

OFFERS FREE LAND SALE LIST FOR \$5

Downtown Real Estate Broker Cites 'Advice'

BY SID ELSNER

For \$5 Philip M. Platten, Room 814, Finance Building, 750 Prospect Avenue S. E., will be glad to sell you a copy of offerings at the country's forfeited land auction in Lakeside Avenue Courthouse.

The list is a photographed-lithographed duplicate of one offered free to everybody by County Auditor John A. Zangerle.

Lists printed for the county cost 20 cents each.

Platten's newspaper advertisements have been drawing as many as 50 customers a day, a woman who identified herself as Mrs. Platten said yesterday.

"Tax sale at the courthouse daily, buy at your own price," the advertisements assert. "To purchase a list of these properties contact Tax Sales Service, 750 Prospect, Room 814."

To Plain Dealer reporters who questioned him, Platten said: "We sell advice; the book is just thrown in."

But the only help he could give in locating one property was to hunt it up in a 1922 map book.

Informed that a regular list was obtained for the asking at Zangerle's office yesterday, two hours after Mrs. Platten had accepted \$5 for her list, Platten immediately offered a full refund.

Then he said he wanted no money for his advice, which consisted mainly of telling a would-be buyer to pick out a property, go down to the courthouse and bid on it.

Explaining his charge, he said: "The \$5 is for any reasonable professional service you could expect for \$5."

He said he could give more service for more money, but did not say what it would be or how much it would cost.

Chester A. Wing of the Better Business Bureau said Platten earlier had sent out post cards and telegrams offering the listings and, after questioning by the bureau, had told Wing he would drop the plan.

"It is unfair to the public to charge for services available free," Wing said. "The same services—or more—are free at the courthouse or at the Cleveland Real Estate Board."

Examiners Notified

Charles E. Norlin, executive secretary of the board, said he had notified the state board of real estate examiners of Platten's activities.

Platten is a licensed broker. He does not belong to the board.

Norlin said his office in the Arcade offered free advice, map service and property listing when available. He gave some away yesterday.

At the courthouse listings are open for inspection and the staff will answer questions and look up material, said Louis B. Mitchell, deputy in charge of the auction.

Platten would not tell what it cost him to put out copies of the public listings or how many customers he had.

"That's my private business," he said.

Zangerle printed 5,400 copies. They have been in heavy demand and are scarce.

Mrs. Platten said Tax Sales Service had "many" copies—at \$5. Her receipt said nothing about paying for advice.

One hundred and nineteen West Side and Bay Village properties were sold yesterday for \$64,325. Since June 2 a total of 895 parcels have been sold for \$350,790, an average of \$390, far ahead of last year. The sale is to end July 31.

Four Ships Bring