

TO THE HONORABLE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF JEFFERSON COUNTY:

Pursuant to Section 192 of the Election Law, we beg to herewith submit this our first annual report of the affairs and proceedings of the Board of Elections of Jefferson County, New York.

We received our appointment as Commissioners of Elections for the County of Jefferson on the 31st day of July, 1911, and immediately filed our oaths of office and entered upon the discharge of our duties.

On the first day of August, 1911, pursuant to the provisions of Section 192 of the Election Law, we met as a Board of Elections and proceeded to draw lots for the respective officers and as a result thereof Commissioner Perley A. Pitcher was chosen President of said Board and Commissioner A. Raymond Cornwall was chosen Secretary thereof.

We established a temporary office in the County Clerk's office and there transacted our business until on or about September first when the Building committee of the Board of Supervisors met and designated an office for our Board on the top floor of the County Clerk's building. This office was fitted up at a very small expense to the County, the only alterations to the building being the hanging of doors leading into the room which we occupy. The furniture in our office is all furniture which was owned by the County and consists simply of tables and chairs. The tables we had recovered at a very small expense. The walls were painted and a gas lamp installed.

The work preliminary to the Election consisted largely of correspondence with the Town Clerks and other Election officers and for the first month or so this work was performed by Miss Irene Allen and Miss Ida Nunez at a nominal charge. On September 18th, however, we employed Kenneth Cox as a Clerk in our office at a Salary of \$12 per week and on September 25th, 1911, we engaged Miss Octavi Worden as a stenographer at \$12 a week.

Section 207 of the Election Law provides that the office of the Board of Elections shall be open during every business day of the year and we accordingly soon after our appointment adopted the hours from 9 A. M. to 5 P. M. as the hours when said office shall be open for the transaction of business.

It was necessary to lay out our work preliminary to the Election and for that purpose we met as a Board of Elections practically every day throughout the month of August. These meetings were sometimes of considerable length and many times we met in the evening and spent the entire evening in conference.

A large amount of printing is necessary in the Election work and we adopted the plan of calling for bids upon all printed work where we could reasonably do so. In each instance we prepared a notice that sealed bids would be received for the work desired and mailed them to practically every printing house or firm that we knew of in Jefferson County. The result of this system of calling for bids was that in a number of instances we succeeded in having the work done at a lower price than in the past.

On August 29th we adopted the Official seal of the Board of Elections of Jefferson County and filed a certificate of such adoption with the Secretary of State.

On August 29th we issued a call for bids on printing the amendments to the Constitution and asked for bids from twenty-three different houses. As a result thereof we let the contract for this work to F. C. O'Brien of Watertown, N. Y. for the sum of \$6. per thousand, which was an exceedingly low bid.

On September 7th we called for bids for printing the Registry list. We requested bids in this instance from eighteen different firms and as a result thereof the contract for this work was let to Hungerford & Holbrook of this city for the sum of \$1200. This figure was below the estimated cost of this work.

On or about September 15, 1911, pursuant to the provisions of Section 400 of the Election Law, we appointed Horatio S. Bailey and Fred J. Hill as custodians of the voting machines in Jefferson County. These custodians immediately took the oath of office and entered upon the discharge of their duties. They are to receive their necessary disbursements and the sum of 60¢ per hour for all time actually spent in the discharge of their duties.

On September 18th we caused a voting machine to be erected in our office and in the evening of September 18th we met with the custodians of the voting machines at our office and set up the machine for demonstrating and went over with the custodians the details of their work.

On September 21st, 1911, we met in the evening at our office with the custodians of the voting machines and instructed a large number of Inspectors of Elections in the City of Watertown in the use of the voting machine as required by Section 401 of the Election Law.

On September 22d, 1911, in the evening we again met at our office with the custodians of the voting machines and continued the instruction of Inspectors of Elections in the City of Watertown, N. Y.

On September 25th, pursuant to authority conferred upon us by the Purchasing Committee of the Board of Supervisors we entered into a contract with the Underwood Typewriter Co. for the rent of a Typewriter, a typewriting desk, and chair. This contract was for the renting of the machine and furniture from that date and in the event of the Purchasing Committee desiring to purchase the machine rather than to rent it they were to have the privilege of purchasing it at a net figure of \$101 and all rent paid to be applied upon the purchase price.

In the evening of September 25th we again met with the custodians of the voting machines at our office to continue the instruction of Inspectors of Elections in the City of Watertown, N. Y.

On September 26th, 1911, we again met with the custodians of voting machines at our office and continued the instruction of Inspectors of Elections in the City of Watertown, N. Y.

On September 28th, 1911, one custodian of the voting machines went to the Town of Theresa and one went to the Town of Wilna and set up machines and instructed the Inspectors of Elections in those Districts.

On September 29th the two custodians went to the Town of Lyme and set up the machines and instructed the Inspectors of Elections in all three districts.

On September 30th the custodians went to the Town of Alexandria, set up the machines, and instructed the Inspectors of Elections in all three districts.

On October 7th the custodians of the machines went to the Town of Hounsfield, set up the machines, and instructed the Inspectors of Elections in both districts.

On October 12th, the custodians of the voting machines went to the Town of Cape Vincent, set up the machines, and instructed the Inspectors of Elections in all three districts.

On October 23d and October 24th the custodians of the voting machines examined and re-set all of the machines in the City of Watertown, N. Y.

The above enumerated items are dates of particularly important work. In addition thereto we met and transacted business of greater or less importance practically every day throughout that period of time.

From October 1st to November 1st the work in our office was practically continuous and required the larger part of our time each day and on many days throughout that time we met in the evening. During this time we called

for bids and let contracts for the printing of the usual Election supplies, including Statements of Canvass, certified copies of the same, distance notices, poll books, tally sheets, envelopes, labels, receipts, and the ballots and sample ballots, including the amendment ballots. The contract for all this work was let by competitive bidding at a considerable saving for the County.

On November 4th and 5th the custodians of the voting machines in company with Commissioner Pitcher went into the Election districts in the various towns where machines are used and re-set and sealed the machines and placed ballots in them preparatory for Election day.

On November 6th the custodians of the voting machines in company with Commissioner Cornwall went into each of the Election districts in the City of Watertown and re-set and sealed the machines and placed the ballots therein preparatory for Election day.

We received the ballots from the printer late in the evening of November 3rd and in order to place them in the machines and cover the voting machine districts it was necessary to engage the services of an automobile. This was also true of November 6th.

On November 4th we left the City of Watertown at 6 A. M. and by rapid work succeeded in covering the districts and returning to Watertown at 6 P. M. on November 5th.

On November 6th we were engaged in the City of Watertown from 9 A. M. until 6 P. M.

On November 7th, which was Election day, we were on duty all day together with one of the custodians of the voting machines. On the morning of November 7th we made a round of all the polling places in the City of Watertown and straightened out the little difficulties which arose.

The changes in the Election Law were more or less confusing and in a number of districts the Inspectors met with difficulties in interpreting the Law. We endeavored to urge it upon the Inspectors that we were ready and anxious to render them any assistance possible to facilitate a smooth work of the Registration and Election days and as a result we had a large number of inquiries and telephone calls from the various districts. Through these means we succeeded in running off the Registration and Election without any serious hitch or complications.

Immediately after Election day on the next morning we started in upon the canvass of the votes and the compiling of the Election returns. This duty was particularly arduous because of the great number of candidates and the unusually large number of propositions. However, we completed this work in time for the first meeting of the Board of County Canvassers.

Immediately after this work was disposed of we took up the Enrollment of voters under the new Primary Law.

This law is entirely new, particularly so to this locality, and it necessitated the preparation of an entirely new set of blanks, books, etc.

We were obliged to have printed enrollment books, ballots, and envelopes and in addition thereto a ballot box constructed for each Election district, and to arrange for having booths in the districts where voting machines are used. This work has all been completed and we believe that the Inspectors generally now understand the provisions of the Primary Law and will have no difficulty in properly enrolling the voters.

Because of our lack of knowledge of exactly what our work comprised we engaged our Clerk and Stenographer for an indefinite period but because of the continuous work which we have to perform it is absolutely impossible for us to get it out without assistance and we have therefore engaged Kenneth Cox as Clerk and Octavi Worden as Stenographer by the year. We have been paying them from the time of the commencement of their employment to the first of December the sum of \$12 per week. They have been faithful employees, capable of earning larger salaries and are worth to us all or more than we pay them. We have accordingly fixed their salary for the ensuing year from December 1st, 1911, at \$15 per week.

At the time of our appointment by your Honorable Board the resolution fixing our salaries made no provision for the payment of Clerk hire or of the expenses incident to our office. It has therefore been necessary for us to pay our postage, express, labor, etc. out of our own pocket and advance the same. This has amounted to a large sum up to date.

The estimated postage for the ensuing year will amount to about \$100, the Express to about \$100 more, and the Labor which we are obliged to engage for copying the enrollment books, folding ballots, etc. about \$300 more and incidentals not to exceed \$50 more. Our entire expense therefore for labor, postage, express, and incidentals outside of Clerk hire, will not exceed \$600 for the coming year.

We would therefore respectfully suggest and urge upon your Honorable Board to set apart the sum of \$2200 as and for the expenses of the Board of Elections for the ensuing year which will include the payment of our two Clerks at \$15 per week and the other necessary incidental expenses. We would also suggest that your resolution be drawn in such a form that the County Treasurer can pay these items upon proper vouchers from us being presented. The above, of course, does not include the salaries of the Commissioners which were fixed and payment thereof provided for in your resolution of July 31st, 1911.

As your Honorable Board is well aware by the Amendments to the Election Law passed by the last legislature a great many changes were made in the law. The majority of these changes if not all are of a permanent nature. Those changes alone practically doubled the Election work, which was heretofore performed by the County Clerk.

In addition to those Amendments to the Election Law the Primary Bill was passed which easily doubles the work of the Election Board before the Primary Bill was passed.

We have reported above the work which we have done on the Primary Enrollment up to this date. In addition thereto after the second of January the ballot boxes, enrollment books, etc. are all returned to us and we must then open the ballot boxes and the envelopes and enroll the voters according to the party they have indicated upon their ballot. After that is done the enrollment books must then be copied and a copy thereof duly certified delivered to the Chairman of each Political party, and the list of enrolled voters tabulated and prepared for publication. This work will occupy practically all the time up to February 15th, there being in the neighborhood of 30,000 voters in Jefferson County who will likely enroll.

Immediately after this work is completed the Spring Primaries will be on and it is our duty to canvass the result of the Primary. We are obliged to canvass separately the votes cast in each election district of the enrolled voters of the several parties respectively. This work you can readily understand will necessitate the expenditure of a large amount of time.

Following the Spring Primaries comes the Fall Primaries with substantially the same work and thereafter, again the registration of voters and the Election in November.

It is plain that the duties of the Commissioners of Elections are practically continuous throughout the entire year and as we have indicated above the Law requires us to keep our office open throughout each business day.

We have endeavored throughout the time of our incumbency in office to administer the affairs of the Board of Elections in a satisfactory yet economical manner and in this we feel that we have succeeded. We have observed the workings of similar Boards in other Counties and we believe that our administration has been equal to that of any other County and at a lesser expense than has been incurred in other counties of the size of Jefferson County.

It so happens that both of your Commissioners are regularly admitted Attorneys-at-Law, and as a consequence they have been able to administer the affairs of their office without the expense of an Attorney's services. In other counties of the State where the Commissioners are not Attorneys they have been obliged to enlist the services ^{of an attorney} at an added expense to the County.

The salary fixed by your Board for the Commissioners of Elections is not at all commensurate with the services which we are obliged to render. The office has become a most important one and the duties thereof require the devotion of a very large part of all our time. We have endeavored to perform the duties to the best of our ability and often throughout our brief tenure of office we have been obliged to work all the evening in order to keep up with our work.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Dated December 5th, 1911.

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS.

By _____

Commissioners.