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Forgery, Other Violations Apparent In House Race

By ED HARPER

The public hearing into alleged fraud and forgery charges will continue into a third day because a key witness will not testify without her attorney.

The hearing was called by the State Board of Elections to air charges of voting irregularities in the House of Representatives race between incumbent Democrat Arthur Williamson and Republican Thomas Harrelson of Southport. According to evidence presented Tuesday and Wednesday, violations including fraud and forgery apparently did occur during the November 3 election in South Lees Precinct—the smallest of Columbus County's 26 voting districts.

The North Carolina General Assembly convened in Raleigh Wednesday morning, but both candidates remained in Whiteville for the hearing.

Mrs. Alma Ward, the registrar in South Lees Precinct who now is the central figure in the election controversy, was called to testify Wednesday morning but refused to answer any questions and said she would plead the fifth amendment until she could talk to her attorney.

The attorney reportedly could not be contacted by the State Board of Elections although he had appeared in the courtroom several times during the proceedings Wednesday.

Rather than allow Mrs. Ward to testify without an attorney the Board decided to adjourn the hearing until Thursday morning. The hearing is near its end, however, and some decision is expected before the State Board of Elections leaves Whiteville.

A handwriting expert determined that the signatures of the Republican and Democratic judges were forged but that the signature of Mrs. Ward was genuine. This "genuine" signature of Mrs. Ward apparently was followed by a period, which was an oddity of the "forged" signatures of the two judges.

An SBI agent reported that a double-sheet had been removed from the poll book, which reportedly was in Mrs. Ward's possession from the election until the time the voting materials were impounded by order of a Superior Court judge.

Two persons whose names appeared on the poll book testified that they did not vote, although an affidavit was produced that allegedly was signed by the two voters stating they did vote.

The affidavit was marked with an "X", although the same person testified she had written three letters to her children on Tuesday morning.

The Democratic judge and the Republican judge agreed that they had not seen four of the seven alleged "non-voters" at the South Lees poll on the day of the General Election.

Further evidence tended to show that 200 county ballots were issued to Mrs. Ward, but 158 were returned to the Columbus County Board of Elections. This indicates a total of 32 ballots were used, which is four less than were removed from the ballot box, and six less than reportedly were used in the elections procedure that day in South Lees.

Testimony tended to show other violations of written election laws, both on the precinct and county levels.

James Bullock, assistant Attorney General for the State of North Carolina, asked most of the questions but frequent inquiries were made by members of the State Board of Elections, Harrelson's attorney George Clark of Wilmington, and Herbert Hyde of Asheville, counsel for Williamson.

REGULAR COURT SESSION

Board of Elections Chairman Bryan Scott said the public hearing would be conducted as a

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State Backing Only One Jail

The \$44,500 grant made to Brunswick County for the construction of new jail facilities specifies that this money is to be used for a single jail facility to serve the entire county.

A request was made by the former Board of County Commissioners for a grant of \$89,178 for this project. However, when notice of approval of the grant was

received under the Lower Cape Fear Planning Unit it was for \$44,500.

In transmitting notice of this grant, the following information and comments were contained in the letter:

"DESCRIPTION: Brunswick County, as many other counties within North Carolina, is in dire need of proper jail facilities. Brunswick County has developed a plan which proposes the construction of two separate facilities for the county. The application proposes the construction of a 1,677 square foot facility in Shallotte and 3,182 foot facility in Southport. The North Carolina Department of Social Services, Jail Specialists, after review of the above application recommended to staff that financial assistance be provided for a single jail facility to serve the entire county. Staff recommends funding in the above amount with conditions.

"CONDITIONS: 1. The above grant be used to construct a single facility to serve the entire county. 2. A copy of the design and specifications be furnished the Committee on Law and Order."

The problem of providing adequate jail facilities is one

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Food Stamp Use Rising

According to information received from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service Field Office in Wilmington, participation in the Food Stamp program during the month of December in the six participating counties of Southeastern North Carolina totaled 32,561 persons in 8,603 households.

The total dollar amount of food stamps issued was \$767,626.00, of which \$220,188.00 was paid by recipients, the remaining \$547,438.00 representing the bonus food coupons, which are paid for by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In Brunswick County 1,836 persons in 526 families participated, receiving \$45,772.00 in food stamps for which they paid \$13,587.50, receiving a bonus of \$32,184.50.

The food stamps are issued to families with limited incomes who are certified by their local Department of Social Services. The cost of the coupons to each family is based on its income and the number in the family. The coupons may be spent for food only at any of the over 700 authorized retail food stores in the six counties.

Elect Bellamy To Soil Board

James D. Bellamy, Jr., recently was re-elected for another 3 year term as Brunswick Soil & Water Conservation District supervisor. The Brunswick District supervisor. The Brunswick District is a subdivision of state government.

At a district supervisor meeting on January 4, magistrate R.W. Cheers administered the oath of office to Bellamy.

Officers for 1971 were elected. They are: Mr. Bellamy, chairman; Bryan Smith, vice-chairman; Worth Mercer, secretary-treasurer. The other members are A.S. Knowles and William A. Clemmons.

Time And Tide

The date was January 15, 1936, and the cenotaph standing in the Southport cemetery honoring two groups of pilots who were lost at sea was the subject for an illustrated feature story. Another front page picture showed the contrast between a stand of timber from which forest fires had been kept away and with one where fires had taken their annual toll. News of particular interest to folks of the Shallotte area told of plans by Dr. M.H. Rourke to move to that community for the practice of medicine.

Bad roads forced the temporary shutting down of the Waccamaw school; a quarter page advertisement proclaimed in big type that "\$25 A Month Now Buys A New Ford V-8."

A Forest Service lookout tower and a close-up of a towerman on watch provided the front page picture of our edition of January 15, 1941. Plans were being made for an all-day meeting of the Brunswick REA at Waccamaw school on the following Saturday.

Former Postmaster L.T. Yaskell had jumped the gun and had brought in a string of freshwater fish, the first of the season; the editor ran down a bunch of rumors that had to do with defense installation in this area; and the H.S. Ward Store at Hickman's Crossroads had burned on the previous Sunday night.

It was January 9, 1946, and men still were coming home from World War II. One was Lt. David Watson, who had served as a Navy Courier in the Southwest Pacific. A check-up revealed that

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Harrelson And His Attorney

Thomas Harrelson is shown at the right with his attorney, George Clark, of Wilmington as they confer during the public hearing held by the State Board of Elections in Whiteville this week. The

State Board is trying to determine the winner in the contest for House of Representatives in the General Election. (Elgie Clemmons Photo).

Henderson Reveals Plans For Island Development

Details of what Bald Head Island would be like if it were developed, and how its ecology and environment would be protected, were released Monday for the first time by William R. Henderson, president of Carolina Cape Fear Corporation, which owns the island.

"We have not been able to reveal our plans until now because the concept study, essential for a major development, was not ready," Henderson said. "The report will answer many of our critics who have been voicing strong opinions without having the facts. Our next planning step is to prepare a master plan for the development."

The Concept study was done by Wm. F. Freeman Associates of High Point, one of the leading planning-design firms engaged in community planning. It was almost a year in preparation, and makes the following recommendations, among others:

—Bald Head will be responsibly developed in stages—six are planned—covering a period of 15 to 19 years.

—The island's natural character will be preserved.

—Access for the foreseeable future will be by water only.

—Development will be limited to existing high ground, and only 4,200 acres—less than one-fourth of the 13,000 owned by Carolina Cape Fear—will be developed.

—The only dredging planned will be for a ferry access, and for a yacht basin and marina, which will disturb virtually no marshland.

—The island's marsh fringes will be placed in a trust to prevent disturbance by anyone.

—The forest green belts created in the development plan will be placed in trust for use by all.

—The beaches and front dunes will be placed in trust for protection and use by all.

—Battery Island will be reserved for a bird sanctuary or other suitable use.

—Restrictions adopted to protect birds, animals, marine life, trees, shrubs and dunes will be enforced throughout the island.

—All historic sites will be preserved and made available for study.

—Air, land and stream contamination will be prohibited, as will loud and offensive noises.

—Architectural guidelines will be established to assure that public and private buildings are compatible with the natural surroundings.

Henderson said that the company plans an Environmental Security Division which will enforce regulations designed to protect the ecology and the environment.

Responding to earlier speculation that his company really did not want to develop Bald Head, but was actually

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Shallotte Man State Director

A Shallotte man has just received appointment as the State Director for the Air Force Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) from the Headquarters of the Southern Command Area at Oklahoma Air Force Base. He is one of the 11,000 members operating in the program.

Alton Clemmons of Shallotte received his appointment as State Director January 1. He has worked with the MARS program for 13 years as a member.

He handles 3rd party messages to people of the area. He has recently relayed numerous messages in the

Supply and Bolivia area from Vietnam.

James H. Robinson and Henry Carter of Shallotte are also members of the MARS program.

"We would like to recruit more members for the program in this area," Clemmons said this week. "Anyone holding a valid FCC Amateur Radio License with equipment capable of operating on 2 of the MARS frequencies, can qualify."

The mission of the MARS is supplement normal Air Force communications, provide emergency backup communications facilities, and provide communications for use in implementing domestic emergency plans of Air Force commands.

It also helps: create interest and promote training in military communications, promote study and experiments in C-E techniques, and provides an additional source of trained communications personnel.

MARS is a radio communications system in-being.

In addition to processing day-to-day traffic, its also handles morale traffic for the military services and the Red Cross. This traffic provides a useful peacetime service and exercises the MARS networks. MARS provides support during peacetime, periods of international tension or emergency, and wartime. In addition MARS personnel and communications facilities are available to assist Civil Defense forces when the diversion will not degrade the military mission.

"The Air Force has always encouraged amateur radio operations," Clemmons said. "In the past, amateur operators have contributed significantly to the Air Force by providing trained operator service during wartime and

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Geedy Named Leland Chief

Members of the Leland Volunteer Fire Department have elected John Geedy to serve his third consecutive term as fire chief. This action was taken at a recent meeting during which the following officers also were elected:

Henry Greiner was elected as assistant chief.

Other officers elected include Frankie Thomas, special deputy sheriff; D.A. Long, treasurer; and Jay Coker, president and secretary.

Company A officers elected include Tommy Dover, captain; David Nelson, first lieutenant; and A.C. Bryant, second lieutenant.

Company B officers elected were Gary Saburn, captain; Ernie Long, first lieutenant; and Glenn Morris Gainey, second lieutenant.

Henry Griener, Frankie Thomas, Joe Gainey and Leland Raynor were elected to serve as board directors. The board of directors also includes the president, secretary and treasurer.



Danger Of Dope Brought Home

Chief of Police M.E. Williamson of Wrightsville Beach brought the dope problem home for his listeners Monday night as he addressed a meeting of the Brunswick County-Southport High School Parent-Teachers organization. Chief Williamson told his listeners the problem is here and now, then gave some advice on how to cope with it. He was introduced by Mrs. Betty Trunnell. (Photo by Spencer)

Mrs. Jones Is Club President

Mrs. Bobby Jones was installed Wednesday as the new president of the Southport Woman's Club in a service conducted by Mrs. H.T. St. George, a former president of the club. Mrs. Jones replaces Mrs. Afton Smith, Jr.

Also installed were Mrs. Fred Burdette, Jr., as 1st vice-president, Mrs. A.E. Huntley as secretary, Mrs. James M. Harper, Jr. as treasurer and Mrs. Landis Brown as chaplain. Mrs. Laura Roughton, who was elected 2nd vice-president, was not present.

The program for the meeting was a slide presentation of the proposed North Carolina Zoological Garden

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MRS. BOBBY JONES