Devoted To The Interests Of The Eastern Shore Of Maryland

CAMBRIDGE TRIBUNE

The Tribune Goes Into Nearly Every Dorchester Home

VOL 4 NO. 31 | CAMBRIDGE, MARYLAND, THURSDAY AFTERNOON AUG. 3, 1939 | $1.50 PER YEAR

Concern Felt By Jones Over Merit System

"Grave concern" is being felt over the "growing tendency to separate as many classes of positions as possible from the operation of the State Merit System," Harry C. Jones, State Employment Commissioner, has notified William C. Walsh, Attorney General.

Mr. Walsh was told that "many interested sources" have protested against what they termed attempts to remove some of the jobs from the Merit System and to keep other State jobs from being included in the classified service.

The Republican Employment Commissioner, whom John S. White, administration floor leader in the House of Delegates, and other Democratic politicians unsuccessfully tried to remove this spring by a "ripper" bill in the Legislature, declined to amplify his statement to Mr. Walsh.

He wrote the Attorney General after Willis R. Jones, chairman of the Board of Correction, had asked Mr. Walsh for an opinion as to legal status of four positions — those of superintendent of the State Penal Farm, the head of the woman's division at the House of Correction and the wardens of the Penintentiary and House of Correction.

Specifically, Willis Jones wanted to know which positions—especially the job of superintendent of women at the House of Correction, which is now vacant—were under the Merit System. The Employment Commissioner maintains the positions of superintendents of the penal farm and of women at Jessups arein the classified service, while the other two jobs are not.

Harry Jones, it was explained, had written heads of State departments advising them to notify him whether they had any new appointments or any vacancies to fill. He pointed out that he wished such informa tion so he could hold the necessary examinations.

He proposed to hold an examination to fill the post of superintendent of women at the House of Correction'

Willis Jones replied:

"The board (of correction) is desirious of having the position filled by the most capable available person and I will be glad to confer with you about the specifications for this position, provided it is determined to be within the Merit System.

"I am a little confused to find that the wardens of the Penitentiary and the House of Correction are not within the Merit System while the superintendent of the State Penal Farm is understood to be within the system."

He asked an opinion "in order to clear up any uncertainty as to the existing law."

In his letter to Mr. Walsh, the Employment Commissioner said:

"The positions of superintendent of the State Penal Farm and superintendent of the women's department, House of Correction, have always been in the Merit System and this department is preparing to hold an examination for the vacancy existing at the House of Correction.

"The growing tendency to separate as many classes of positions as possible from the operation of the State Merit System law is causing grave concern, judging from the protests that reach this department from many interested sources.

"Before you give the opinion requested, I should be glad if you would discuss the matter with me and consult the records of this department."

Meanwhile, Governor O'Conor revealed that when he appointed R. Chester Cromwell, former Democratic member of the House of Delegates from Anne Arundel county, as Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds at Annapolis, he didn't know that the position was under the Merit System.

Mr. Cromwell, after being sworn in and after posting bond, reported for duty July 5, but Philip A. Myers, Republican incumbent, refused to relinquish his position on the ground that he was a classified employe.

Since that time both Mr. Crom well and Mr. Myers have reported for work each day. First one and then the other man's name appeared on the State pay roll but finally the State Comptroller's office decided to withhold all pay until the matter could be settled.

The State Employment Commissioner sent a copy of the late Governor Ritchie's executive order, dated December, 1920

Continued on last page

4-H Club Tour To World's Fair Completed

Word was recently received at the County Agent's office in Cambridge, that plans had been completed for a state-wide 4-H club tour to the New York Worlds Fair. The dates set for this event, according to the communication received, are August 20th to 23 inclusive. A brief outline of the tour is somewhat as follows: Eastern Shore 4-H club members will board a Baltimore & Ohio train at Wilmington, Delaware, leaving there at 7.10 P. M. the evening of July 20th. This group will arrive at the Hotel St. George, at 10:05 P. M. the evening of the 20th, where room reservations will have been made for them. Breakfast will have been made for them. Breakfast will be served for the group 7.30 the morning of August 21st in the Hotel dining room. At 8:30 A. M. the members leave the hotel for the Fair Grounds via subway transportation. The return to the hotel in the evening will also be via subway. The morning of the 22nd breakfast will be served at 7:30 A. M. with the group leaving via busses on a sight-seeing tour of New York City, with a luncheon served at 1 P. M. The afternoon of the 22, is again spent at the fair grounds, returning to the St. George Hotel via subway at 10.30 in the evening. At 1130 P. M. the group will leave the Hotel St. George to return to Wilmington.

According to assistant County this trip has been especially well planned. He states the tour is sponsored by the agricultural division of the B. & O. Railroad, cooperating with the Maryland Agricultural Extension Service. This all cost tour (14.20) includes transportation from Wilmington to New York. Buss fare from B. & O. Station to the St. George Hotel, breakfast, July 21st, Sugway fare from hotel to Fair grounds and return to hotel at night and a pass into the Fair Grounds.

On the 22nd, breakfast is again included, as well as bus fare on the sightseeing tour, and the 1 P. M. luncheon. Following the luncheon transportation via subway is again furnished to the Fair Grounds, with passes to the Fair and return transportation to the hotel. Hotel rooms are also included for the nights of August 20th and 22nd. Members of 4-H clubs, members of the 4-H Council, Older Youth Groups, F. F. A members or others affiliated with any of these groups may go on this tour.

The information indicates, however, that any one wishing to go must make reservations with the County Agent or the Home Demonstration at the County Agricultural Extension Office not later than August 10th. The $14.20 must be remitted with the reservations. This amount is then forwarded to the B. & O. Railway and a coupon book containing all the necessary tickets, passes, and reservation will be mailed directly to the applicant.

New Welfare Board Board Named By Gov.

After considering a long list of possible appointees, Governor O'Conor named the State's new Board of Welfare, choosing Charles H. Roloson, Baltimore insurance executive who headed the last Community Fund campaign, as chairman.

The Governor also selected Mrs. J. Enos Ray, chairman of the Prince George's County Welfare Board, to be the first woman to sit with the policy-forming officials in the State's solial-welfare organization.

Another of the seven appointments—three of them continuations, was that of George M. Moffett, president of a national food-products corporation, now a resident of Maryland and the owner of a large Eastern Shore estate.

To represent Western Maryland, the Governor appointed Thomas W. Pangborn, Hagerstown industrialist.

Reappointed, since they were members of the old Board of State Aid and Charities that was superseded by the new State Department of Public Welfare, were:

Sidney Hollander, member of the Board of the Associated Jewish Charities; Lee L. Dopkin, Maryland pioneer in old-age pension legislation; William L. Galvin, counsel to the Bureau of Catholic Charities.

"In determining the composition of the newly created State Department of Public Welfare," the Governor said, "I am aware of the importance of selecting the best qualified persons to control the administration of the manifold duties affecting the welfare of so many of our citizens.

"Accordingly, I have given consideration to a long list of possible appointees and have consulted with numerous persons vitally interested in this branch of the State government.

"Of the above, Messrs. Dopkin, Galvin and Hollander have been members of the Board of State Aid and Charities for a considerable period.

"Accordingly, the experience which they have gained and their intimate knowledge of conditions affecting the less fortunate people of the State, as well as of the institutions and State-aided hospitals, will be of inestimable value in the continuation of the work of this department.

"Mr. Hollander is acknowledged as a specialist in this important field and has made most valuable contributions in welfare discussions and undertakings.

"Mr. Galvin, since his original appointment by Governor Ritchie, has devoted himself untiringly to work of the charity board, and Mr. Dopkin has been one of the pioneers in the country on questions of old-age assistance and related matters.

"I consider Mr. Roloson exceptionally well qualified and possessing needed experience to be the chairman of this group. He was selected to head the Community Fund drive in Baltimore and his work elicited most favorable comment from everyone who had the opportunity to see the results he achieved.

"He is an outstanding businessman, is public spirited, and, I think, will be a most valuable addition to the board.

"In Mr. Moffett I welcome the opportunity of having the State avail itself of the judgment and experience of this nationally known executive. He has been president of the Corn Products Refining Company since 1922 and is conceded to be one of the foremost business executives of the United States.

In naming the first woman ever to serve on the State Welfare Board, the Governor said:

"I am pleased to be able to accord this honor to Mrs. Ray. For years she has been a faithful and competent administrator of relief work in Prince George's county. From the time that relief agencies began to operate in their present form, Mrs. Ray was selected for her county because of her business ability, her thorough understanding of human problems and the respect and confidence she enjoys from her fellow-citizens. . . . .

"As the representative of Western Maryland," the Governor said, in speaking of Mr. Pangborn, "Mr. Pangborn will bring a rounded-out experience in matters pertaining to public welfare. He has not only made a thorough study of present-day problems resulting from the strees of economic conditions but inaugurated in his large industrial organization many of the plans which later were adopted on a State-wide and national basis. . . . "

J. Milton Patterson, executive secretary of the Public Welfare Department, had this to say about the new board:

"Governor O'Conor assumed the leadership of our program in the Legislature and has followed it up by the appointment of an outstanding board. I am awfully thankful to the Governor for giving me such a fine board, free from political entanglements."

HOUSE FAVORS TEACHING HOW TO COOK SEAFOOD

The House has passed a bill sponsored by Representative Caldwell (Dem., Fla.) designed to extend Federal aid to the sea food industry by establishing in the Bureau of Fisheries, Department of the Interior, an educational service on methods of cooking and preparing fish and other seafood.

The measure seeks an annual appropriation of $75,000 during the next five years to carry out the purposes of the bill.

The educational service would include demonstrations for home economics teachers, and for clubs, schools and similar institutions, and also the sponsorship of fishery studies at colleges, universities and other educational institutions.

County Corn Crop Yield To Be Large

One of the best corn crops in recent years is the prediction of county agriculturists who estimate that approximately 26,000 acres planted in Dorchester this year will yield over 750,000 bushels.

Canning factories in Dorchester and throughout the shore are busily engaged with the crop. The season for canning corn, packers say, probably will continue until late in September. In the meantime, the tomato crop is being harvested and additional labor is being taken on as a number of plants will be busy with both crops during the next month or so.

The wheat crop in Talbot this year was estimated at about 450,000 bushels. Approximately 300,000 bushels have been shipped by growers, it was said.

The indicated yield of all important Maryland crops as of August 1 was ninety-six per cent of the ten-year average from 1921 through 1930, the Maryland Crop Reporting Service announced this week.

The service reported winter wheat yields were considerably higher than expected and corn and tobacco production prospects show marked improvement over those of a month ago. July rainfall for the State was practically normal, the report said, but there still are some sections which were dry at the close of the month.

The report summarized August 1 conditions of various crops as:

Winter Wheat — Production higher than expected. The August 1 estimate of 8,900,000 bushels compared with 8,774,000 bushels a year ago, and the five-year average (1928-1932) of 8,730,000 bushels. Excellent weather prevailed during the harvesting and threshing periods and quality was excellent. Yields were highly variable.

Oats—Short crop, due to decreased acreage and low yield.

Barley — Production will be considerably below that of last year largely because of severe winter injury.

Corn— Conditions above average and prospects indicate a crop of 15,840,000 bushels, as compared with 17,544,000 last year, and the five year average of 14,431,000 bushels. Weather conditions favorable during the tasseling veriod and little or no storm damage in main corn sections.

Telephone Co. Cites Oper. Costs

Operating revenues in June for The Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company of Baltimore City, serving the State of Maryland, amounted to $1,352,458, as compared with $1,245,413 for the same month of 1938, according to the report of operations just filed with the Maryland Public Service Commission.

Operating expenses, including taxes, amounted to $1,085,760, which was $84,097 more than for the same month last year. Net income for the month of June was $266,698.

Taxes for June amounted to $198,764, or about 15 per cent of the customers telephone bills. Taxes for June 1939 were $15,599 more than for June, 1938. For 6 months of 1939 taxes amounted to $1,170,209, which is $102,706, or about 10 per cent more than for the same period in 1938.

Maryland was served by 271,168 telephones on June 30, 1939, an increase of 16,545 over the number in operation on June 30, 1938.

Telephone users made more than 35,452,200 calls during the month, which was an increase of 7.2 per cent over those made during June, 1938.

STATE WPA STAFF CUT; OTHERS WILL GO SOON

Approximately fifteen members of the administrative staff of the WPA in Maryland have been discharged because of the reduction in the work-relief appropriation, Francis H. Dryden, State administrator, announced this week.

Mr. Dryden said other administrative employes would be dropped from the State pay roll during the next two months. He was unable to estimate the total number of persons who would be dismissed as a result of the slash in the WPA appropriation.

State To Get $15,101.99 For Game From U.S.

The Game Department of the State of Maryland will get a total of $15,101.39 under terms of the Pittman-Robinson Act according to an announcement issued from Washington.

Under the terms of the act, the Game Department must put up $5,034 in order to receive the above sum, which would mean a total of $20,135.99 available for the establishment of a State Game demonstration preserve.

The last Legislature passed the necessary legislation to enable the Game Department to meet the terms of the Government.

Game Warden LeCompte is looking over a number of pieces of property that would be suitable for the purpose, but it is not likely that any decision will be made for the present.

Oxford Canoe Suffers Mishap At Cambridge

The Chesapeake Bay log canoe, the Mystery, recently purchased by Mr. Norman Gibson, met with a mishap in her first race for the new owner. She was entered in the canoe event at the Cambridge regatta on Tuesday. This trim craft was giving a good account of herself when a brisk breeze sprung up suddenly. The bowsprit gave away under the sudden increased strain. The jib came loose and trailed in the water, causing the Mystery to turn over. Noneof her crew was hurt.

This will not deter the entering of this boat in the forthcoming races at St. Michaels and Oxford.

Swims Ashore When Yacht Engine Dies

Timothy Cronin, 52, swam a mileand a half to safety Tuesday when the motor on a thirty-seven foot tender he was operating for the annual cruise of the Maryland Yacht Club stopped in a heavy sea near Poplar Island.

About fifty yachts were making the week-long cruise to Eastern Shore regattas and the open tender, used to carry ice to club boats and as a ferry for members, was trailing them when the fleet sailed for Oxford after a day of fishing.

Cronin, weary and with arms swollen after the long immersion, said the motor stopped about 2.30 o'clock Tuesday morning. The open vessel began to ship water in the heavy sea.

After trying to bail with a bucket and water cooler, he dived overboard and swam to Jefferson Island.

Meantime, the tender had been reported missing to the Coast Guard by Capt. Howard Bregal, of the yacht club. The patrol boat Dionne was hastily summoned for the search. The tender was found, full of water, several hours afterward.

Cronin, at one time in the navy, returned to Baltimore.

QUENSTEDT NOT TO APPEAL RULING OF JUDGE O'DUNNE

There will be no appeal filed from the decision of Judge O'Dunne dismissing the mandamus suit of Walter E. Quenstedt, who sought reinstatement as warden of the House of Correction. This was revealed this week by S. Robert Levinson, who, with William Saxon, was counsel for the deposed warden.

Quenstedt, who was appointed warden of the Cut by Governor Nice, was removed from his position in January of this year for the good of the service after a meeting of the Board of Welfare.

Quenstedt argued in his suit that he had been ousted arbitrarily and without a hearing. It finally was brought out at the hearing before Judge O'Dunne that the former warden had permitted prisoners to leave the institution at night without supervision. In the words of Judge O'Dunne, "you (the warden) got too intimate with some of your crooks and they sold you out, double-crossed you."

"Loose Methods" Of County Book-Keeping Severely Critized In Auditor's Complete Report

Governor And State Officials On Business Cruise On Bay

Governor O'Conor returned yesterday to the hustle of handshakes and telephones after a day-long business cruise on the State yacht Du Pont to get away from interruptions while considering important State matters.

The Du Pont dropped anchor at dusk off the Cambridge Yacht Club, where the Governor presented trophies for regatta winners on Wednesday.

With him were State Comptroller J. Millard Tawes and State Treasurer Hooper Miles, who conferred with the State Executive on Board of Public Works matters during the cruise Also along, presumably for the ride and to be on hand when information was needed, were Deputy Comptroller Joseph O'C. McCusker, Budget Director Walter Kirkman, Attorney General William C. Walsh and Deputy Attorney General William Henderson.

O'Conor was too busy with the welcoming committee to recount the amount of work completed away from telephones and interruptions, but other members said it was a day profitably spent.

The Governor explained he and his cabinet made the trip because we've a mass of important work to get through with. Last time our meeting lasted about six hours, but it was continually broken up.

Business which was to be considered by the Public Works Board during the cruise included workmen's compensation for National Guardsmen, adjustments in the State police department budget, questions arising from proposed State construction and the knotty question of what to do about vacations and sick leave for State employes paid by the day.

Farm Crops Poor In Some Shore Areas

Unless cantaloupes and water melons fill the pockets of farmers in several lower Shore counties, summer profits are likely to be poor. Strawberries were small and scarce and lacked a good flavor, many farmers not even making expenses. The cucumber season now ending, was a failure with many growers, prices remaining low in spite of a fair yield. Quality was good but only those farmers who sold their produce themselves in the city made money, and they partly because of the freight they saved.

Rains of the last two weeks have made cantaloupes late and bueyers fear that the quality will be poor, since the sweetness of the cantaloupe depends on dry weather once the small fruit starts to grow. About 60 per cent of the expected crop will be harvested, growers say.

Tomatoes can stand plenty of water while growing, but suffer if flooded when grown. This crop is the "standby" of many farmers of the Shore and it is predicted that double the 1938 acreage will be planted next year by growers in all sections.

Garrett Tract Transferred To University of Md.

An agreement has been signed transferring for use and management by the University of Maryland an 1800-acre tract of the Garrett County land utilization project, it is announced by Dr. H. H. Bennett, Chief of the Soil Conservation Service.

The University of Maryland is to use the tract for a period of 99 years as an outdoor laboratory for research, investigation and demonstration in the biological sciences, engineering, forestry and wildlife conservation.

The Garrett County project—a combined area of 35,635 acres—was established in 1935 as a part of the nation-wide program for the development of submarginal land for non-farm use. The 1800-acre tract has been developed as a field laboratory and a group camp was constructed to house extension service workers, 4-H club members and others interested in group study of conservation methods. Some erosion control work has been carried on to demonstrate effective methods of soil conservation. Improvements were made with the cooperation of the Works Progress Administration.

This is the second transfer of Garrett County project lands for use and management by the agencies of the State of Maryland. Recently a 33,835-acre tract was made available to the State Forestry Department of the University of Maryland.

Set August 15 For Power Boat Crabbing Law

The State Conservation Commission has agreed to delay until August 15 enforcement of a law against engines in crabbers' boats at Crisfield thereby giving the watermen time to comply with the statute.

The commission on an inspection trip, announced the compromise after meeting with State legislators, crabbers and seafood packers.

Glenwood Evans, former State Senatodr, brought a number of crabbers from Smith Island and about twenty-five others also attended the meeting, held aboard the State conservation boat.

Last week more than one hundred summonses were issued for crabbers, charging them with using engine power in boats dragging scrapes along the bottom for crabs. The cases are due to be heard this week. The law permits engines in boats collecting crabs from long lines of bait.

FARM PRICE SLUMP BRINGS WHEAT TO 5 YEAR LOWS

County farmers have been watching anxiously the nose-dive in prices of the principal farm commodities during the past week. There are still many crops of wheat left unthreshed in the fields, due to the heavy rains of July. Last week wheat dropped to the lowest since the panic of 1933 and, so far, has failed to make much recovery. Prices on other farm products took the downgrade with wheat.

Tomatoes, usually one of the best money crops in this county, are down to where farmers can make little profit from them, with the season just in its beginning. Other commodities are likewise being handled at almost farm production costs.

The nose-dive in prices of principal farm commodities during the past week promises to be a severe strain on the Administrations farm program as laid down in the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938. Secretary Wallace says the act contains the correct and enduring approach to the nation's farm program.

Since the new program got under way last year it is hardly fair to blame the Administration for the price stampede. On the other hand, opponents of the Administration cannot be blamed too much for making the most of the surface appearances. They are saying the program has failed.

Wheat dropped last week to a five-year low and has failed to make a recovery. Latest reports indicate a continued decline.

So far as farm commodity prices are concerned it is the fact that they tumbled in spite of what the Administration could do about them. In the case of wheat the prices at some points recently have been below the 60 cents a bushel loans offered by the Federal Government.

SYSTEM IN VOGUE FOR SOME YEARS IS DECLARED ANTIQUATED, COSTLY AND INADEQUATE, AND NEW BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HAVE TAKEN PROMPT STEPS TO INSTALL SYSTEM THAT WILL PROPERLY SAFEGUARD INTERESTS OF TAXPAYERS.

COMPLETE REPORT OF AUDITORS, AS FILED WITH COMMISSIONERS, COURT AND STATE'S ATTORNEY, TO APPEAR IN COUNTY NEWSPAPERS NEXT WEEK.

Announcement was made this week that auditors of Ernst & Ernst, who were engaged several months ago by the Board of County Commissioners to make a thorough check-up of all county books, accounts and finances, have completed their task and have compiled a voluminous and highly interesting report which will be published in the county papers next week.

Because complications of such a nature as to create surprise were found, the County Commissioners some weeks ago decided to adopt the recommendations of the auditors that a more adequate system be installed to safeguard the accuracy of accounts; to insure proper deposits of all public funds and to banish procedure of favoritism indicated in tax collections whereby apparently some were indicated exempted from penalties that others were compelled to pay.

The Commissioners are, therefore, publishing the audit just as it has been filed with them and with the Courts and State's Attorney, outlining the auditors criticisms and suggestions so that the citizens and taxpayers may judge for themselves whether these undesirable methods are to be continued, or whether adequate records are to be set up.

The auditors' report is a complete accounting of one year of County bookkeeping and County finances during the twelve month period ending April 26, 1939. The report gives names, dates and instances of what the auditors term "loose methods", and provides the greatest amount of vital, imporant and useful information ever given the people of Dorchester County concerning exactly how their finances and the county accounts are administered and kept.

The report sets forth in unmistakable language every citizen can readily understand that the present system of handling certain of the county's business is not only antiquated and inadequate, but actually has resulted in complications which, if continued from year to year might result in astounding losses to the taxpayers who provide the funds which operate our county government.

The County Commissioners at the beginning of their term adopted the system of publishing immediately following each session, a full report of all expenditures, showing to whom funds were expended, the amounts expended and for what expended. The audit has been made with the further aim of more fully acquainting the people of Dorchester County with every intimate detail of the county government and to set up such safeguards as competent auditing experience dictates is vitally essential.

The introduction of any new system in the handling of county affairs necessarily involves a great amount of detail to be dispatched by all the various branches of the government but the County Commissioners have not hesitated to face this responsibility, feeling that the protection of county funds and the keeping of proper county records was a responsibility, duty and trust they could not conscientiously ignore.

County citizens are invited to read the auditors' report when it appears in the county papers next week and study the whole survey carefully and diligently.