional safeguard to the public furnished by the plant man unnecessary? How shall we answer that? In a dozen ways, but I will make only one answer here. Ask all the attorneys of high standing in any community where such gentry operate, if they will accept his abstracts, and then the same question about the abstracts of the plant man. You may find, unfortunately, some attorneys who will accept the curbstoner's abstracts, but you will find more who will not. You will find none who will not accept the abstract

made by the reputable abstracter working with a plant.

The curbstoner operating in a state which has numerical indexes in the recorders office in a county with simple titles, may get along for quite a while, but sooner or later, litigation or development will complicate these records to an extent that it will be impossible for him to safely certify his abstracts. In the meantime he is preventing the legitimate abstracter from making a fair profit, which means that the public will suffer in the end, as the lack of money to spend in plant improvement will handicap service on the part of the legitimate abstracter in future years when complications have increased and the curbstoner has passed on to greener pastures.

If every abstracter should be required to have an index before he could do business, what could we reasonably expect to be the result? North Dakota and Wyoming have such laws, and I am sorry I have no information to their effect. North Dakota also has a fee statute and a licensing board and the Wyoming law seems to attempt to provide a complete set of abstract books in the recorders office for the use of the public. Oklahoma recorders are supposed to keep a complete grantor-grantee numerical index on all land and in many counties these indexes comprise a very fair abstract plant, in so far as the recorders office alone is concerned. The courts and the tax office are another and extremely interesting matter. To get back to the question however—what results could we expect under a plant requirement law?

In the first place, every abstracter would immediately have the responsibility of a capital investment. This one thing alone, it seems to me would go farther toward inducing in the abstracter, the right habits of thought and the right attitude toward his profession and the public than could anything else. I base this surmise on the present attitude, condition, character and fundamental solidity of those members of our profession who now are and long have been, in that condition. We have been told at conventions time and again, by outsiders, that our profession ranks very high in intelligence, and character. I am advised that very few curbstoners attend our conventions.

From the point of view of the legitimate abstracter, the elimination of the possibility of this unfair and unjust competition lends more security to his investment in plant. Perhaps he is not at present known in your county. Tomorrow a boom may strike and your volume of business be enormously increased. For many years you have gone on at a steady pace on a very small margin of profit—some years none, other years a little. Now you are finally in a position to take a good profit from this increased volume. But in comes the curbstoner, getting business from the strangers on the strength of his sign "Bonded Ab-

stracter," cutting prices, working fast and carelessly on the crest of the boom, taking money out of your pocket and giving the title profession a black eye by the way he conducts himself and his office. How can you keep him out? Isn't it right that you should keep him out? What good does he do the community? Can you wait until he comes and then oust him? Wouldn't it be much better to have him barred before the time arrives when he wants to come in?

I am sure that none of us are interested in any regulations which would curb legitimate competition. If an abstractor surveys the field and decides there is sufficient volume of business to justify the necessary investment in a plant to run in competition with us, he is entitled to go to it and we will do our darndest to give such good service to our customers that he'll get none of them. But we don't believe in any state aid to that end. We believe only in such regulations as are necessary to protect the public from being swindled and to protect our investment from the unfair competition of those who are swindling the public.

It seems to me that no further state regulation is really necessary, if we can eliminate the so-called abstractor who operates without a plant. The rest of the necessary regulation will be done by those who furnish the capital and by the State and American Title Associations, through education.

To sum up, my consideration of the subject has led me to the following conclusion—Of the four forms of state regulation of the private business of making abstracts of land titles which have heretofore been advocated and are now on the statute books of at least one or more states, one of them, the bond requirement, is at least harmless; another the state licensing board, is beneficial, but lends itself readily to complications of a character that might make it difficult to keep under proper control; the third, state regulation of prices for abstract service, is vicious and should be defeated whenever introduced; the Fourth—a requirement that anyone practicing the profession or doing business with the public as an abstractor, must have a separate index of the public records, is an excellent thing by all just standards embodying in itself in a very simple manner, the direction of natural forces toward the ends of de-

sirable improvements. I cannot help but believe that it should be carefully studied and perhaps in some measure fostered and promoted by this Association.

CHAIRMAN DALY: If there is any state where there is any legislation with reference to the regulation of abstract companies, I think it would do well to study Mr. Ricketts' paper as to what should and should not go into a bill regulating abstract companies.

Is there any discussion on this paper? There is one question I would like to ask—in the states where there are bonding laws, what percentage require surety bonds and what percentage personal bonds?

MR. RICKETTS: I don't believe the form of bond is stated by the law. They are not all personal; in Oklahoma either kind of bond is acceptable, but it has to be approved by the county commissioner.

CHAIRMAN DALY: Are there any states that require a deposit?

MR. RICKETTS: One state, I believe, has five thousand and one has ten thousand dollar bond. One state has a graded bond, depending on the size of the county. Oklahoma has a five thousand dollar bond law in any county. Abstracters all give the same size bond. It doesn't amount to very much.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Kansas City, Mo.): Doesn't that tend to put a lot of fellows in business who oughtn't to be?

MR. RICKETTS: I think it does. It would seem to mean that he is an abstractor because he can make bond.

MR. J. R. MORGAN (Secretary, Abstracters Section, Johnson Abstract Co., Kokomo, Ind.): I think "bonded abstracters" are very largely a myth in the minds of the public and abstracters. Everybody is on equal footing in the matter of bonding, whether he knows how to make an abstract or not. The bond only protects the public from losses.

It is wonderful, when you think of the amount of abstracting that is done over these United States, the small amount of loss through the act of the abstractor. It is a very small amount. The bond does not protect the public against the most important thing of all as to the curb-stone abstractor, and that is that his abstracts all have to be made over by somebody else and the original purchaser has been "fim-

med." The bond does not protect him on that.

Personally, I am against any legislation. I have fought in our own state to keep down legislation. We will get fee bills and other things tacked on. All on earth we need is the right of contract given to us under the common law, and efficiency in a plant of our own will meet any competition there is. I get a great deal of business making over the other fellow's work. I appreciate it very much.

MR. C. N. ROSS: Would a state examination of abstractors do any good?

MR. MORGAN: No; anybody could pass it. It is like the civil service examination. A congressman recommends a man, and then they hold an examination, and nobody has a chance to get in except the man he recommended.

CHAIRMAN DALY: Is there any further discussion? Mr. Ricketts has analysed the laws of all of the states which regulated abstract companies, and I think that this information was furnished to him by the office of our Secretary, which has been compiling these records. Mr. Hall is also compiling the records of all of the states that have title insurance laws, and the purpose of that is that if there are any states where title insurance laws are being introduced or there is any chance of them being introduced in the future, any one interested can write to the Secretary's office and get a copy of every title insurance law that exists in any state.

I think this is a really constructive move on the part of our Secretary, and I think it will be used in many cases, because title insurance is growing and there will be other states which will require title insurance laws in the future.

Our regular program of the day has been completed. I was a little fearful of having too long a program and didn't want to tire you out.

I thought at this time it might be advisable to take up one of the important committee reports, and that is the Committee on Advertising. Those of you who were at the Atlantic City convention know the tremendous work this Committee has put in and I think it would be advisable to hear from Mr. Dilworth at this time to know what the committee has done this year and what it proposes to do during the year to come.

REPORT OF ADVERTISING COMMITTEE

By Tom Dilworth, Chairman

Really, we have so little to talk about and almost nothing to say on the subject. It wasn't our expectation when we turned in our report at the Atlantic City convention that the committee would be continued. When President Woodford stated that he wanted us to continue to function during this coming year, we asked him what would be

expected of us, and he replied that we were just to continue the work we had been doing.

With that in view, upon my return home, I communicated with the other members of the committee, Ed Lindow, Bill Pryor, Arthur Longbrake, and Mrs. Jeffries. All of them were present at the Chicago meeting last

year and all of them are here now, with the exception of Mr. Longbrake, who suffered an accident last week and is in the hospital.

I wanted you to know we are on the job, even though we are not functioning. I asked for suggestions and we exchanged some letters, and following the suggestion of Jim Wood-

ford and Dick Hall, prepared a letter to send out requesting that a further contribution be made by the members along the line of those contributions that were made last year.

It was submitted to Mr. Hall and it was understood that it was to be sent out about the first or fifteenth of December and we had expected that in response to that letter we would obtain new ideas and much new literature, but on account of the holiday season being at hand, and further, because of the fact so many other letters were being sent out by the Association at that particular time, we decided to hold up this letter and not to send it.

We appear before you today just as we left you at Atlantic City. We haven't been able to formulate any plans. We have had several conferences, and I have come to the conclusion that we must have more definite instructions from the executive committee, or must base our report merely on a recommendation that the subject be turned over to some advertising agency that would be interested in the matter from a financial standpoint with the hope of reward if something could be evolved that would meet the situation.

It is a disappointing report for us to make, but we felt that we would rather come up here and face you and make it than to let it go by default.

The difficulty about handling that recommendation, so far as this committee is concerned, is that the members of the committee live in communities that haven't available to them such large advertising concerns as might take the subject over for consideration. It would have to be done by some one who lived in one of the larger cities, or through the Executive Secretary's office.

What I am saying about this feature of the report has reference only to the information that we were seeking for the benefit of the abstracters in advertising their work.

Ed Lindow has a separate report to make with reference to the title insurance section, and I will ask you, when other members of the committee have spoken, to call upon Mr. Lindow to make his separate report.

I would like to have Bill Pryor supplement what I have said with any suggestions he might have to make.

MR. W. H. PRYOR (Vice President, Pryor Abstract Co., Duluth, Minn.): I don't know that there is much to add to Mr. Dilworth's report. The committee is in the position at this time of not knowing what is expected of them.

The exhibit which was shown at Atlantic City represented the collection of different advertising material, and from our standpoint, it almost seems as though the committee had performed the functions that were expected of it. If we are to go any further, it will be necessary to have authority from the executive committee asking us to tabulate this material and assemble it, and possibly make recommendations as to the best form of advertising for

title service. That, you see, is a pretty big thing to attempt and something which I feel is really out of the province of our committee.

It does seem to me, however, that in view of the fact that less than ten per cent of the members of our association responded to the call that was sent out last year, that we would still be able to gather some additional material which might be put with what we already have and again have it shown at the coming convention, and rather than to attempt any decision or recommendation as to the best form of advertising to put that exhibit before our members and let them draw their own conclusions, taking into consideration their own particular needs.

I believe the letter which is suggested would bring in a material increase to the amount of material this exhibit has. I really believe it will be highly valuable to again show that exhibit at the Detroit convention. I know it created a great deal of interest last year and I believe it was one of the most satisfactory things that was accomplished in title matters, so far as the Atlantic City convention was concerned. I know everybody who saw that exhibit was able to take home ideas for his own business. Surely the ninety per cent who did not respond must have some material that will be of advantage to the members of this Association. Out of that ninety per cent I think we can get some stuff that might be of value to us.

CHAIRMAN DALY: I think it is true the exhibit you prepared at Atlantic City has been sent to the various state meetings throughout the year, so that while the committee may not have functioned, the result of the committee's work really has functioned during the year.

MR. DILWORTH: Dick Hall told me he had eight or ten inquiries, three or four from state associations and seven or eight from different concerns who asked about particular phases of advertising, and that he had taken these sheets and forwarded them to these different inquirers and they had made notes from them and returned them to the Secretary's office. It has been used in that way; I don't know to how great an extent other than that.

CHAIRMAN DALY: Mr. Lindow, you have a special matter to come up under advertising.

MR. ED LINDOW (Union Title and Guaranty Co., Detroit, Mich.): Mr. Chairman and Members: About a year ago, under the advertising committee, I was asked by the title insurance section to get the sentiment, and I also got the approval of the officers, for the establishment of some form of national advertising. I understand this subject has come up now for the third time, and I don't want to be the third member to go down in defeat.

I wrote about fifty-four letters to some of the leading title companies throughout the country to start on some form of national advertising, touching only on the high spots of

what title insurance is and its benefits to the public, not making any distinctions between any of the several policies as are issued today.

Responding to the fifty-four letters, I have received thirty-one letters. fourteen of the companies have signified their willingness to contribute one hundred dollars this year toward that cause, another fifty dollars and there are three that are hesitating somewhat as to what amount they wish to contribute, due to the size and capitalization of their company. Five more are also considering the possibility of contributing to this cause.

Of the thirty-one replies to my letters, I have had nine flat refusals, and most of them have been refusals after a second letter from me.

The idea of the title insurance section and the officers has been to run a campaign in the National Real Estate Journal which is published twice a month, using preferred position, and I have sent a copy of the National Real Estate Journal to the companies that I wrote to, with the thought of using the title men's code of ethics as the first announcement in that publication. Dick Hall has presented two other good copies.

The cost of continuing this campaign would run in the neighborhood of \$125 to \$145 per issue. That means that if we were to run a campaign for a year, using the publication twice a month, it would necessarily mean the forty title companies contributing one hundred dollars apiece.

Our next bet, if that is impossible, is to use the publication once a month, and we then need \$2,000 to cover the expense.

I don't want to make it appear that it looks easy, because I still have a few that I am trying to get in, and there is no doubt in my mind that we are going to start this campaign and run at least once a month. So many title companies—I hope this won't be considered as a sort of slam on my part—but especially where title insurance is universally used, the title companies are hesitating to come into this cause. I don't think there is any state in the Union that is immune from some future ways and means of evidencing title. We don't know what is going to happen ten, fifteen, or fifty years from now, and if we can have the realtors, all the big fellows in the real estate business, from which most of our business starts, as friends, and also have them know what title insurance is in a better way, I think it will be beneficial not only to the companies where it is universally used, but from coast to coast.

We talked this morning about trying to get the cooperation of the National Real Estate Board on Uniform Lien Law. Fine; we should have their cooperation. But let's give them a little cooperation. Put something back. We have had a lot of cooperation from the National Real Estate Board.

Another thing that was brought up this morning was the question that

came up in New Jersey that they do not have the support and cooperation of realtors. According to the circulation of the National Real Estate Journal, that magazine is placed in New Jersey in a great number of realtors' offices.

I think it has been very interesting to read some of the letters and comebacks, especially on refusals, on going into this campaign, because I am afraid some of the corporations—I am not saying this about all of them—but there are a few that are still thinking of twenty years ago.

Another thing in Detroit—I don't want to boost Detroit too much, for you are coming there and I don't want to steer you away—we spend thousands on good will advertising. The least we can get out of this campaign, even where title insurance is universally used, if we create just a little more good will, we will be paid a hundred times on every cent we put in it.

I think this is a subject that some of the members are willing to discuss and I am sorry that a few of them whom I would like to have had discuss the matter have left the room.

CHAIRMAN DALY: Do you wish to take any action on this report?

MR. STONEY: I suggest he write some more letters and get some more people in, because the idea is all right.

MR. W. J. SNYDER (Chairman, Title Insurance Section, Philadelphia, Pa.): That is one of the principal things that the title insurance section of this Association set out to do this coming year. It is one of the things that we feel is the most important that

we can do, and I was rather surprised, in talking to Mr. Lindow, to find that he experienced any hesitancy on the part of title companies in joining in that movement.

I happen to come from a section of the country where title insurance is universal. There isn't a transfer made in the city of Philadelphia and there isn't a mortgage placed on record that isn't accompanied by title insurance. So consequently I don't know that we need to advertise what title insurance is. Our investing public, as well as the citizens generally, is fully converted to that idea. They know nothing else.

But at the same time, some of the companies in the East are cooperating in this plan. I do not know what proportion of them, but it matters not whether you have title insurance or whether you have not. As Mr. Lindow explained, it is a bulwark against other methods being established. If you have the best thing there is on the market at the present time and your neighboring state gets something that is very much inferior, there is no telling how soon the attempt may be made to invade your territory.

Therefore, I think that national advertising of our commodity is one of the most important things that we can do, and I certainly hope, as chairman of the Title Insurance Section, that Mr. Lindow will get one hundred per cent cooperation.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Kansas City Title & Trust Co., Kansas City, Mo.): Our company is one of the fourteen, I believe, to whom Mr. Lindow referred. I answered his letter im-

mediately and made a subscription.

I am of the same opinion as Mr. Snyder of Philadelphia and Mr. Lindow of Detroit that it is for the general good of title insurance. Just as Mr. Snyder has said, you don't know when or where an outbreak is going to occur for some different method of handling title insurance, and if we can educate the people throughout the United States through the Real Estate Journal, it will mean a great deal.

Our local board is a member of the National Association, and I understand that a copy of the Journal goes to each active member in the local association along with his membership. So there is a very fair distribution of that Journal, at least to the most important real estate men over the United States, and it looks to me as if the cost was a very small sum. If anybody is spending any sum for advertising—I think we spent \$25,000 last year in Kansas City, and that is possibly a very small amount as compared to Mr. Lindow's company—one hundred dollars for one insertion is a very small proportion of that fund to be used for national advertising.

I think that the California companies should come in, and I think that every company should come in, every title company in the United States. Education is the finest thing in the world, and if we can get title insurance before the people so they know what other communities have done, they will do what California has done. It will soon be a title insurance business and abstract companies all over the country will make more money when that comes to be in existence.

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE, SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

SECRETARY HALL: The purpose of this meeting is not to try to tell you anything or to give any impression that we are trying to tell the state association officials in particular what to do, but there has been such a change and a big growth in the title business in the last few years and the work of the American Association has increased so, even in the last few months, that I want to tell you a few things that seem to be pre-eminent at this time and seem to be the most important things in the title business and try to show you how the American Association office wants to help you with them.

A few years ago when state associations held a meeting, if they had the customary baker's dozen, they were lucky, and when the American Title Association held a meeting it was not much larger. I imagine there have been conventions a few years back when there wasn't the interest and program and possibly not much more of an attendance than at this winter meeting, but today every state association has an increase every year in its attendance. The American Title Association has a wonderful increase

every year in the attendance at its conventions, and the title men all over the country seem to be "picking up," as you might say.

Two years ago I was a pessimist. I was in the abstract business and from the way things looked, I would almost have sold my abstract business for ten cents on the dollar. I had been going around to state meetings talking to abstracters for two years and thought of all the hopeless situations in the world, it was the title business. I couldn't see how you could make anything of it. You couldn't get any correspondence from anybody you would write to. I thought if some of these fellows did work like they answered letters, it was no wonder they were in bad shape.

State conventions were a joke. There absolutely seemed to be no interest in the abstract business as a business, and I used to go around with a long face wondering what there was to do and how to do it, and was really discouraged.

In the last year I have attended a great number of conventions and with the exception of one state, have failed

to find a single group of title men that was disgruntled. They were working things out, and while business was not as good as it ought to be, they seemed to be making money. Some state associations said, "We haven't anything to worry about. Business is good; we have cut out cut-throat competition and all that sort of thing."

Two years ago title insurance was something everybody had talked about for a long time. The rank and file of title men knew nothing about it. We can remember how at New Orleans the matter of title insurance was presented to us so we all wanted to know about it, particularly the country or small city abstracter for we have all kinds and varieties of abstracters in this part of the country. They wanted to know about it immediately.

Within a period of two and a half years title insurance has become almost universal throughout the entire Pacific coast and the western states. It has been presented over this part of the country in four or five states, and in others they are working on state licensing, bonding and requiring an abstracters.

In many states they have simply reduced competition by increasing their efficiency. The abstracters are making money; they are together. In one other state they have tried what we have thought of for years, the matter of licensing, bonding and requiring an abstractor must have a plant.

It will probably be introduced in two or three other states—whether it will become a law I don't know.

I can say the work in the office of the American Title Association has more than doubled in the last year. I say this every once in a while, but it has more than doubled in the last six months. I wish you folks could realize the difference in attitude among those in the title business between now and a year ago, and especially, now and four or five years ago.

It is a peculiar thing that in the cities there are fewer title companies in proportion to the size than in the country towns. In this section of the country it is often that we find six abstracters in a town of probably twenty-five hundred and a county of a few thousand population. I think of all the people to be pitied it is the average country abstractor. In the country every real estate man, lawyer, banker and other are his competitor.

When we would send out questionnaires or talk to the abstracters, the same answers that we got twenty-one years ago are the answers we get today, which shows there has been a realization of what the problems and troubles are, but apparently no concerted effort or practical attempt to remedy them has been made.

In the last year a lot of those things have been taken hold of in a few states and solved. These are what seem to me to be the matter with the title business. In the first place, start with the abstractor—there is a disposition in the mind of people, brought about by circumstances a long time ago, that it is the county officials' business to provide a way for the public to go to the record and learn anything there is there. Some of those thought the county official should furnish that information on request and even prescribe fees to pay for it, and they are suffering under that handicap in some places.

There is a constant attempt in all states to put in tract indexes in the counties. One state practically put abstracters out of business a few years ago when they passed that kind of a law. Only two abstracters in the state of Utah are keeping up a set of abstract books with tract indexes. The result is, the title business, especially the abstract business, is everybody's business. The abstract is used in ninety per cent of the United States.

It is not necessarily the territory; it is not necessary the population. Abstracters have just gone along, as we all know, and let anybody and everybody tell them about their business. The Torrens Law comes up periodically. This year in every state where

there has not been a Torrens law on the statute books an attempt is being made to put it on.

At a request for information, I have just finished a compilation of all the material I could find on the Torrens law. We have printed that and have sets of it. It is quite a voluminous affair. I was surprised to note there hasn't been a thing written on the Torrens system since 1910. All the agitation for it came from 1907 to 1910, when the law was passed, in most places where it is on the books.

In addition to that there is an attempt to pass laws regulating the abstract business fees, particularly to make the abstracters do this, that, and the other thing. In Kansas, for instance, they introduced a bill providing that if at any time the county loses anything out of the register's office, an abstractor must replace that on demand—which means, if the court house burned you would have to reproduce your plant to the county without cost, but in return, you would have free access to the county records. That is a wicked bill that could ruin you.

In other places they are introducing bills to have the register of deeds make abstracts on demand. In other words, there is a great agitation today directed to this business, and more than since 1907.

In many states title insurance is coming in for due consideration. Editorials have appeared in the paper—the most vicious one I ever read was published in my own home State of Kansas. It went on to say the title policy wasn't worth anything, that there was nothing back of the companies, that title insurance was not dependable. It said nobody knew anything about these companies, that they might soon be out of business, that the only safe way was the Torrens system.

They are agitating that these title insurance companies be put under insurance regulations, that they be required to build up reserves, and so forth, such as fire and surety companies.

I was in one city in Minnesota the other day, and found that the abstracters and everybody else admitted that thirty-three and a third per cent of the business done in that county and city was done under the Torrens Act. When they go down to talk to the real estate and loan men, they will accept it and are tickled over the proposition. Go to the man in charge of it, who has been in charge of it for years, and he will tell you the system is perfect. He will say you can start a deal at eight o'clock and have it closed at ten-thirty, with the papers recorded and everything fixed. You talk to him about our stock arguments against it and he will tell you you are wrong, that thirty-three and a third per cent of the real estate transactions are done under the Torrens system and that it gains in favor every day.

Going on down, we find this old proposition of discounts, cut prices. Nobody seems to be making anything out of the abstract business in the majority of places.

The farm bureau, which is a strong organization throughout this part of the country, has particularly taken upon itself to see that the abstractor is put out of business this year. That is one of the things you see.

There is just one thing I have observed very emphatically, and that is, that wherever the title men in a state are strong and active and have a wide-awake, functioning state association these problems don't appear. You show me where a bill is introduced for any reason whatsoever aimed at the title business and I will show you a place where the title companies and the state association aren't functioning properly. In states where they are advocating various kinds of measures, you will find the title business on a poor basis.

All industries, all trades, and all professions have taken it upon themselves to take care of themselves. In other words, when you are rendering personal service like those in our business are, unless you give your best product and give satisfaction, you are not going to survive or make yourself better liked.

The thing that makes an automobile dependable is that the men in that particular business are doing everything they can to make that particular car better. That is what we are going to have to do. It is a subject that has been broached many times in all title conventions, meetings, and groups, and sometimes nearly split up friendships, this matter of regulation of the title companies and abstracters in particular.

As I see it, there is no business in the world today which is as unorganized and undisciplined a mob as the title business. If you show me five title companies right next door to each other, I will defy anybody to go in and recognize any mode of procedure that is akin. As you go into the states, it is even worse—this applies to title insurance and to abstracts. I think we are really going to have to take hold of our business and do a lot of things with it or it is not going to survive.

I think the only way to do that is through the state associations. Somebody in each locality or each community has to take it upon themselves to do those things. You fellows here, whether you are state officers or not, no matter what you are, the persons with ability and energy have to carry the others. That one thing bears out the fact that big companies have to take an interest in the welfare of the title business the same as the little fellows. They are more concerned, because the fact that the title business is rotten in one place brings out this agitation that can affect the whole United States.

That is one reason why the big companies, and the metropolitan title companies, you might say, have been so generous in supporting everything for the general welfare of the industry. They realize that unless the title business as a whole is in good and flourishing condition it is not safe in any place.

The title business has absolutely done nothing in its existence to build good will with the public. The American Title Association, for instance—you would be surprised—every once in a while I think somebody knows who we are and we are getting along all right, and then something happens to show me that nobody knows who or what we are.

I am thoroughly of the opinion that in the future, and beginning right now, these state associations are going to have some kind of requirements for membership. I don't think you can take in every Tom, Dick, and Harry like so many do. I think you are going to have to weed out a lot of people that are in the title business. I don't think a man can do undertaking, sell real estate and insurance, and make abstracts.

We will have to get a lot out of the business. The volume of our business is limited, I don't care where it is. The volume is all you will ever get. I think you are going to have to do something to put these fellows out of business, so those in it in good faith and established can afford to stay.

We have been trying for years to educate them. We have said, "Don't have rules and regulations about taking people into the state association. Don't try to get legislation because if you do, you are going to hurt yourselves."

You have tried but haven't improved yourselves the last fifty years by that attitude. I am thoroughly of the opinion that the first thing to do is to discipline yourselves. We are going to have to have these requirements for membership. We are going to have to do something in our own ranks that will weed out the inefficient and give better service and make the title business more popular. It is not popular because in the majority of places there are men in it who have no business being there and live off of it in a boot-leg or wild-cat way.

I have come to the conclusion I am in favor of the state legislation regulating the abstract business as it has the law, banking and all higher professions.

I know in North Dakota they have a license law and things like that, and it is working to perfection. It has done more to stabilize the business and make money for those in it than anything that ever happened.

I was in a state up here where they have a very stringent state law about how you can get in, what equipment you must have, and so forth, and every abstracter in that state is making money. They have no competition or fear of not making money because few people want to put the investment in

an abstract plant that it takes and those fellows are getting along fine.

I am also of the opinion title insurance has to do something along this line. We have had an idea, and you will learn of it a little later, to gather statistics on the title insurance business. So we will have facts to present to those law makers who are going to legislate against title insurance and show them a real idea of its workings.

There is no question in my mind but that if not in this session of the legislature, then in the next, there will be passed measures regulating the amount of capital that a portion of every premium set aside, require certain reserves put up, that a title plant can only be carried for so much percentage of the capitalization, and a lot of things like that. I am not sure but what they are good measures.

The title companies in business and functioning properly, I think, hold a record for moral and legal and every kind of responsibility and have conducted their business in the most admirable way and have built up the most enviable business records of any business in the country. There has never been a record of any title company that has failed to pay a loss when it should and there have been times when they did so when they could have resorted to legal means of evasion. There has never been a time when anybody who placed confidence in it has ever lost a dime. That can't keep on forever because it is attractive in the eyes of outsiders and they will be around organizing title companies. They think they are a mint.

Some of the biggest men in the real estate field in the country think it is awful the profit that title insurance companies make, that title insurance is ridiculous, that it is a joke, and that these dividends we pay are outrageous. They laugh when we mention title insurance.

We have a big job, men, in our business, building it up and protecting it. The best thing we can do is to build good will. The name of the American Title Association and the title business as a whole has never been broadcast throughout the country or general public, and that is one reason why, if for no other, we want to see this campaign we are planning put over. It will be the first time the organization of title men has ever been put before the public. They don't know who we are.

I think there is hardly a citizen in this country today who doesn't have to use the services of a title company at some time or other and yet I don't know of any business in such common usage that the patrons know so little about as the title business.

We are trying to work out a campaign that will help overcome some of these things. The point I am trying to emphasize is this—I believe without a question of a doubt that somewhere everyone of these problems have been tried or that we can help you

from other sources—that the American Title Association wants every man in the title business, and particularly state officials, to know that you have an organization and an institution that can help you.

We think we have now accumulated every facility and every bit of data any one would want on almost any subject and if we haven't it, we know where we can get it. But we have to start, too, on publicity to put the title business in front of the people. It was hard a few years ago because you couldn't get anybody in the business itself to take an interest. That is overcome now and I want to say right here that everybody in the title business is up on his toes as never before.

The thing to do is keep everlastingly at it and put it over the hill, and I believe if there is as much improvement in the next five years as in the last five, none of us will recognize it at that time.

The Association is working through other agencies. We are getting speakers on programs; we are doing everything of that kind, and it is going to bring some great results.

These state associations have to be the whole thing. They have to build the good will and improve the conditions in their own localities. We have all been wondering about this discount business and price cutting, getting abstracters together, regional meetings, and so forth, and it has never been tried until this year.

I have always thought if there was a situation in a place where business was being ruined, you could do like others—the Laundry Men's Association, for instance—you could send an outsider there and get them together. The outsider can sometimes do what the insider can't. State associations can do things like that. They can get them together but somebody has to take the initiative and engineer it.

My observation of the work of the state association is that unless the secretary functions, the whole thing dies. Early experience meetings are not effective any more. You have to do something in between times. A bulletin must be issued if you expect to keep interest in your association and meeting. You have to work up your state meeting in advance and have a good program, making it worth while for them to come.

Two things you can do is to hold an abstract contest and get out a state bulletin. I wish I could emphasize the importance of that. You have to keep in contact with your members and with your fellows. The American Association will send a representative to every one of your state meetings to try to help you and talk to you. The principal thing is, most state associations don't prepare the meeting in advance, don't prepare it well enough. When they go there the fellows possibly haven't gotten the best thing they could.

I am firmly of the opinion that be-

fore the next legislature meets we should digest this proposition of regulation and that we should prepare to regulate our business. If we don't, we are going to be regulated. Every business in the country has regulated itself, and President Coolidge not long ago commended realtors for making the realtors the highest profession in the country. If they have done this, why can't we?

It has gotten so now—I am not going to start an argument about legislative propositions or anything of that kind—but I don't think there is any legislature or law making body in the country that is going to turn down a group of men when they come and try to improve their business.

I am sincere in saying if we don't try to improve the title business, we are going to have it shoved on us. The office here wants to serve every one of you in every way it can. We have a lot of things and material here always available to you. We have been working on an advertising proposition by which we hope before long to give any title man or company some comprehensive ideas about advertising. Mr. Dilworth has collected that material and it is going to be worked on by experts.

The state associations are the key to the whole thing. They are functioning like they never functioned before. Title men all over the country are looking up, are looking after their business, and I think you can all go away from here feeling that the history of the business never showed any more promise than the immediate future does. But it is going to mean that there is more and more work as these things accumulate and more and more men needed to carry it on.

These meetings have been very productive, have been very successful in results. It is hard to realize when you attend a thing like this is, to see the practical good, and yet when you go away you see what it is. You can't see it in the palm of your hand but it sets the wheels in motion, and the title business today is on the biggest forward movement it ever was and that means more problems.

Now the facilities are available for you in anything you want. The brains of the business are available at any time to help you, and it is wonderful the way the men in the title business stand ready and willing to help. In my work there isn't anything that comes up that I want assistance on that I don't receive it immediately. There are a dozen places where I can get it. The fellows are one big family sitting around a table and they stand ready, from coast to coast, to put anything in the business to help it.

I want to say, there is no business that has the feeling in it this one has. It is wonderful to have it. If there is anything I can answer or tell you or help you with, I will be glad to do it.

But we will have to get up on our toes a lot more. I think we have to

get together like they have done in other places and in plain language get together on making more money. We have to do like any other business. We have to get those groups together and start out and do it and cut out this business of being a disorganized mob, every man for himself, doing business every way and any way he can.

We have an example set in one state that can be followed in every other. If it will make twenty-five per cent more revenue in one state, it will in every other state. I don't know why the title business couldn't stand twenty-five per cent more.

The second is, we are going to have to regulate our business or be regulated. Those are the two things that are the most paramount. That is all I have to say.

I think this meeting has been a wonder. I hope you will all work me to death the next year. I know that everybody will be very much pleased to serve any of you at any time. We have a going organization now—it is going because there is so much work to do it can't stop. It is loaded down and going up hill of its own accord. Call on us often next year, and you state officials, don't forget, the office here will do anything in the world for you and help you in any undertaking.

MR. MARK M. ANDERSON (St. Louis, Mo.): There is just a word I want to say. I think the National organization of title men has done efficient work. We have these meetings and there is a great amount of enthusiasm and it seems the Association is functioning properly. I think our greatest weakness is in our state organization.

The necessity of the existence of the title companies is based upon the service obtained from title companies, regardless of whether that particular company belongs to the Association or not.

In the past few years I have had occasion to seek service from country examiners to quite a large extent. That service has been terrible. Any one who applies to the title companies and receives no service at all in spite of paying for service, is going to be dissatisfied and disgruntled with the whole organization. He condemns the whole organization. He doesn't ask whether they are members of the association or not.

I think our trouble is with the state organization. We must have the states themselves seek out their weakness. In Missouri we have a pretty fair organization, but only a small portion of the title people of the state belong to it and the people who do not belong to it and some even who do give a bad reputation to the rest.

We send work out to these country people and they simply throw it on the desk. No matter how urgently you beg or plead to have the work attended to, they don't do it. You spend a large amount of time and stationery imploring them to get the work back. I think

the state association ought to spend some money to get those people into the state organization and teach them their obligation to the public. They have no knowledge of that obligation at all. They don't seem to care. All they want to do is get orders on the books, and they think in time they will get their money.

I think on that one particular line we are censured continually and it is due to the policy of the country people who take no interest in the organization. I think we ought to spend some money sending men around to talk to these people. We have very serious difficulty along that line.

SECRETARY HALL: I think Mr. Anderson has brought out something we all know. There is no question about it, the state title associations are the bed-rock of the title business and the title business is never going to be any better than the state association.

All of you who have ever sent out abstracts over the country for friends or customers or anything like that can appreciate what he said. When you realize, some of these loan companies operate over ten states, no wonder they cuss the abstract business.

Think of it yourself. You have all had abstracts and asked that they be returned to you in a hurry, and what have you heard from them? Hardly a week goes by that some member of the Association, or some loan company, or somebody like that doesn't write to us and want to know if such and such company is still in existence, that six weeks ago or two months ago they sent over for some information, or sent four or five telegrams, and so forth.

When you figure these real estate men and large operators operating over large territory having to deal not only with good, but with bad abstracters, you can see what kind of a deal we are in. We have to get it up on some basis so that every Tom, Dick, and Harry cannot get into it and those in good faith can survive and make some money out of it.

MR. TOM DILWORTH (Chairman, Advertising Committee, American Title Association, Waco, Texas): I would like to ask you to be a little more definite in the observation you made to the effect that frequently in a local situation that was complicated an outsider could come in and effect more remedy than one living in the particular locality. Did you have in mind such a one to be sent by the American Title Association or the state association?

SECRETARY HALL: I think you can do either. I know of four places where that has been tried. In fact, one time a fellow came in my office and wanted to know if I would drive over to another county. He said three abstracters were making abstracts for a flat fee of five dollars for new and anything they could get for others. He said he had an investment in one of those plants.

We tried to call a meeting and final-

ly got them together at the hotel and had a dinner. Before they got through they shook hands and agreed to cut out commissions and they are friends now.

I think you can come in from the outside and build them up and get them together. I think every place where that situation exists, if you keep at it enough and work it right, you can get those fellows together, unless there are too many in it. If you have a lot of curb-stoners, I don't think it can be done, but where there are three or four abstracters you can.

That is why I say I think you have to regulate those fellows out of business.

MR. ANDERSON: I think there is something in addition to regulating fees. My objection has been to lack of desire to give service. They don't seem to care about giving service or understand the necessity of giving service to the public. They get pretty good pay for work they do. You can't get work from them. Once on their desks, it stays there.

I have sent abstracts to country examiners and after four or five weeks delay, after writing four or five letters, deals waiting to be closed, I find the matter is lying on their desks—no time to take it up. I know they are not doing work out in the country. There are no transfers of property or loans being made. I can't imagine what the county abstracters are doing—hunting rabbits or what. They let their work go and put it off to the time it suits their pleasure to finish it.

That is where we are weak, and must overcome that. I think a committee should be appointed to go around the state and make personal trips. I believe the outsider can do more than the local man in bringing these men to a realization of what they should do. We are going to suffer as long as that condition exists, and it is pretty general over the country.

MR. GEO. N. COFFEY (Wooster, Ohio): I had an experience with a member of our own Association where I wanted some information to finish an abstract. I wrote to him and waited a week or ten days and then called him over long distance. He said he had been busy, but would get it out and send it to me. When he sent me the material, he hadn't even signed his name and didn't certify it. When I came to check it up, I found two people in the county by the same name and one he showed me had been dead some time before the other. The thing I wanted to know wasn't there. I went over and got it myself. When I went back and told him I had to get it myself and let him set the fee. I didn't hear from him again.

It seems the members particularly ought to cooperate in a thing of that kind. If a man sends over to me and wants something in my county—I had a case like that not long ago—this company was just started up, and I laid aside my own work and pushed it through.

MR. JAMES M. ROHAN (President Missouri Title Association, St. Louis, Mo.): It strikes me from the remarks made here the whole responsibility devolves upon the state officials. The work is dependent on the state officials, upon their efficiency and their efforts. I believe a great deal of good can be obtained by getting in touch right now, after this meeting is over, with the state officials, and in a general way urge upon them their duties.

I will say, as president of our Association, this is a revelation to me. While I knew in a general way the weakness of our system, I have never given the matter much thought, but by the different state officials getting in touch with their members occasionally and going around through the country they can pass the word along and raise our business to a higher plane.

If we give service, business will certainly gravitate toward us. There is no question about that. In any business your success depends upon the measure of service that you give. By a proper effort and strong effort on the part of our state officials in getting the best obtainable material into our association and passing the word along to those members who are not equipped with the information that we who attend these meetings get, I think it will put our business on a much higher plane.

SECRETARY HALL: I think we all know that the country today is anxious and demanding efficient title service, and it has to be given. We know there is a great deal to be done and after these meetings we can go away and do a big part in helping.

Keep in mind we have a big job from now on for several years to put the title business where it should be. Every one of us has a duty to help do it.

This cup on the table is the cup awarded by President J. W. Woodford as a prize to the state association making the greatest increase in membership campaign. In addition to that he is going to give some kind of personal token—I don't know whether it is to be a gold knife or just what—as an individual gift to the state secretary who shows the biggest percentage of gain.

The second prize, offered by the Executive Secretary, will be a copy of Thompson on "Real Property" and the third will be choice of Gills "Tiedeman on Real Property" or "Warvelle on Abstracts" awarded to the state secretary who shows the biggest percentage of gain.

PRESIDENT WOODFORD: This question of service and the bringing of service to some reasonable degree of celerity can best be kept in mind with this idea, that an abstractor's orders aren't worth a whoop to him until he has finished the job and billed it so that it becomes an account receivable in his assets. If he takes an order and holds it on his books for six days, if it is a fifty dollar order he could get out in two days' time, he has lost four days

on fifty dollars' worth of assets to his company. When people try to hurry us ahead of our forty-eight hour service, we tell them that our orders aren't worth anything to us until we can charge them on our books as accounts receivable.

There are a lot of abstracters in the country, like a lot of lawyers—they like to let things pile up so it looks like a lot of business. But the best executives in the country with whom you come in contact are the men who clean their desks as rapidly as they can clean them. Abstracters ought to do the same thing.

While I have the presidents and secretaries here, I want to drop this remark also. There has been some dissatisfaction in the past over, I won't say caliber of the men sent to represent the American Association at the state meetings, but as to the material they put before the state associations.

Last fall I wrote every president and every secretary of every state association and requested those officials to notify me and to notify the Executive Secretary's office just as soon as the dates for their state meetings were set. Also in that letter I suggested that if they had a choice, that they request the individual whom they wanted as a representative of the American Association at their meetings, telling the state secretaries and presidents that it was an injustice to the representative to send him without sufficient notice or sufficient time in which to prepare something of worth while interest to the state association, that they owed it to him and the American Association and the state association to have that designation made as far ahead of time as possible so they would get something worth while from the representative. I also mentioned the fact that in the natural course of business it wasn't always possible to get the first man designated, that sometimes we had to get the third man designated, and that takes time.

There are twenty-seven state associations. I wrote fifty-four letters. I got three replies, one of which requested a representative. The rest were silent on the proposition. The one thing I wanted to bear down on them about they were silent on.

I am not assuming any one here has that criticism of the American Association, but when I hear that criticism on the lack of cooperation to that extent, I ask them if they have cooperated with the American Title Association so it can serve. If we don't know until the day after tomorrow that some state association is going to meet the last of next week, we have mighty short time to give you anything worth while. The members of the American Association are very human and very few are possessed of that ability that perennial candidates for office have of talking at any time without notice.

Bear that in mind; let us know at the earliest possible date your choices, it will help us a great deal.

REPORT OF TITLE INSURANCE SECTION

Wellington J. Snyder, Chairman

There isn't very much to report on the activity of the Section, but the Title Insurance Section of your Association has set out to accomplish or try to accomplish four things during this year.

The first one is advertising of title insurance in the National Real Estate Journal, Ed Lindow being at the head of that Committee. He made his report yesterday, so you know all about that proposition. The only thing I want to say about that is to reiterate that you give him your support because I know of nothing we can do that is of more importance to the Association than to get our wares before the public. I don't see how you can expect to have business unless the public, from whom you must get your business, knows where you are and what you do. So, therefore, I very heartily recommend that you give Mr. Lindow your support in that campaign.

One of the other projects is the question of title insurance underwriting, Mr. Camp being chairman of that Committee. He is collecting valuable data and I trust that by the time of the Detroit convention that we will have that in shape so that we may be able to decide whether it is feasible or whether it is not feasible, but it is another matter we wish to have decided on one way or the other.

You will recall that at the Atlantic City Convention Mr. Henley of California read a wonderful paper at one of the noon-day luncheons on the uniformity of rates and Mr. Booth made a motion that a committee be appointed with Mr. Henley as chairman to work out a scheme, if possible, to have universal uniformity of rates throughout the country. Mr. Henley is working on that and the other members on that Committee are Mr. Harry C. Bare of Pennsylvania, Mark Anderson of Missouri, John E. Carny of New York, and John T. Hillis of Iowa. I believe the report will be made for Mr. Henley later in the day.

The fourth thing we are working on is the question of the attitude of the United States government towards title insurance. We have discovered that wherever the United States government buys land or condemns land for any of its purposes it still requires, under an act of congress, an abstract to be furnished to the Attorney General, and that he passes on the title, and that it will not accept title insurance in any state or at any time.

When that matter was first broached to me I was very sure that they did because I remembered that during the war when they built up Hog Island as the naval base and built a great many houses for their employes, that various companies in Philadelphia insured

titles to those tracts, but I am informed that was only a war measure and is not the attitude of the government.

I notice on the program that I am down to make a report on that subject and while I am on my feet I may as well do it. I wrote to the Attorney General in Washington and I will simply read a letter he forwarded to me.

(Mr. Snyder read a letter received from the Attorney General of the United States.)

MR. SNYDER: After receiving that letter I wrote to him again and told him that I had knowledge of the government accepting title insurance during the war, and he then wrote back and said that was a fact but that it was done under the stress of the moment and that the present Attorney General didn't feel like relegating his prerogatives to any title company in the country.

Now, it seems to me there is food for thought and that something should be done by this Association to see whether we can't overcome some of the prejudices and possibly have a different act of Congress passed on that subject.

After considerable discussion this matter was referred to the Executive Secretary with instructions to endeavor to reach some understanding with the Attorney General's office.

REPORT OF TITLE EXAMINERS SECTION

John F. Scott, Chairman

I honestly believe that a commercial reason was back of my appointment as chairman of the Title Examiners Section.

It was realized that we had just finished a building and loan convention of the United States Building and Loan Association in Minneapolis and that the mailing list and the acquaintance in the building and loan field might be productive of an increased membership in the Title Examiners Section of the American Title Association.

So, I appear before you with no blushes or modesty because the reason for this job being pushed at me was that and nothing else.

I have taken two thousand of the six thousand names of the leading building and loan associations in the country and, by that I mean the two thousand having the largest assets and appearing to be up and coming associations.

Within the last three weeks I have sent a circular letter to each one of those associations enclosing a printed form of application for membership for their attorney in our Section. Those letters are just about all in the mails today and of the first 250 which went out about a week and a half ago, when I left St. Paul we had a little

better than fifteen five dollar checks received, which indicates some of the letters were being read and acted upon.

An amusing phase of it was this—that in my letter I promised them on request to send a copy of Mr. White's admirable address on Federal Liens, thinking that no request would come for that pamphlet without the five dollar check accompanying, but I have already had half a dozen requests without the check, but I think follow-up letters will increase the membership.

That is the only field I felt competent to attack. I believe from the activities in the past you have gone over the trust company list, insurance companies and the loan companies pretty fairly. Mr. Morgan combed that field. I would be tickled to death if any of you men would write me places where I could go with my head up and solicit membership in the Title Examiners' Section.

Mr. Stephens suggested to me this morning that it would not be a difficult matter for him to obtain an increased membership through the medium of his own state association in Illinois, and I welcome the cooperation of the other forty-seven states of the Union in that particular.

So much for membership, except that my desire is to double the membership if possible and these building and loan associations can well afford the five dollars for their attorney.

I understand the second duty is to assist in the program and I want to ask whether any papers or addresses on the Torrens Law would be appropriate in the Title Examiners Section or whether that might be a subject left out of the discussion. At this morning's breakfast conference, Mr. Hall stated that Torrens legislation is being agitated in very many states of the Union. I don't believe you can competently and effectively answer the friends of the Torrens legislation by saying that is all tommy-rot and poppycock, because there is something to it. There are decisions in the case books of the various states of the Union which have had Torrens legislation on their books and in our particular state—I think Minnesota was first, in 1901, in approving that legislation—and those decisions are very valuable, I believe, to the Title Examiners Section, particularly. I would like to find that out this morning before I make any overtures to bring somebody to tell us, not what a fine system it is, not how effective it is, but to tell us

exactly what the law is on the subject up to the time of his address.

I have secured the consent of Mr. Cox, who is the general counsel for the Federal Loan Board in Washington, to attend the convention and speak generally on matters that would come to his attention through the operation of the federal loan banks. If such a subject would be of general interest, I am quite certain we could secure his services. I think we had three speakers at Atlantic City.

My thought was that on the third as we are just forty miles from Ann Arbor, we could secure some member of the faculty of the University of Michigan to address us on some title subject. I will have, before it is through, the most interesting part of the convention ceremony—I am serving my notice.

MR. R. ALLAN STEPHENS (President, Title Examiners Association of Illinois, Springfield, Illinois): Mr. Scott has taken my name in vain two or three times. I have been very much interested in this Title Section discussion. I am very glad I came here although I came here decidedly under false pretenses because Jess Payton said he would meet me Friday and I haven't seen him yet.

In Illinois we have organized a Title Section. Unfortunately, I am the president. I am out here to find out what it's all about, and am convinced you fellows don't know what it's all about either.

We are certainly at loggerheads on the question of membership in the Title Examiners Section. I am glad to come here to clear it up. In Illinois we have 97 members of the Abstracters Association at the present time. Not long ago we were talking about how many members we wanted in the Title Examiners Section. I made the statement that a circular letter would bring in 500 applications at once. I dictated five letters and got five replies right back with checks attached.

So we must limit the Title Examiners if there is going to be anything left

of the abstracters section. I know that. You can say you can have the whole world if you want to. If we pass the word out to eight thousand lawyers in Illinois—twenty-five hundred are examiners in some shape or form—we will undoubtedly swamp the abstracters association. We will have more legal advice than we can possibly use. We have to limit them.

I am rather interested in the viewpoint of the secretary this morning that he wants a big association. I am somewhat of a believer in old Gideon—he had only a few who wouldn't stop to lap up the water—they threw it into their mouths and went on and licked the Midianites. I am pretty sure that is the way with an organization of this kind. I can illustrate.

In our office we sent an abstract out about fifty miles away to an abstracter, who I think is a member of this Association. Two or three months passed and it hadn't come back. Finally I got in the car and drove over there to see what was the matter. When I got over there I found out he had everything in the office piled up on his desk.

I said, "Where is your filing system?" He said, "I don't believe in files. If you put all your work out you have it right in front of you and you can see it."

What's the use of trying to educate a man of that kind. He hasn't enough business to justify it. He is like a snapping turtle. You rap him on his shell and he withdraws into the shell and you walk out and leave him alone.

But there are certain standards which it seems to me there are a few men following. Some man will go in there with an abstracting plant and put him out of business. You can't educate him at all.

What we have done in our title examiners section is try to get a limited number.

We have put in our by-laws that no man can join the title association unless he agrees to attend one out of two meetings. We have in our application: "I agree if I do not attend

one in two meetings my membership will automatically cease." We are going to lose a lot and we want to lose a lot. If he thinks he will get a little business out of it, we don't want that fellow in the business.

We feel that the title examiners section in Illinois ought to be a section of men skilled in title examining who can assist the abstracters in building up their organization and raising standards and methods of doing business.

I understand that under our rules we collect five dollars from them and then we turn two dollars over to the abstracters association, which gets our name listed in this national directory. I am going to beat Scott all to death on collecting members. I am going to say: "Send me five dollars. We are going to spend three dollars at Peoria at the annual meeting and with the other two dollars we are going to do what Scott is trying to get five dollars for."

Possibly he will get some members from Illinois. Our title men will look him over and say, "You're not a title man; you examine titles for two dollars apiece. We wouldn't have you in our class at all."

MR. JOHN SCOTT: Mr. Stephens, that is the very reason why I stated that the first part of my report was not fit to print and I wanted to ask those questions to find out where I was. I wanted to know whether I was in competition or whether somebody else was cutting prices on me and I am just beginning to find it out.

MR. STEPHENS: I think you abstracters better get us title examiners together before you go much further because I assure you you are going to have some rivalry. What we have done in Illinois is to put it up to the abstracters association and give each member of the association six months in which to designate his representative in the title examiners section. I will say about fifteen have taken advantage and have designated an examiner whom they wanted to represent them. The rest we expect to fill up by June.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON COOPERATION

Paul D. Jones, Cleveland, Ohio, Chairman

The following Committee on Cooperation was appointed at the Atlantic City Convention:

Paul D. Jones, Vice-President Guaranty Title & Trust Company, Cleveland, Ohio, Chairman;
V. E. Phillips, Kansas City, Missouri, attorney, Proctor & Phillips;
Frank T. Ewing, New York City, attorney Metropolitan Life Insurance Company;
E. D. Schumacher, Richmond, Virginia, President Title Insurance Company of Richmond;
J. M. Dall, Chicago, Illinois, Vice-President, Chicago Title & Trust Company;
Sydney A. Cryor, Spokane, Washing-

ton, Attorney, Federal Land Bank; Cornelius Doremus, Ridgewater, New Jersey, President Fidelity Title & Mortgage Guaranty Company.

As Chairman of this Committee I beg to make the following report:

Approaching the subject of cooperation we have borne in mind that it includes virtues as well as sins. We have endeavored to make suggestions of a constructive character as well as suggestions of remedial nature. Cooperation as we understand it is producing a better understanding between persons or organizations with similar aims and endeavors.

Your Chairman has communicated with various members of the commit-

tee and has received many valuable suggestions. These suggestions we will endeavor to classify under the following headings:

1. It is quite evident that a most extensive field of cooperation between the American Title Association and other organizations is to be had by close contact with the National Association of Real Estate Boards, The Mortgage Bankers Association, The United States League of Building & Loan Associations, The Association of Life Insurance Presidents, and other organizations engaged in kindred activities. There are many common interests between these organizations. In addition representatives of the various

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Richard B. Hall.....Kansas City, Mo.
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THE AMERICAN TITLE ASSOCIATION

Richard B. Hall, Executive Secretary
Title & Trust Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

MARCH, 1927.

land banks of the country and representatives of the National Farm Bureau have kindred interests in real property and title matters. Mutual understanding between our organization and these organizations affords opportunities for great help.

2. There is a persistent demand in every avenue of business for standardization of forms and practices. The abstracters section has done much within the association in bringing about such uniformity. We believe helpful suggestions could be received from various other organizations with a view of standardizing title insurance policies and in turn we might give to other groups ideas for uniform practices in the handling of real estate and title matters. In this connection I want to read you an excerpt from a letter received from one of the country's largest life insurance companies:

"I do not know that I have any ideas now that would be of any benefit, but it has occurred to me that the members of the American Title Association could be of assistance to the life insurance companies who are making mortgage loans throughout the different states if some sort of a standard title policy were adopted. This standard title policy need not necessarily be a form of policy which the various title companies were to use in their regular title work, but rather what might be termed "life insurance company standard form."

Our company accepts title policies in a great many title companies throughout the United States and in nearly all of these title policies we require certain exceptions and changes before we accept the title policy.

A great many exceptions, such as exceptions to mechanics' liens not of record, while it may be all right for those who are loaning money locally, it is not satisfactory for a life insurance company who is loaning money throughout the United States. A title company which is especially in the business of insuring titles and insuring the lenders of money against any liens which might be outstanding prior to

the lien of the mortgage, certainly is in a better position to assume this responsibility when they are usually right on the ground where the property is located, than the borrower would be whose principal office is located in a distant state.

Practically all of the title companies with which we do business in the country, make the changes we request in these policies, but you can readily see when we are handling numerous loans at the Home Office, it is not very satisfactory to have so many different forms of title policies even though they may have stricken out the objectionable clauses.

If there could be adopted a standard form of policy for the use of life insurance companies and other companies loaning throughout the country it seems to me that this would be of a great deal of benefit, not only to the lenders of money, but also to the title companies. In the Home Office here it would certainly mean a great deal of saving of work if we could know as soon as we saw the form of the title policy, just what it contained, rather than have to acquaint ourselves with so many different forms.

I do not know whether this suggestion is one that will be of any benefit for I expect the title companies are more or less wedded to the forms they are now using, although my idea did not contemplate the giving up of this form, but simply the adoption of a standard form to be used by those loaning money throughout the country."

I am just giving you the slant from some of the large insurance companies on this subject. . . . (Applause.)

3. Closely associated with the previous suggestion is the matter of uniform laws between the various states upon matters touching real property law, mechanics' liens and other related subjects. Our judicial committee or a special committee if such has been named no doubt will cooperate fully with the American Bar Association and other associations with a view of uniform legislation in the various states.

4. It has been suggested that this Association should use its influence to elevate the tone of advertising and to encourage in so far as possible publicity of a nature so as to favorably impress the public. We believe our title insurance section has done much along

this line and that the exchange of ideas between the various state organizations through our national secretary can bring about much coordination in respect to advertising methods.

5. A field for cooperation which has not heretofore been touched or suggested so far as your Chairman is informed is that of general education concerning title matters and real estate law among the new men employed by abstracters and title companies. It is of utmost importance that our take-off men and those to whom is intrusted the detail work of our organization have a greater understanding of their tasks and appreciate the responsibility of their work. In other words, we suggest cooperation in educating ourselves and our successors. The new men coming into our organizations within a few years assume positions of responsibility and if something can be done to give them the fullest information concerning our work we will have performed a commendable service.

6. In connection with education we suggest another field of cooperation even more extensive, that is the general public. One member of our Committee (Mr. Phillips) is a professor in real property law and in touch with educational methods in the various law schools of the country. It would be too ambitious a program to attempt to have all the law schools inaugurate a course in abstracts and title insurance, but we believe that members of the Association are in close touch with the faculties of various law schools and commerce schools of the country and that in a great many instances it might be arranged for competent title men to deliver two or three special lectures each year upon the fields of our endeavors and now untouched in the legal curriculum under the subject of real property law.

We might make numerous other suggestions upon particular subjects, but if we can do something as a body to cooperate along the lines herein outlined, that is: First, with other organizations now functioning; second, in the standardization of forms and practices; third, in uniform laws; fourth, in uniform advertising; fifth, in educating those within our ranks, and sixth, educating the public, we will have done something to bring about the good will and efficiency so much desired.

Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm; it moves stones. It charms brutes. Enthusiasm is the genius of sincerity and truth accomplishes no victories without it.—LYTTON.

Those in Attendance at Mid-Winter Meeting and Conference, February 4-5, 1927

ARKANSAS.			
Elmer McClure	Little Rock	V. E. Phillips	Kansas City
Secretary, Little Rock Title Insurance Co.		Attorney, Proctor & Phillips.	
President, Arkansas Title Association.		Member, Committee on Cooperation.	
Bruce B. Caulder	Lonoke	Richard B. Hall	Kansas City
President, Lonoke Real Estate & Abst. Co.		Executive Secretary, American Title Association.	
Secretary, Arkansas Title Association.		Mrs. Richard B. Hall	Kansas City
CALIFORNIA.		E. D. Bartlett	Kansas City
Donzel Stoney	San Francisco	American Title Association.	
Executive Vice President, Title Insurance & Guaranty Company.		John Henry Smith	Kansas City
Member, Executive Committee.		President, Kansas City Title & Trust Co.	
Mrs. Donzel Stoney	San Francisco	Jesse P. Crump	Kansas City
ILLINOIS.		Vice President, Kansas City Title & Trust Co.	
Jos. P. Durkin	Peoria	Mark M. Anderson	St. Louis
Secretary, Title & Trust Company.		President, Title Guaranty Trust Company.	
R. Allan Stephens, Attorney	Springfield	Member, Committee on Rate Analysis.	
President, Title Examiners Section,		James M. Rohan	St. Louis
Illinois Abstracters Association.		President, St. Louis County Land Title Co.	
INDIANA.		President, Missouri Title Association.	
J. R. Morgan	Kokomo	NEW JERSEY.	
President, Johnson Abstract Company.		E. C. Wyckoff	Newark
Secretary, Abstracters Section.		Vice President, Fidelity Union Title & Mortgage Guaranty Company.	
IOWA.		Treasurer, American Title Association.	
F. C. Sabourin	Des Moines	NEW YORK.	
Southern Surety Company.		Fred P. Condit	New York City
Mrs. F. C. Sabourin	Des Moines	Vice President, Title Guarantee & Trust Co.	
O. N. Ross	Orange City	Member Executive Committee.	
President, Sioux Abstract Company.		H. J. Davenport	Brooklyn
President, Iowa Title Association.		President, Home Title Insurance Company.	
KANSAS.		President, New York State Title Association.	
Pearl Koontz Jeffrey	Columbus	Henry R. Chittick	New York City
Member, Advertising Committee.		Solicitor, Lawyers Title & Guaranty Co.	
H. E. Jeffrey	Columbus	OHIO.	
Robert B. Spilman,	Manhattan	J. L. Chapman	Cleveland
President, Kansas Title Association.		Secretary, Land Title Abstract & Trust Co.	
Forrest M. Rogers	Wellington	Member, Executive Committee.	
Secretary, Rogers Abstract & Title Co.		Leo S. Werner	Toledo
Chairman, Membership Committee.		Vice President, Title Guarantee & Trust Co.	
Vice President, Kansas Title Association.		George N. Coffey	Wooster
E. L. Mason	Wichita	Secretary, Wayne County Abstract Co.	
Guarantee Title & Trust Company.		Secretary, Ohio Title Association.	
Member, Executive Committee, Kansas Title Association.		Fred A. Hall	Cleveland
Mrs. E. L. Mason	Wichita	Asst. Vice President, Land Title Abstract & Trust Company.	
Hobart Barbour	Winfield	Paul D. Jones,	Cleveland
Barbour-Collinson Abstract Company.		Vice President, Guarantee Title & Trust Co.	
Member, Executive Committee, Kansas Title Association.		Chairman, Committee on Cooperation.	
Fred T. Wilkin	Independence	OKLAHOMA.	
Security Abstract Company.		Vernon Day	Tulsa
Secretary, Kansas Title Association.		Title Guaranty Trust Company.	
Mrs. Fred T. Wilkin	Independence	Vera A. Wignall	Pauls Valley
Roy E. Greer	Oswego	Manager, Guaranty Abstract Company.	
Deming Investment Company.		President, Oklahoma Title Association.	
Ella M. Woodford	Burlington	Hugh Ricketts	Muskogee
MICHIGAN.		Secretary, Guaranty Trust Company.	
Edwin H. Lindow	Detroit	Secretary, Oklahoma Title Association.	
Vice President, Union Title & Guaranty Co.		OREGON.	
Member Advertising Committee.		Walter M. Daly	Portland
Secretary, Title Insurance Section.		President, Title & Trust Company	
L. C. Diebel	Detroit	Vice President, American Title Association.	
Vice President, Union Title & Guaranty Co.		Jas. S. Johns	Pendleton
MINNESOTA.		President, Hartman Abstract Company.	
W. H. Pryor	Duluth	Chairman, Abstracters Section.	
Secretary, Pryor Abstract Company.		PENNSYLVANIA.	
Member, Advertising Committee.		Wellington J. Snyder	Philadelphia
John F. Scott, Attorney	St. Paul	Vice President, North Philadelphia Trust Co.	
Chairman, Title Examiners Section.		Chairman, Title Insurance Section.	

Harry C. Bare
Vice President, Merion Title & Trust Company.
Secretary, Pennsylvania Title Association.

TENNESSEE.
H. N. Camp, Jr. Knoxville
Vice President, Commercial Bank & Trust Co.
Secretary, Tennessee Title Association.
Chairman, Underwriters Committee.

Guy P. Long Memphis
Vice President, Union and Planters Bank & Trust Company.
President, Tennessee Title Association.
Secretary, Title Examiners Section.

J. M. Whitsett Nashville
Vice President, Guaranty Title Trust Co.

TEXAS.
Tom Dilworth Waco

Ardmore
President, Dilworth Abstract Company.
Chairman, Advertising Committee.
H. B. Baldwin Corpus Christi
President, Guaranty Title Company.
Member, Executive Committee.
T. M. Scott Paris
President, Scott Title Company.
R. O. Huff San Antonio
President, Texas Title Guaranty Co.

WASHINGTON.
J. W. Woodford Seattle
President, Lawyers & Realtors Title Insurance Company.
President, American Title Association.

WISCONSIN.
Frank A. Lenicheck Milwaukee
Vice President, Citizens Abstract & Title Company.

NEW MEXICO ORGANIZES A STATE ASSOCIATION.

Another new state organization was added to the group when a meeting of the abstracters of New Mexico was held in Santa Fe in February and an organization perfected.

A. E. Pettit of The Las Vegas Title Guaranty Co. of East Las Vegas was the prime mover of the event and responsible for the activity. He found a ready response among the abstracters of the state who have long realized the necessity for an organization of their business. Letters were sent to all in the state, and when a responsive interest was found, the meeting was called.

A representative crowd was present when the meeting was called to order at the Elks Club. It was very encouraging and satisfactory especially

in view of the great distances to be traveled and that it was the initial effort.



PHILLIP N. SANCHEZ,
Mora,

who will pioneer the work of Secretary of the New Mexico Title Association.

W. S. Hutchison, of the Santa Fe Title Abstract Co. acted as presiding officer and introduced the Mayor of the City, who gave it a good beginning by enthusiastically endorsing the move. Titles are very complicated in New Mexico, and the handicaps of abstracting greater than almost every place. There is a need of improvement in many things and Mayor Summers thought the abstracters the ones to do it, and the association was very much needed, not only for the abstracters business but the general business of the community as well. He knew his reasons for so speaking, as he is an old county official.

Richard B. Hall, Executive Secre-

tary of the American Title Association was present to assist in the organization and tell of the national body.

A general conference was held and a view of the situation and condition of the abstract business in the state was gathered.

Everyone present was enthusiastic for perfecting the organization and had added encouragement in the many messages and letters of cooperation and support received from those unable to attend.

A name was chosen, it being the New Mexico Title Association to correspond with the national and other state bodies. The necessary preliminary work was decided upon and assignments for its accomplishment given to various committees and individuals.

Further work will be conducted to secure the memberships of the several abstracters in the state and perfect the organization and another meeting and regular convention will be held in Albuquerque in late June.

The following officers were elected: President, A. E. Pettit, Las Vegas Title Guaranty Co., East Las Vegas; Vice President, and Chairman of Membership Committee, L. A. Sanders, Gessert-Sanders Abstract Co., Roswell; Secretary-Treasurer, Philip N. Sanchez, Mora Abstract Co., Mora.

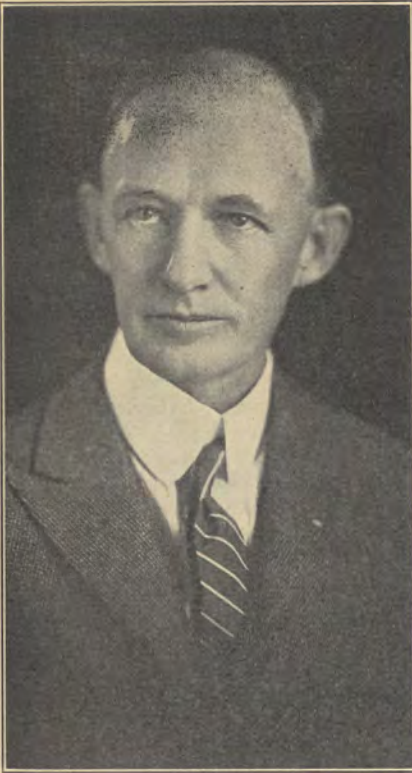
OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION HAS USUAL INTERESTING CONVENTION.

The Oklahoma Title Association's Convention for 1927 was a continuation of that organization record of 100% worth while sessions. There was a long program of a full two days length and every speaker was on hand to fill his part. A record crowd was in attendance when it was called to order in the meeting place, the Huckins Hotel in Oklahoma City, and with Ray McLain as local host.

This Association started having Noon Conferences this year as part of the convention doings. Everyday problems and matters of business routine and conduct were discussed. Different leaders and presiding officers were chosen for each of them and they were very profitable and successful.



A. E. PETTIT,
East Las Vegas,
elected as first President of the New Mexico Title Association.



HOWARD SEARCY,
Wagoner,
elected President of the Oklahoma
Title Association, and as such con-
tinues his long effective work for
the organization.

The Abstract Contest for the Woodford Cup proved more interesting this year than ever. The Lincoln County Abstract Co. of Chandler won first place, with the Guaranty Trust Co., Muskogee, Second and the Union Abstract Co. of Sapulpa third.

The work of the Committee on a Uniform Certificate was given enthusiastic approval and voted to be continued. The Oklahoma Association has adopted a uniform certificate that is being used by many of its members and indications point that it will be universally adopted by all of them within the year. It has been presented to the various loan companies and examiners of the state who have approved it and further work and efforts will be expended in advancing it to others.

The Oklahoma Association has also adopted a trade-mark or insigna which is being given prominence and establishes its members abstracts as a "brand" upon which dependence can be placed. They include in their certificate the statement that the abstract is made by a member of the state and the American Title Associations; that the maker has a privately owned and maintained set of abstract books or indexes, and that he has filed a surety bond that is in force and effect with premium paid for the period that includes the date of certification.

The membership of the Oklahoma Association has likewise reached a near limit of those in the state eligible

to belong under its membership restrictions.

James S. Johns, Chairman of the Abstracters Section of the American Title Association attended as the representative of that organization and was a feature of the program and convention proceedings. Following his appearance and visit the organization agreed upon and began Regional Meetings as suggested to further develop and advance the abstract business within the state.



J. W. BANKER,
Tahlequah,
whose election as Secretary of the
Oklahoma Association insures a
continuance of efficiency in that
office.

It was a fine meeting and those in attendance had a great time. A banquet was the entertainment feature of the first day and a theatre party occupied the evening of the last.

The following officers were elected:
President, Howard Searcy, Wagoner,
Wagoner County Abstract Co.

Vice-President, Hugh C. Ricketts,
Muskogee, Gauranty Trust Co.

Vice-Pres. Leo. A. Moore, (N. E.
Dist.) Claremore.

Vice-Pres., R. E. Rutherford, (S. E.
Dist.) Tishomingo.

Vice-Pres., Addie Loftin, (S. W.
Dist.) Purcell.

Vice-Pres., Mrs. C. I. Jones (N. W.
Dist.) Sayre.

Sec'y-Treas., J. W. Banker, Tahle-
quah, The Cherokee Capitol Abstract
Co.

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION MEETS IN ST. PAUL.

The 1927 Convention of the Minne-

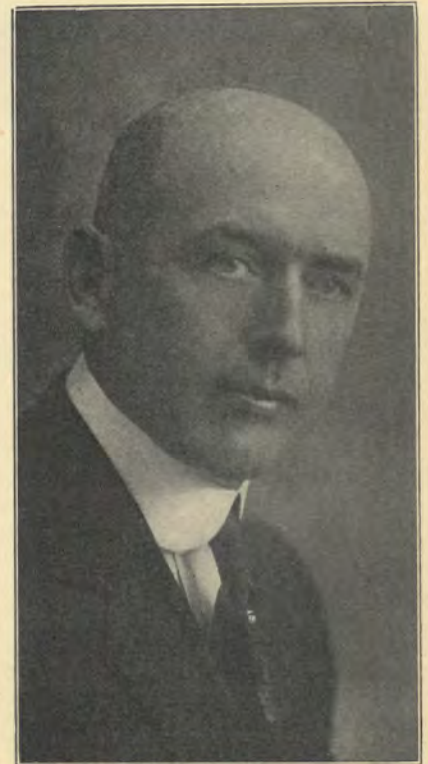
sota Title Association met in its most frequented stamping grounds, the state capitol and the usual time—while the legislature was in session and other things of interest going on.

There was a full program of interesting topics by able speakers which with the many things of policy and other matters for consideration by the association, made it a full and busy session.

John Scott told of the Atlantic City Convention of the American Title Association. W. H. Pryor gave a most instructive talk on "A Practical Method and Scheme for Building an Abstract Plant." The President of the Federal Land Bank of St. Paul gave an interesting and highly valuable talk on abstracts and abstracters and their relation to business. Henry Soucheray told how the Torrens System worked and which proved to be an undisputable showing of how it did not work to be so perfect and the abstracter had a wonderful opportunity for business in abstracting Torrens matters. Richard B. Hall, Executive Secretary of the American Title Association attended as the representative of that organization.

A luncheon was held at noon and turned into a round table discussion and conference.

The following officers were elected for the coming year: C. E. Tuttle, Hastings, President; Albert F. Anderson, Detroit Lakes, Vice President; E. D. Boyce, of the Blue Earth County Abstract Co., Mankato, Secretary Treasurer.



C. E. TUTTLE,
Hastings,
elected to lead the Minnesota Title
Association for the coming year.

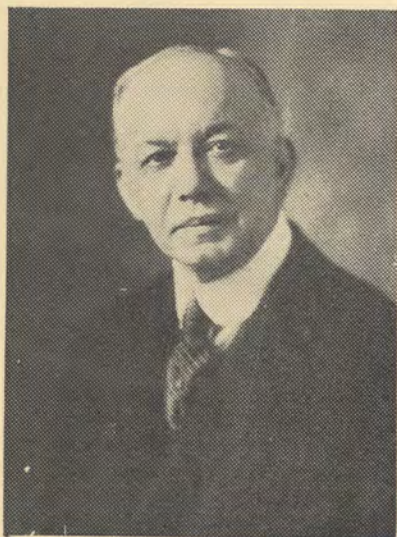
ANNUAL CONVENTION OF NEW JERSEY STATE TITLE ASSOCIATION OF MUCH INTEREST.

A Record Attendance for a State Meeting with 114 Present.

The annual convention of the New Jersey State Title Association was held at the Hotel Ambassador, in Atlantic City, on Saturday, Jan. 29. Delegates in large number were present from every section of the State. Every Title Company and Trust Company doing title business in the State was represented. Sessions began at ten o'clock on Saturday morning and lasted continuously, closing with a banquet in the evening.

Judge Cornelius Doremus, President of the Fidelity Title and Mortgage Guaranty Company of Ridgewood, and also President of the State Title Association, presided throughout.

The Convention Committee consisted of Edward C. Wyckoff, Chairman, and Arthur S. Corbin, H. Walter Gill, Wm. C. Lambert, Frederick E. Koester, Wm. S. Casselman and Stephen H. McDermott.



CORNELIUS DOREMUS,
Ridgewood,

honored by re-election as President of the New Jersey Title Association.

The report of the President showed an increase of approximately 100% since the organization of the Association in 1922. The President stressed during his address the necessity for the adoption of a "Code of Ethics," similar to that in use by the State Bankers, State Bar and State Realtors Associations. He also sharply emphasized the necessity for further standardization and uniformity of rates for title policies charges for making loans. This met with hearty applause.

The special title course conducted by the New Jersey Law School came in for special praise from the speaker. He declared that the course was a great benefit to the title companies of

the state as it eliminated the scarcity of skilled and experienced title searchers with which the companies have heretofore been faced.

The address of welcome was made by William Harrison, one of the city officials, who delivered the key of the city to the convention.

Resolutions of sympathy were passed because of the death of Edward L. Bader the day before.

Edward F. Merry, City Counsel of Paterson, read a very well thought out paper on "Tax Titles," upon which subject he is an expert. Much discussion followed.

Mr. George L. Allin of the Title Guarantee and Trust Company of New York spoke at length on "Uniformity of Policies."

Addresses were delivered by the following officers of the National Title Association, namely: Former President Frederick P. Condit; Wellington J. Snyder, Chairman of the Title Insurance Section of Philadelphia; and Edward C. Wyckoff, National Treasurer.

In the evening President Doremus, as Toastmaster, introduced President John E. Potter of the Pennsylvania Title Association, who read an important and instructive paper on "What of the Future." This was followed by Senator Arthur H. Pierson of Union County who spoke on "State Finance."

The speaking was concluded with an address from Hon. Marshall Van Winkle of Jersey City, who spoke on historical aspects of New Jersey and reviewed in the most scholarly way the events leading up to the War of the



STEPHEN H. McDERMOTT,
Freehold,
re-elected to continue his efficient work as Secretary of the New Jersey Title Association.

Revolution and the changed attitude of England toward the United States in recent years. He called attention to the spirit of admiration held by the English nation for the memory of Washington, resulting in the placing of a statue of "The Father of his Country" in Trafalgar Square, London.

Theodore Walstrum of Ridgewood gave several piano selections which were greatly appreciated.

The association re-elected all of its old officers, namely, Judge Cornelius Doremus, President; William S. Casselman, of Camden, and Frederick Conger, of Hackensack, Vice Presidents; Arthur S. Corbin, of Passaic, Treasurer, and Stephen H. McDermott, of Freehold, Secretary.

It was voted to hold the next annual convention at Atlantic City.

RE: WRITING INKS.

"The pen is mightier than the sword"—but of what use is the pen without ink, and unless that ink be fairly permanent the results of much effort and study may become a total loss. Thus we see that one of the prime objects of a writing ink is its permanence; of almost equal importance is that it should flow from the pen easily. Other qualities will vary according to the work it is used for. An example of this is India and Chinese inks which are not affected by light or chemicals but can be removed from the paper mechanically, consequently, these make good drawing inks but are very poor for any work where there is liability of forgery.

A good record ink such as that adopted by our Government must penetrate into the fibres of the paper but not pass through; it must equally resist changes from light, air, water or alcohol. The sunlight tests are from 20 to 80 days. This record ink is a mixture of tannic acid, gallic acid, sulphate of iron, hydrochloric acid, carbolic acid, gum arabic, and water. It is not a true solution, but the fine precipitate being held in suspension by the gum arabic, gives it all the appearance of a rather thick solution and for the purpose it acts as one too.

None of the aniline colors are considered permanent as writing inks; they all crystallize out of their solutions too easily and quickly; they are too sensitive to chemical reagents, are not water and alcohol proof, and are not sufficiently resistant to light.

Regarding the many colored inks, it is safe to say there is no permanent red ink, but Prussian Blue if rightly prepared is considered permanent. Some of the greens and violets are fairly good for ordinary work where the permanence is not a prime object.

Marking inks or indelible inks of the better class always contain silver, usually as a solution of silver ammonio-tartrate.—["Weston's Record" (Byron-Weston Paper Co.).

The American Title Association

Officers, 1926-1927

General Organization

President
J. W. Woodford, President, Lawyers and Realtors Title Insurance Co., Seattle, Wash.

Vice-President
Walter M. Daly, President, Title & Trust Co., Portland, Ore.

Treasurer
Edward C. Wyckoff, Vice-Pres.

Fidelity Union Title & Mortgage Guaranty Co., Newark, N. J.

Executive Secretary
Richard B. Hall, Title & Trust Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

Executive Committee
(The President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Chairmen of the Sections, ex-officio, and the following elected members compose the

Executive Committee. The Vice-President of the Association is the Chairman of the Committee.)

Term Ending 1927.
Henry J. Fehrman, Omaha, Neb. Atty. Peters Trust Co.
J. L. Chapman, Cleveland, O. Secy. Land T. Abst. & Trust Co.
Henry B. Baldwin, Corpus Christi, Tex., Pres. Guaranty Title Co.

Term Ending 1928.
Fred P. Condit, New York City. Vice-Pres. Title Guarantee & Tr. Co.
M. P. Bouslog, Gulfport, Miss. Pres. Miss. Abst. Title & Grty. Co.
Donzel Stoney, San Francisco, Cal. Exec. V.-Pres. Title Ins. & Grty. Co.

Sections and Committees

Abstracters Section

Chairman, James S. Johns, Pendleton, Ore.
President, Hartman Abstract Co.
Vice-Chairman, Verne Hedge, Lincoln, Neb.
Secretary, J. R. Morgan, Kokomo, Ind.
President, Johnson Abstract Co.

Title Insurance Section

Chairman, Wellington J. Snyder, Philadelphia, Pa.
Title Officer, North Philadelphia Trust Co.
Vice-Chairman, Henry J. Davenport, Brooklyn, N. Y.
President, Home Title Insurance Co.
Secretary, Edwin H. Lindow, Detroit, Mich.
Vice-President, Union Title & Guaranty Co.

Title Examiners Section

Chairman, John F. Scott, St. Paul, Minn.
Attorney, Guardian Life Bldg.
Vice-Chairman, Edward O. Clark, Newark, N. J.
Assistant Solicitor, Prudential Ins. Co. of America.
Secretary, Guy P. Long, Memphis, Tenn.
Title Officer, Union & Planters Bank & Trust Co.

Program Committee, 1927 Convention

J. W. Woodford (The President), Chairman, Seattle, Wash.
Wellington J. Snyder (Chairman, Title Insurance Section), Philadelphia, Pa.
James S. Johns (Chairman, Abstracters Section), Pendleton, Ore.
John F. Scott (Chairman, Title Examiners Section), St. Paul, Minn.
Richard B. Hall (the Executive Secretary), Kansas City, Mo.

General Chairman, Noonday Section Conferences, 1927 Convention.

Harry C. Bare, Ardmore, Pa.
Vice-President, Merion Title & Trust Co.

Committee On Publications

J. W. Woodford (the President), Chairman, Seattle, Wash.
Henry J. Fehrman (the Retiring President), Omaha, Neb.
Richard B. Hall (the Executive Secretary), Kansas City, Mo.

Committee On Organization and Membership Extension

Forrest M. Rogers, Chairman, Wellington, Kas.
Secretary, Rogers Abstract & Title Co.

The President and Secretary of each of the State Title Associations constitute the other members of this committee.

Committee On Constitution and By-Laws

Henry R. Chittick, Chairman, New York City.
Solicitor, Lawyers Title & Guaranty Co.
M. P. Bouslog, Gulfport, Miss. President, Mississippi Abstract, Title & Guaranty Co.
E. J. Carroll, Davenport, Iowa. Attorney, Davenport Abstract Co.

Committee On Advertising.

Tom Dilworth, Chairman, Waco, Tex.
President and Attorney, Dilworth Abstract Co.
W. H. Pryor, Duluth, Minn. Secretary, Pryor Abstract Co.
Arthur C. Longbrake, Toledo, O. President, Real Estate Abstract Co.
Edwin H. Lindow, Detroit, Mich. Vice-President, Union Title & Guaranty Co.
Pearl Koontz Jeffreys, Columbus, Kas.

Committee On Cooperation

Paul D. Jones, Chairman, Cleveland, O.
Vice-President, Guarantee Title & Trust Co.
V. E. Phillips, Kansas City, Mo. Attorney, Proctor & Phillips.
Frank T. Ewing, New York City. Attorney, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.
E. D. Schumacher, Richmond, Va. President, Title Insurance Co. of Richmond.
J. M. Dall, Chicago, Ill. Vice-President, Chicago Title & Trust Co.
Sydney A. Cryor, Spokane, Wash. Attorney, Federal Land Bank.
Cornelius Doremus, Ridgewood, N. J. President, Fidelity Title & Mortgage Guaranty Co.

Judiciary Committee

Lloyd Axford, Chairman, Detroit, Mich.
Special Counsel, Union Title & Guaranty Co.
William Webb, Bridgeport, Conn. Vice-President, Bridgeport Land & Title Co.
Richard P. Marks, Jacksonville, Fla. Vice-President, Title & Trust Co. of Florida.
Tom W. Massey, San Antonio, Tex. Manager, Bexar Abstract Co.
Stuart O'Melveney, Los Angeles, Cal. Executive Vice-President, Title Insurance & Trust Co.
John E. Martin, St. Paul, Minn. Attorney, Federal Land Bank.
Mark R. Craig, Pittsburgh, Pa. Title Officer, Potter Title & Trust Co.

Legislative Committee

Wayne P. Rambo, General Chairman, Philadelphia, Pa.

Special Counsel, Market Street Title & Trust Co.

District No. 1.
New Jersey, Wm. S. Casselman, Chairman, Camden.
Pres. West Jersey Title & Guaranty Co.
New York, Herbert J. Feehan, Albany.
Secy.-Treas., U. S. Abstract & Surety Co.
Connecticut, Carleton H. Stevens, New Haven.
Secy., New Haven Real Estate Title Co.
Rhode Island, Walter H. Vanduyke, Providence.
Title Guaranty Co. of Rhode Island.
Massachusetts, Francis X. Carson, Springfield.
Title Insurance & Mortgage Guaranty Co.

District No. 2.

Pennsylvania, Lester E. Pfeifer, Philadelphia.
Title Officer, Chelton Trust Co.
West Virginia, D. N. Mohler, Charleston.
C-o Morton, Mohler & Peters, Atty.
Virginia, Beverly H. Davis, Richmond.
Vice-President, Title Insurance Co. of Richmond.

District No. 3.

Florida, Eugene D. Dodge, Chairman, Miami.
Mgr. Dade Co. Abst, Title Ins. & Trust Co.
North Carolina, D. W. Sorrell, Durham.
South Carolina, Edward P. Hodges, Palmetto Bldg., Columbia.
Georgia, William J. Davis, Atlanta.
Pres., Atlanta Title & Trust Co.

District No. 4.

Tennessee, J. R. West, Chairman, Nashville.
Vice-Pres., Guaranty Title Trust Co.
Kentucky, Charles A. Haerberle, Louisville.
Secy., Louisville Title Co.
Ohio, O. L. Pealer, Warren.
Pres., Warren Guaranty Title & Mortgage Co.
Indiana, Charles E. Lambert, Rockville.
Pres., Lambert Title Co.

District No. 5.

Louisiana, Lionel Adams, Chairman, New Orleans.
Union Title Guarantee Co.
Alabama, James W. Goodloe, Mobile.
Asst.-Secy., Title Insurance Co.
Mississippi, W. R. Barber, Gulfport.
Secy., Miss. Abst. Title & Guaranty Co.

District No. 6.

Arkansas, Elmer McClure, Chairman, Little Rock.
Pres., Little Rock Abst. & Grty. Co.

Missouri, James M. Rohan, St. Louis.
Pres., St. Louis County Land Title Co.
Illinois, H. F. Payton, Springfield.
Secy., Sangamon County Abstract Co.

District No. 7.

North Dakota, A. J. Arnot, Chairman, Bismarck.
Pres., Burleigh County Abstract Co.
Minnesota, W. S. Jenkins, Minneapolis.
Pres., Real Estate Title Insurance Co.
Wisconsin, John M. Kenny, Madison.
Dane Abstract of Title Co.
Michigan, W. F. Angell, Detroit.
Trust Officer, Fidelity Trust Co.

District No. 8.

South Dakota, R. G. Williams, Chairman, Watertown.
Secy. Southwick Abstract Co.
Iowa, Geo. H. Whitcomb, Northwood.
Nebraska, Alfred L. Hanson, Freemont.
Secy., J. F. Hanson & Son.
Wyoming, R. M. Lamont, Cheyenne.
Pres., Pioneer Title & Loan Co.

District No. 9.

Kansas, Fred T. Wilkin, Chairman, Independence.
C. A. Wilkin & Co.
Oklahoma, Roy S. Johnson, Newkirk.
Vice-Pres., Albright Title & Trust Co.
Colorado, J. Emery Treat, Trinidad.
Mgr. Trinidad Abstract & Title Co.
New Mexico, J. M. Avery, Santa Fe.
Avery-Bowman Co.

District No. 10.

Texas, Alvin S. Moody, Houston.
Pres., Texas Abstract Co.

District No. 11.

California, W. P. Waggoner, Chairman, Los Angeles.
Vice-Pres., California Title Ins. Co.
Utah, Alex E. Carr, Salt Lake City.
Nevada, A. A. Hinman, Las Vegas.
Pres., Title & Trust Co. of Nevada.
Arizona, Louis J. Taylor, Phoenix.
Trust Officer, Phoenix Title & Trust Co.

District No. 12.

Washington, W. H. Winfree, Chairman, Seattle.
Pres., Kings County Title Co.
Oregon, G. F. Peek, Portland.
Secy., Union Abstract Co.
Montana, W. B. Clark, Miles City.
Pres., Custer Abstract Co.
Idaho, Henry J. Wall, Twin Falls.