

Remove Last Obstacle to Refund of Gas Tax to Counties, Report

The last obstacle in the way of paying into the various counties of Illinois their share of the invalid 2 cent gasoline tax was removed last week, when Judge Charles G. Briggie in the circuit court at Springfield dismissed 21 suits against the state.

The dismissal removes all litigation against the gasoline tax monies collected by the state in January of 1927 and indications are that payment will be made to the counties within a very short time.

Lake Co. Share \$50,000

The amount due to Lake county under the old gasoline tax is estimated at \$50,000, and this sum will be applied against the bond issue recently passed in the county for the improvement of several important state aid roads.

The suits dismissed according to a United Press dispatch from Springfield, involved collections under the invalid gas tax which were paid to the state under protest. Previously the suits of oil companies for the return of the tax monies they had paid into the state were ruled out when one test case was carried to the supreme court and a decision was returned finding that the state had no right to pay back to the gasoline companies any funds they had paid to the state for the tax in view of the fact that the consumer who had really paid the tax could not be refunded his money.

Payment Soon

While Secretary of State William Stratton has not announced when the monies will be paid to the counties, indications are that the work of disposing the funds, held in the state treasury since 1927, will be carried on at once and that the closing chapters of the old 2 cent tax will be written before the end of the summer road building season.

The old gas tax was declared unconstitutional after it had been in operation for some months and the money received, now that it is free of court entanglements, will be returned to the counties according to the auto population of the county.

Move to Organize New Circuit Court Dist. to Include Lake Co.

Action toward giving eight counties in Illinois, including Lake county, a separate court circuit, is underway in Sangamon county, according to an International News Service dispatch to the Waukegan News-Sun.

The eight counties, Sangamon, St. Clair, Peoria, Madison, Will, Lake and Winnebago, all having reached populations of more than 100,000 people, are now eligible to have county lines and circuit court lines contiguous.

The Bar Association of Sangamon county today started action to have the circuits changed so that these eight counties, and Cook county, would have separate court circuits, which would permit additional courts and judges and considerably speed up the trial of cases.

Require Legislation

According to the dispatch, judicial re-apportionment and redistricting of

the counties must be included in an act of the state legislature to permit the change.

Lake county is at present a part of the Seventeenth Judicial district of the state and includes Lake, McHenry, Boone and Winnebago counties. At present there are only two judges, Judge Edward D. Shurtleff of Marengo and Judge Arthur E. Fisher of Rockford sitting in this circuit and holding court in the counties. The redistricting into one county circuits would remove both Winnebago and Lake counties from the

seventeenth district and leave Boone and McHenry counties within one district and possibly mean an additional judge in that circuit as well as in Lake and Winnebago counties where most of the court work of the present seventeenth district is carried on.

Believe Lightning Hit Plane; Wings Torn Off

Experienced airmen who viewed wreckage of a monoplane which fell near Arkansas Pass, Tex., last week,

killing four prominent Kansas City men and their pilot, agreed that a bolt of lightning struck the plane, tearing both wings from the fuselage.

The men were returning to Kansas City from a fishing trip in the Gulf of Mexico when eye-witnesses saw what they thought was an explosion. Both wings parted from the fuselage, and the plane plunged to earth. The wings fell several hundred feet from the men's bodies.

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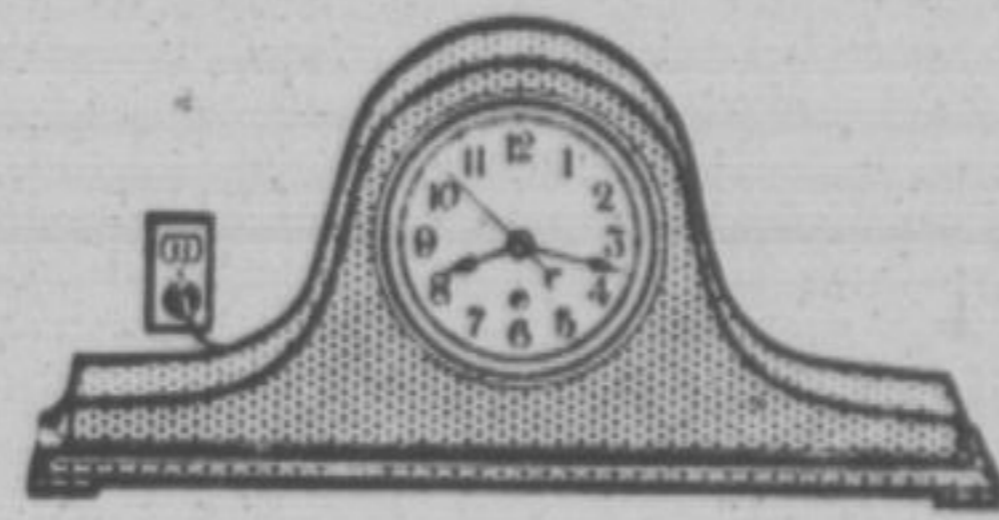
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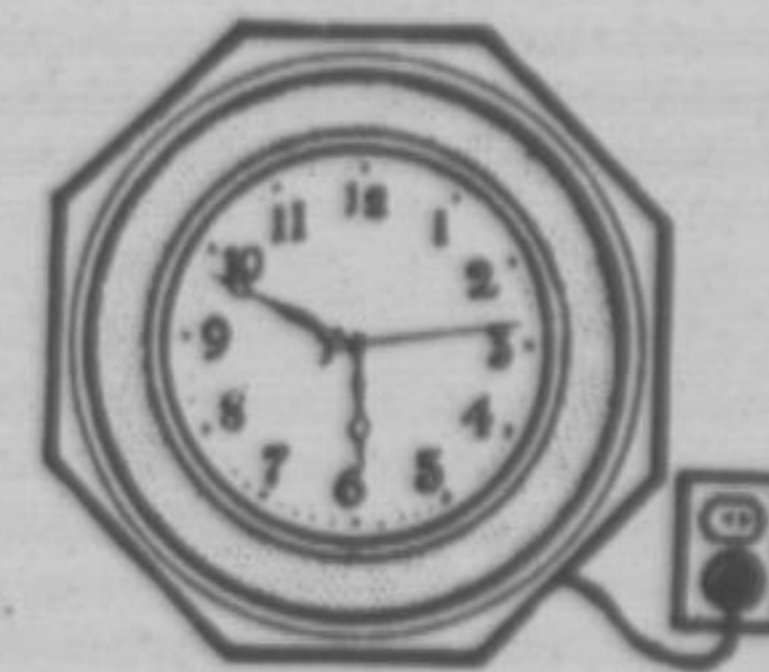
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