

A. G. WALLING, LITH, PORTLAND, OR.

THE PRESENT COURT HOUSE.

MOSCOW, I. T. MAY 1st, 1883.

As the question of the relocation of the county seat of Nez Perce county is to be submitted to a vote at an early day, and as my name, as well as the names of prominent citizens of this place, has been qualified by such endearing epithets as "Pirates, Robbers," etc., I have taken the liberty to publish this statement and mail it to you as well as others of the county, whose names are familiar.

It shall be my object to deal strictly in facts and figures, and though it has become almost one of the usages of the day to call our opponents hard names, yet I never indulge in such expletives, recognizing the fact that those who endeavor to destroy the reputation of their neighbors that they may thereby build up their own, have but a flimsy claim upon the future esteem of their fellows.

With these introductory remarks I shall proceed to discuss the question at issue, and that you may fairly understand what is proposed, I will first give you a copy of the enabling act, which submits the question to the legal voters at the polls. It is as follows:

AN ACT, to provide for the relocation of the county seat of Nez Perce county.

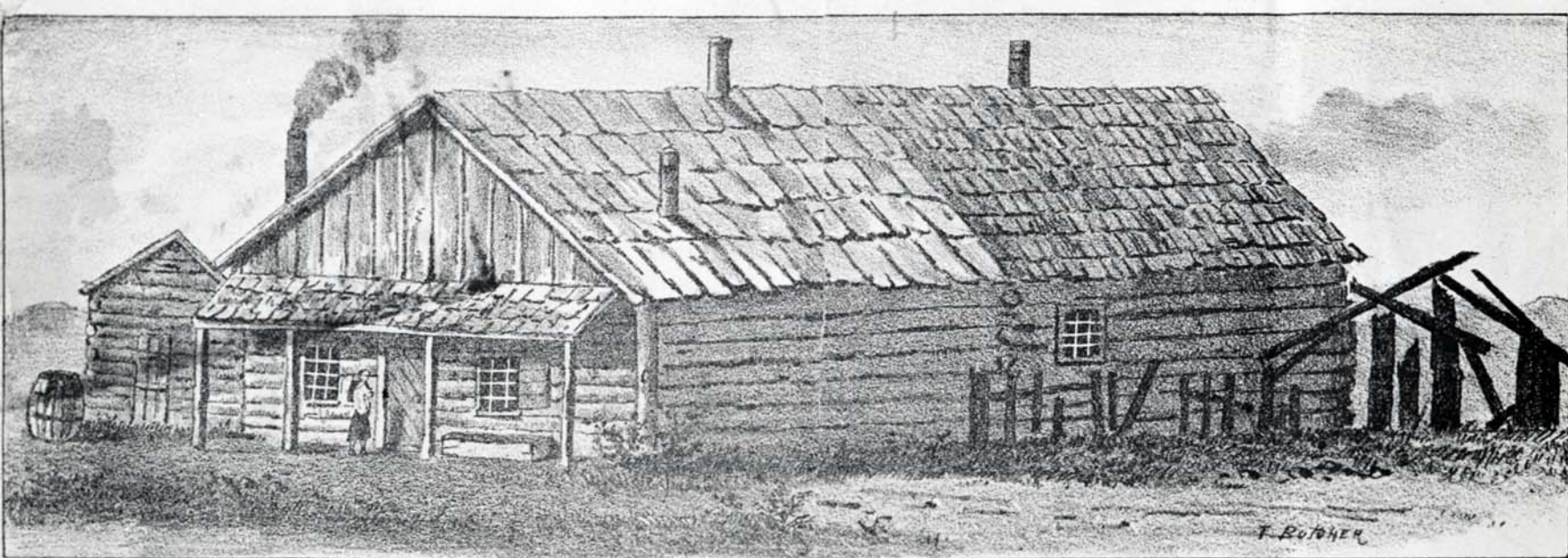
Be it enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Idaho as follows:

SECTION 1. A special election shall be held in the County of Nez Perce on the first Monday in June, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and eighty three, (1883) which special election shall be conducted in the manner, and be governed by the laws relating to general elections.

SECTION 2. At said special election, the question of the permanent location of the County Seat of Nez Perce County shall be submitted to, and be voted upon, by the qualified voters therein, the words "For County Seat," shall be written or printed on the ballot, and the town, or place desired, by the voter shall be written or printed opposite, or under the words above mentioned and required.

SECTION 3. In canvassing the vote on the location of the county seat, ballots shall not be rejected because of any error in orthography, or informality therein, if it can be clearly ascertained from the ballot what was intended by the voter; but where two or more ballots are folded together, they shall not be counted, and upon the canvass of the vote, by the Board of County Commissioners, the town or place receiving the highest number of votes, shall be, and is hereby established and confirmed as the permanent County seat of Nez Perce County. In case no choice is made at said special election, the question shall be again submitted at the next general election thereafter.

SECTION 4. The County Commissioners of said county shall cause notice to be posted in the manner provided in the general election laws of this Territory. They shall cause suitable poll books and returns, to be prepared and furnished to the judges of election



JAIL? ENTRANCE—OPPOSITE THE BREWERY.

of the several precincts in said County. They shall appoint judges of election at their regular session in April, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, for all the precincts in said county as required at a general election, and on the second Monday in June, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, they shall meet at the County seat of said County and act as a board of canvassers, and declare the result of said special election, and if it shall be ascertained from such canvass that any town or place has received a plurality of the votes cast, such town or place is hereby declared to be the legally established county seat of Nez Perce County.

SECTION 5. In case it shall be ascertained by said canvass of votes that the county seat is removed from the town of Lewiston to any other town or place, it shall be the duty of the County Commissioners of said County to cause the archives, records, and funds of said County to be removed to the town or place chosen, within ninety days after the result of said special election shall have been ascertained, provided, that the citizens of such towns, shall subscribe and pay into the County Treasury, an amount in cash equal to the cash value of all the County buildings now owned or occupied by said County in the city of Lewiston. Together with the cost and expense of removing all public records and property to such town or place, and the amount so paid into said County Treasury shall be expended in the erection of County Court House buildings, at the County seat so established, and in removing the public records and archives thereto. They shall have power to rent, or otherwise secure suitable buildings or rooms for the use of the County officers, and for the preservation of the records, archives and moneys of said County.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

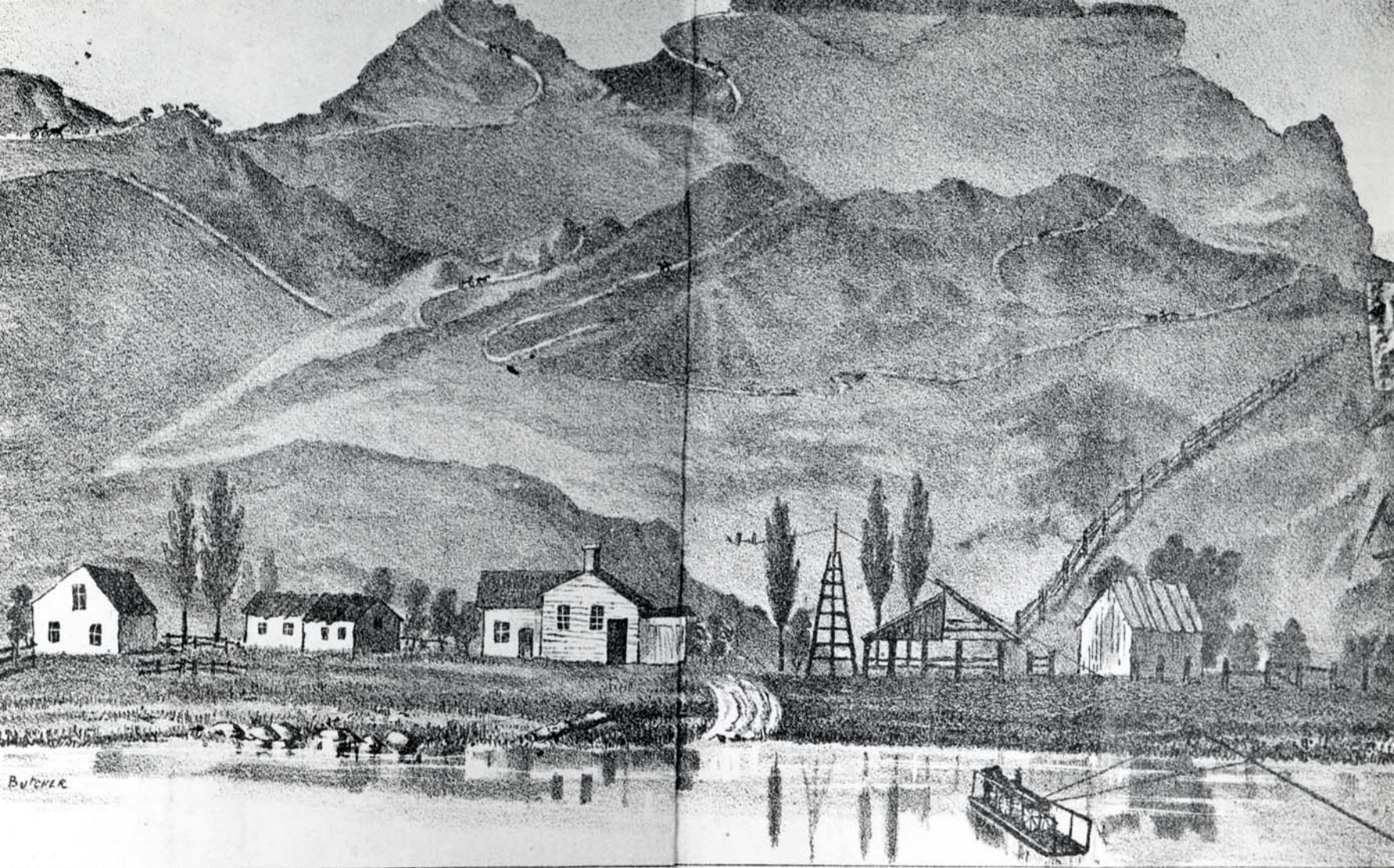
And for the information of those who are comparatively new comers, many of whom are not familiar with the history of the County, and have not even visited the present County seat at Lewiston, I have caused to be taken sketches of the public buildings and have had them lithographed, and herewith present them for your inspection, as also a picture of the approach from the north including the ferry on clear water. At a trifling cost you can have these pictures framed; they are well worth the expense, as they call to mind so vividly those early days in the history of our country; they are also valuable as illustrating to what extent self-interest can befog the human intellect. The smaller of the buildings is the County seat, proper, of Nez Perce County, one end of which is occupied as a jail and the other room which was formerly used as a court room, is now occupied by one department of the public school. The building was among the first built in the place and was occupied for some time as a store. The larger building was built in 1862, by Hill Beachy for a hotel; but the innovation of saw-mills brought in their wake, modernized hotels, and the festive bedbug was allowed to perambulate the deserted rooms with "none to disturb

or make him afraid", until a happy thought at length dawned upon the brilliant intellect of its owner (one of Lewiston's enterprising citizens;) accordingly propositions were made to the proper authorities as follows:

Pay me a rental of one thousand dollars per year in semi-annual payments for four years; or pay me a rental of seven hundred and twenty-five dollars per year, for six years and I will at the end of the time specified, give and make over unto Nez Perce County that fine old log house, which will then be twenty-six years old, together with the appurtenances etc., including, I suppose the bedbugs and all the old memories which cluster around it. To be brief, the latter proposition was accepted, and the county took possession, and has occupied the building a little over one year, and has faithfully paid the first year's rent (\$ 725) and if it continues faithful for five years more and the tax payers pay the rent, the county will then own the property; but at the present time the county *owns* only the smaller building and merely occupies the other as a tenant, for which privilege, they pay \$ 725 , per year. Now it has been urged against a change that at some future day Northern Idaho would be annexed to Washington Territory which would involve or necessitate a change of county lines. Such a contingency might arise in the dim future; but in any case you will see that the tax payer will be benefited by a donation as provided for in the bill. If any point in the county obtains a plurality vote over Lewiston that town or place is obliged to pay into the treasury the value of all the buildings now occupied by the County, and the commissioners are required to use the money to erect new ones, hence the County will be benefited to the extent of the rent it now pays, besides owning the property it will occupy free of expense. It is a pecuniary benefit as well as a convenience to any town to have the county seat, and they should be willing to give some return for that benefit, and under the provisions of this bill if there is a change, the town getting it will have to pay for the benefit desired. I in common with a great many others would like to have the county seat located in Moscow, and in consideration of the benefit derived thereby we are willing and ready to submit to the provisions of the bill. We like Lewiston but it is inconvenient to get there for all the people north of Clear Water, and as much the greater number of people are north of the two great barriers (the big hill and the river,) we claim it is better for the smaller than the larger number to be inconvenienced. We may be selfish. Our line of reasoning may be taken because we are on the north, but that does not alter the fact that every vote in the County outside of Lewiston, except twenty-four in Waha, was cast in the north. We admit that it will be a little rough for those who have been accustomed to sit around comfortable offices and barrooms in Lewiston during all these years, to have to begin now to pay ferriage and climb that big hill; but a breath of our mountain air will do them good; a trip over our fertile hills will imbue them with loftier ideas of patriotism and the advantages of living in peace and good fellowship with all mankind. If we in Moscow are successful they will learn upon coming among us that we are not such a bad lot of "Pirates and Bandits" after all; they will learn that we are simply human, trying in all things to do the best we can to promote our own interest; but with all our faults we are determined to have at least one virtue, that of charity. We do not, or will we ever blame the people of Lewiston for trying to retain that which cost them nothing but which has ever been a source of convenience and profit. In conclusion, allow me to assure you and through you your neighbors, that all the people of Moscow ask is a fair expression at the polls, and if a plurality of the voters would prefer to continue the County seat at Lewiston, or to remove it to any other than this place, we submit without a murmur; but if we are favored with a plurality of the votes we will comply with the law, and if business or pleasure should ever call you to our little town, we will do our utmost to entertain you in a gentlemanly and hospitable manner.

Very Respectfully Yours,

W. J. McCONNELL.



THE APPROACH TO LEWISTON.