

Engineer Admits Setting Blaze

Partridge

Philip Partridge, county engineer, confessed to authorities about midnight Tuesday that he had set the fire at the Lincoln elementary school here Monday, Prosecutor Richard L. Davis revealed.

Partridge, following the confession and subsequent questioning, was given a preliminary hearing before Justice of the Peace David Boothby about 1 A. M. Wednesday and held for grand jury action on a charge of arson. Bond was set at \$2,000. A property bond was provided and Partridge was released.

The engineer had attended a meeting of city council and during the session, he drew Police Chief Walter Reffitt aside and told him that he had started the fire at the school. The chief, stunned by the confession, called the county prosecutor at his home.

THE GROUP then went to the office of the county prosecutor where Partridge made and signed a written confession, admitting the act in some detail.

Davis said Partridge was apparently "motivated" in setting the fire by the "inequalities between the white and colored elements here." He did not elaborate further.

The prosecutor said Partridge admitted going to the school shortly after 4 A. M. He entered the building through a basement window and pried the lock from a classroom door. He admitted carrying two cans of fuel into the classroom and setting the fire.

Apparently Partridge had been on the verge of confessing previously, Chief Reffitt said. The chief said Partridge came to the police station about 8:30 A. M. Monday, about three hours after the fire, and told the officers that he had some information about the blaze but wanted to wait until Tuesday.

Partridge came to the police station again late Tuesday after the chief had gone home for the day. Later, at the council meeting, after the engineer had appeared with a group of chamber of commerce men concerning an annexation proposal, at the session, he drew Chief Reffitt aside.

At the preliminary hearing before Boothby, Partridge entered a plea of guilty.

Confession Is Made By Partridge

Philip Partridge, county engineer, confessed to authorities about midnight Tuesday that he had set the fire at the Lincoln elementary school here Monday, Prosecutor Richard L. Davis revealed.

Partridge, following the confession and subsequent questioning, was given a preliminary hearing before Justice of the Peace David Boothby about 1 A. M. Wednesday and held for grand jury action on a charge of arson. Bond was set at \$2,000. A property bond was provided and Partridge was released.

The engineer had attended a meeting of city council and during the session, he drew Police Chief Walter Reffitt aside and told him that he had started the fire at the school. The chief, stunned by the confession, called the county prosecutor at his home.

THE GROUP then went to the office of the county prosecutor where Partridge made and signed a written confession, admitting the act in some detail.

Davis said Partridge was apparently "motivated" in setting the fire by the "inequalities between the white and colored elements here." He did not elaborate further.

The prosecutor said Partridge admitted going to the school shortly after 4 A. M. He entered the build-

City to Seek \$108,957 To Operate Next Year

City council approved the finance commission's budget request for \$108,975 on which to operate during 1955, when council held its public hearing on the budget in conjunction with the regular council meeting, Tuesday night.

No figure was mentioned in the request, but it was indicated that this will be set after representatives of Peck, Shaffer and Williams, Cincinnati bonding firm, confer with the board and with the county auditor.

Commissioners also accepted a plat of a new lake subdivision owned by C. E. and Barbara Tucker. The subdivision, called Lakeview Heights, has 21 lots platted to date. Six of these front on the lake and the others front on Churn Creek. The subdivision is located near the Beechwood Subdivision, on the west bank of Churn Creek.

About nine-tenths mile of roads have been constructed but are not completed at the present time. Tucker said that the roads will be maintained by him as a private road for the time being.

The board also paid routine bills and accepted sheep claims at the meeting.

penses for the first six months of this year and the estimated expenses for the remaining six months of 1954.

The \$108,957 figure, of course, represents only that requested for the general fund. Receipts expected to be collected through revenue or state distribution of various funds will more than make up the estimated expenditures in such funds as street repair, water fund, sewer fund, etc.

IN THE general fund, estimated receipts were listed as follows: General property tax, \$10,500; classified property tax, \$25,000; sales tax, \$5,000; dealers' intangible and financial institution tax, \$7,000; cigarette tax, \$1,500; inheritance tax, \$8,000; admission tax, \$1,800; taxi licenses, \$150; liquor permit fees, \$5,000; other permits and licenses, \$300; fines and costs collected through mayor's court, \$14,000; state health subsidy, \$900; parking meter revenue, \$26,462; miscellaneous sales, \$100; special assessments, \$1,045; and township fire fund, \$2,200.

On the other side of the balance sheet, estimated expenditures were listed as: Council—salaries, \$1,312, expenses, \$300; clerk of council—salary \$160; mayor—salary, \$3,000; auditor—salary, \$3,000, expenses, \$600;

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

Hospital Board Asks Commissioners To Put Issue on Ballot

The Highland County commissioners, at a meeting held here Tuesday morning, accepted a request by the board of directors of the Highlands Community Hospital to place a bond issue for the construction of a new county hospital on the ballot in the next general election.

The request, signed by six property owners and members of the board, said that the board believes that the facilities at the local hospital do not meet the demand for hospital services here. It also pointed out that the hospital fails to meet the requirements as set up by the state.

The letter sent to the commissioners said, in part, "We honestly believe there exists an urgent need for a more adequate hospital in every way for our county.

"We sincerely request that the board proceed at the earliest time possible by giving the matter your favorable consideration and pass

the necessary legislation for a bond issue at the next regular election for the building of a new hospital."

Commissioners also accepted a plat of a new lake subdivision owned by C. E. and Barbara Tucker. The subdivision, called Lakeview Heights, has 21 lots platted to date. Six of these front on the lake and the others front on Churn Creek. The subdivision is located near the Beechwood Subdivision, on the west bank of Churn Creek.

About nine-tenths mile of roads have been constructed but are not completed at the present time. Tucker said that the roads will be maintained by him as a private road for the time being.

The board also paid routine bills and accepted sheep claims at the meeting.

Vesper Set Next Sunday

Second in Series Of Services Scheduled

The second in a series of summer vesper services will be held Sunday, July 11, at 7:30 P. M. at the Hillsboro High School athletic field. Seats will be provided. The series is sponsored by the Hillsboro and Highland County Council of Church Women.

The principal speaker for the program will be Dr. Hugh Bean Evans, minister of the Seventh Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati and moderator of the Presbytery of

Company H, Local Guard Unit, Will Leave Here Sunday for Encampment With 147th Infantry at Camp Perry

Columbus Man

WEDNESDAY morning, Partridge issued the following written statement to this newspaper:

“Ohio passed a law abolishing segregated schools twenty some years ago. But we still have segregated schools in Ohio.

“The Supreme Court’s recent decision abolishing segregated schools may not take effect for another twenty years or longer.

“The most devastating weapon of the enemies of freedom is infiltration. Daily they grow stronger and we do not dare to wait this long for progress.

“We must take unto ourselves the whole armour of freedom.

County commissioners were called into special session Wednesday at noon to discuss the situation concerning the county engineer. No action had resulted up to press time.

Partridge came here in the early part of 1950 from Clinton County. He was with the Clinton Construction Company in that county. He is the father of three children.

Partridge, 43, was appointed in 1950 to fill the unexpired term of Claude West as county engineer. Then, in 1952, he was elected to a four-year term in the post.