Randolph County Salaries Bill

The facts concerning the Randolph county salaries bill were published in The Courier of March 1, 1917:

The salaries bill, presented with such a rush, and passed the Senate the same day it was introduced, and went to the House the next day without engrossment and held up by the wide-awake active Democratic representative from Montgomery county until the provisions of the bill could be ascertained, died at the hands of its makers after it had been amended in such a way as to protect the people's interests and to prevent excessive and extortionate fees from being collected by the officers from the people in salaries, postage and stationery and other expenses. The committee on counties, cities and towns, after duly considering the bill, made proper amendments so that increased fees could not be charged over and above the fees that were charged by the officers heretofore in the county, as will be seen by the amendments to section 1 in bold faced type printed below.

In section 2 the committee amended the bill by requiring duly itemized accounts.

In section 3 the committee amended the bill by requiring copies of the monthly reports to be posted at the court house door. The Republicans insisted that this amendment should be "in a newspaper." The committee did not think that expense should be incurred every month in the year.

The principal amendment to section 4 is to require the sheriff to pay his clerks and assistants out of this salary, and also strikes out the last clause in said section, "when requested to do so by the commissioners," thereby taking it out of the discretion of the commissioners whether the defendant shall pay certain costs or not and leaving it to the court, where the constitution placed this authority.

Section 5 contains an important amendment which provides that the returns on all processes shall show in what township same were served. This amendment was made in order to prevent the opportunity of collecting fees improperly by deputies.

Section 6 contains an amendment providing that the compensation of the jailor shall be the fees allowed by law. This prevents any increase of the fees above what the general law provides.

Section 7 provides that the clerk of superior court shall pay his clerks out of his salary.

Section 7½ is a new section entirely, which prevents in any event the salaries and clerk hire of any and all of the officials exceeding the fees received by the office, and contains an important provision which prevents the commissioners from making any jobs for any of the officials.

Section 9 is amended by a new provision which provides that the board of education and the highway commission have the right to select the banks in which particular funds are to be kept.

All of section 10 is stricken out in the amended bill except the last sentence, printed in bold faced type. As the bill was originally drawn it provided that the county officers could get their postage and stationery at the expense of the county. The clerk's postage and stationery amounts to more than $250 a year.

Section 11 is amended by a new section which prevents any possible raid on the treasury of the county, by collecting all the fees formerly allowed by law, but reduced under the wise management of the Democratic party. The salaries are therefore confined to the limitations prescribed by the reduction of fees made under a special law providing that the salaries of Randolph county officials might be reduced.

Section 13 is not amended.

Section 14 is amended by additions in black faced type, as will be seen, which prevents any officer from collecting more salary in any one year than the fees allowed by law in that year amount to.

Section 15½ provides that the books of the county may be audited. The bill relating to salaries and fees in effect in the county now provides for that, and all salary bills should provide for it, but those who fathered this bill did not want any provision for auditing what they did, therefore they left it out, but the committee added it and provided that not exceeding $150 could be used.

The committee adopted this bill. Senator Gregg told them he would be satisfied with anything they did, but when the bill was presented both Senator Gregg and Representative Pickett asked that it be tabled, clearly showing that their purpose in the original bill was to increase the fees of the county officials instead of reducing them as they promised in the campaign. There cannot be any valid objection to the bill as amended, and no other reason can be assigned for the failure to enact it except the fact that the bill was so perfected as to protect the interests of the public.

The following section, 15¾, was presented by the committee, in addition to the amendments agreed on by the committee:

The board of commissioners of Randolph county may at any time fix the salaries of the clerk of superior court, register of deeds and sheriff of said county at a less amount per year than the amount fixed by this act if, in their judgment, they see proper to do so.

The representatives from this county would not hear to this, although a number of Republicans as well as Democrats favored giving the commissioners the privilege of reducing the salaries to less than the amount named in the bill if the commissioners saw fit. [illegible]

made before the general assembly adjourns, so that it cannot be said that due notice and warning were not given before it is too late.

We print the bill as follows introduced and slipped through the Senate in 1917 at the instance of the Republican officials of Randolph.

The legislative committee in the House amended the bill as shown as here printed. The amended parts of the bill are printed in bold black faced type while the unamended part of the bill is in the ordinary light faced type:

A BILL

To fix the salaries for the Sheriff, Clerk of Superior Court, and Register of Deeds of Randolph County, North Carolina, and to abolish the Treasurer's office of Randolph County, North Carolina.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

Section 1. That the sheriff, clerk of the Superior Court and reigster of deeds of Randolph county, and their respective deputies, shall collect and receive and account for all fees to which they are entitled by virtue of their respective offices, **as fixed by the board of county commissioners and finance committee of Randolph county by resolution adopted and recorded in the proceedings of the session of the board of commissioners at the April meeting, 1914, and recorded in minute book ——page——** and pay the same within the first three days of each and every calendar month to the financial agent or agents of Randolph county, and they shall be responsible for and chargeable with all moneys of every kind which are to be or by law shall be paid into their respective offices, and shall be held to strict account therefor.

Section 2. That each and all of said officers shall open and keep a set of account books in which shall promptly, correctly, truly and accurately be **fully** itemized accounts of all moneys collected or received by said officers, or which by law shall be payable into their respective offices, and all of said books shall at all times be open to the inspection of the public upon demand, and said books shall be safely and securely kept so to as to prevent loss or destruction by theft, fire or accident.

Section 3. That on the first Monday of each and every calendar month a true and accurate transcript shall be transmitted by each of the **said** officers of Randolph county to the board of commissioners of said county said transcript to contain and show in detail **and fully itemized** all the entries made upon said books referred to in the next preceding section during the preceding calendar month, and this transcript shall be sworn to and duly certified by the officers filing same, **and a copy thereof posted at the court house door in said county;** any officer failing to make any report or reports required **by law** shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

Section 4. That the sheriff of Randolph county shall receive a salary of three thousand dollars ($3,000.00) per annum as full compensation for his service and the services of such office deputies and clerks as the business of his office and the public good may require; and it shall be his duty to employ and pay **out of his said salary** for all necessary deputies and clerical assistance as may be required in his office and in Asheboro township; and he shall be allowed no further compensation, except he shall be allowed the amount of his actual expenses for conveying prisoners from the place of trial to jail or from jail to the place of trial; for conveying prsioners to or from other counties or, to or from the State's prison; for taking insane persons to or from State hospital; and it shall be the duty of the sheriff to render to the board of county commissioners, monthly, a **fully itemized** statement of expenses, the date and purpose for which it was incurred; and if satisfied that the amount is correct the said commissioners shall pay the same **out of the general fund of Randolph County** to the sheriff by order upon the financial agent of Randolph county; and the costs of conveying prisoners, where it may be recovered, shall be taxed in the bill of costs by the court (when requested to do so by the commissioners).

Section 5. That the sheriff shall appoint at least one deputy in each township, and the deputies in other townships than Asheboro township shall receive and retain for their services the fees allowed by law for the service of all summonses, subpœnas, notices, and all other legal processes whatsoever; that the sheriff shall continue to collect all taxes required by law and account for the commissions allowed by law, and pay the same to the financial agent of the **fund to which it belongs,** to be credited to the salary fund; and said sheriff and his deputies in Asheboro township shall serve all process in said township and account for the fees as herein provided; Provided nothing herein shall relieve or prevent the sheriff or deputies in Asheboro township from serving any such papers or process anywhere in the county as required by law, and he may be required to do so by any court; and deputies of other townships shall not be prevented from serving such process in Asheboro township. **The return on each process shall be made so as to show in which township the same was served.**

Section 6. The sheriff may appoint a jailor, who shall receive the compensation allowed by law for keeping the jail which shall be paid from the county funds as provided by law.

Section 7. The clerk of the Superior Court of Randolph County shall receive a salary of two thousand five hundred dollars ($2,500.00) per annum as full compensation for his services and the services of assistants, deputies and clerks; and he shall employ and pay **out of his said salary** during the sitting of the Superior Court and at such other times as the public good and convenience may require, one deputy clerk and such other and further clerical assistance as the public business may require; and it shall be the duty of the clerk of the Superior Court at all times to provide and pay **out of his said salary** for the prompt and efficient discharge of the duties of his office and all duties imposed upon him by law.

Section 7½. The amount paid by way of salary to said sheriff, clerk of the Superior Court and register of deeds and allowed as hire for clerks through said offices shall in no event exceed the amount of fees collected through said offices and in the event the amount of fees collected through said offices in any one year should not equal the amount of salaries and clerk hire allowed said offices during that year, then the amount of salary allowed said sheric, clehk of Superior Court, and register of deeds shall be decreased so that the amount of salaries and clerk hire shall not exceed the fees collected through said offices. That the year referred to herein shall be deemed to begin at twelve o'clock noon on the first Monday of December of each and every year.

This section was strisken out and the following amendment inserted:

Section 7½. **The said salaries aforesaid paid to the said sheriff, the clerk of Superior Court, and register of deeds shall include all clerical assistance of every kind and character employed by any official in said offices, or by either of them, and if the fees collected of any of said offices shall not amount to as much as the said annual salaries aforesaid, then the amount of salary of each of said officers not receiving fees to the amount of said salary during any year, shall be decreased so that the amount of salary and clerk hire for that year shall not exceed the fees collected through said office or offices for that year. The clerk of the Superior Court shall keep invested in good interest bearing securities all funds in his hands as such clerk, except funds received on bills of costs and other funds to remain in his hands less than six months, or in some solvent bank or banks paying interest thereon for the benefit of said funds, and a record shall be kept of same in a ledger, together with all funds received and disbursed by him and it shall be the duty of the solicitor of the district in which Randolph county is situate to see that such investments are properly made, and report thereon at each criminal term of court.**

Section 8. The reigster of deeds of Randolph county shall receive a salary of two thousand five hundred dollars per annum as full compensation for his services and the services of his assistants, deputies and clerks; and he shall employ and **pay** out of **his said salary** the compensation of such deputies and clerks as the public business may require; and it shall be the duty of the register of deeds at all times to provide and **pay out of his said salary** sufficient clerical assistance as the prompt and efficient discharge of his duty as register of deeds and all duties imposed upon him by law may require, and shall perform the duties of clerk to the board of county commissioners **and do all other acts imposed upon him by law without additional compensation.**

Section 9. That the office of county treasurer is hereby abolished, and in lieu thereof the board of county commissioners is hereby authorized and empowered and directed to appoint a solvent bank located in the county as financial agent for said county, which said bank shall perform the duties now performed by the treasurer of said county: Provided, that such bank so appointed shall not charge nor receive any compensation for its service other than such advantage and benefit that may accrue from the deposits of the county funds in the regular course of banking: Provided, further, that said bank so appointed and acting as financial agent of the county shall be appointed for a term of two years and shall be required to execute the same bonds for the safe keeping and proper accounting of such funds as may come into its possession and belonging to said county, and for the faithful discharge of its duties, as are now required by law of the county treasurer: Provided, further, that said county commissioners shall appoint a bank to act as financial agent of the county on the first Monday of December, 1918, and every two years thereafter.

(Section 9 was also stricken out and the following section is inserted:)

Section 9. That the office of the county treasurer is hereby abolished, to take effect the first Monday in December, 1918, and the treasurer is to collect and disburse funds and do such other acts as treasurer as may be required of him by law until said term expires, or during his term of office, and in lieu thereof the board of education of Randolph county is hereby authorized, empowered and directed to appoint a solvent bank or banks located in said county, as financial agent for the public school and educational funds of said county, including the special school tax districts therein, which said bank or banks shall perform the duties as treasurer of said public school and educational funds; and the highway commission of said county shall likewise appoint a solvent bank or banks in said county to perform similar duties as to the public road funds of said county and the road districts therein; and the board of county commissioners shall likewise appoint a solvent bank or banks to perform similar duties as to all other funds except said public school funds and educational funds, and road funds as aforesaid; said appointment shall be made as aforesaid by the said board of education, and by the said highway commission, and by the said newly elected board of county commissioners at meetings to be held the first Monday in December, 1918. The term of each bank or banks so [illegible]

cial agent shall expire on the first Monday of December, 1920, and on the first Monday in December every two years thereafter; in the same way and manner as aforesaid the newly elected commissioners shall appoint a bank or banks to serve for a period of two years as financial agent for the county funds, and all other funds except public school and educational funds, and the road funds aforesaid; and the county board of education shall likewise appoint a bank or banks to serve in like capacity for two years as financial agent of said public school and educational funds; and the county highway commission as aforesaid shall likewise appoint a bank or banks to serve in like capacity for two years as financial agent of the road funds as aforesaid; such bank or banks so appointed as financial agent or agents for any and all of said funds shall give such bonds as required by law for the county treasurer to give for the care and keeping and disbursing of said funds, and shall make reports and settlements as required of the county treasurer. This act as to salaries of the sheriff, register of deeds and clerk of the superior court of said county shall go into effect on and after the 28th day of February, 1917.

(The following section was stricken out, except the last sentence which is in bold faced type:)

Section 10. That in addition to the salaries herin provided, the board of commissioners of Randolph county shall furnish each of said officers with all necessary supplies for conducting the business of their respective offices, including the necessary postage for official business and such supplies shall be paid for out of the general funds of said county. **Each of said officers shall be required to preserve and keep in good order all the records, supplies, and furniture belonging to said office, and be responsible for the saftey thereof.**

Section 11. That the said officers of Randolph county hereinbefore mentioned whose compensation is fixed upon a salary basis, and their several deputies, assistants and clerks shall faithfully collect, receive and account for all fees, commissions, profits, and emoluments of all kinds now belonging or appertaining to their respective offices, and all fees, commissions, profits and emoluments to which they become entitled by virtue of their respective offices under the laws of North Carolina relative to salaries and fees, or such as may hereafter be enacted by the General Assembly, except as otherwise herein provided, and shall pay the same to the financial agent of Randolph county on the first day of each and every calendar month, or within three days thereafter; and the said officers and each of them shall be responsible for and chargeable with all moneys of every kind which are, shall be, or ought to be paid into their respective offices; and they shall be held to strict account for all such moneys; and for any abstraction, concealment or misapplication of any moneys payable into their respective offices, which any of them shall have collected, the officer, deputy, assistant or clerk so offending shall be guilty of felony and upon conviction shall forfeit his said office and be punished as is now provided by law in cases of embezzlement by public officers. All the money paid to the financial agent of Randolph county as herein provided shall be kept by said financial agent of said county in a separate fund to be known as the "Salary Fund." Provided at the close of each and every year if there remains any money in the salary fund, then such surplus shall be transferred and credited to the general fund.

(The above section was stricken out and the following inserted:)

Section 11. That the said officers of Randolph county hereinbefore mentioned whose compensation is fixed upon a salary basis, and their several deputies, assistants and clerks shall faithfully collect, receive and account for all fees, commissions, profits, and emoluments of all kinds now belonging or appertaining to their respective offices and all fees, commissions, profits and emoluments to which the sheriff, clerk of superior court, and register of deeds are entitled to by virtue of their respective offices under the the law, as aforesaid, or such as may hereafter be enacted by the General Assembly, except as herein otherwise provided, and shall pay same to the financial agent of Randolph county for said funds on the first day of each and every month, or within three days thereafter; the said sheriff aforesaid shall pay the said financial agent or agents aforesaid all fees collected by him by law; the commissions to be charged to said sheriff and paid over by him upon the collection of taxes shall be as follows: .5% up to $50,000.00, and 1% on all excess over that amount for each year; and said clerk of the superior court shall likewise pay over all the fees in the same way and manner except that said clerk shall be allowed no fees whatever from Randolph county; and the said register of deeds shall likewise pay over all fees collected by him, but such register of deeds shall not receive and shall not include therein any compensation from the county except the following, towit: 5c per name for each name appearing upon the tax lists for each year for making the necessary abstracts of taxes, in accordance with the requirements of the law; neither shall any fees be collected or paid over for issuing county orders or for registering the bonds of public officials or other public documents ordered by the county commissioners to be registered. No fees shall be allowed or collected by any of said officers of sheriff, register of deeds and clerk of superior court in excess of or other than the fees and commissions in the resolution fixing fees at the April term of the board of county commissioners of Randolph county for 1914, the said resolution being registered in the minutes of said meeting and the records of said office of register of deeds; and the said officers and each of them shall be responsible for and chargeable with all the moneys of every kind which are, shall be or ought to be paid into their respective offices, and they shall be held to strict account for all such moneys; and for any abstraction, concealment, or misapplication of any moneys payable into their respective offices, which any of them shall have collected, the officer, deputy, assistant or clerk so offending shall be guilty of a felony and upon conviction shall forfeit his said office and be punished as is now provided by law in cases of embezzlement by public officers. All the moneys paid to the financial agent or agents of Randolph county as herein provided shall be kept by said financial agent or agents of said county in a separate fund to be known as the "Salary Fund." Provided, at the close of each and every year if there remains any moneys in the salary fund, then such surplus shall be transferred and credited to the general fund.

Section 12. Any officer of Randolph county, or any deputy, assistant, or clerk of such officer, who shall fail or refuse to collect any fee, commission, or emolument of any kind belonging to his office shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be fined or imprisoned, in the discretion of the court; and all fees, commissions, or emoluments which shall be collected by such officers under the laws of the State of North Carolina shall be demanded and collected by them in advance, unless otherwise provided by law, and upon being collected shall be turned over to the financial agent of said fund for said county as provided in this act.

Section 13. That each and all of said officers shall open and keep a separate set of account books, consisting of a daily journal and a ledger, in which shall be promptly, correctly and accurately entered itemized accounts of all moneys collected or received by such officers by virtue of their offices: or which by law are or may be payable into their respective offices; and all of said books shall at all times be open to the inspection of the public upon demand, and said books shall be safely and surely kept so as to prevent and guard against loss or destruction thereof. Said books shall show in itemized form the name of the person paying in any sum of money, the date when paid, the purpose for which paid, and the amount thereof; except such fees for proof of witness tickets may be entered without giving name of each person paying same. The county commissioners of Randolph county shall have power to prescribe the form of said books and accounts to be kept, and to prescribe rules and regulations therefor, not inconsistent with this act, and the said books and accounts shall be kept in the form and after the manner so prescribed by said county commissioners.

Section 14. That the salaries herein provided for the officers shall be paid by the financial agent or agents upon warrants issued by the board of county commissioners in favor of said officers in monthly installments out of the fees and commissions received from each of said officers during each year for the salary for each year of the term of said officials.

Section 15. After this act shall be effective as to the office of sheriff of Randolph county, at the expiration of the term of office of any person holding said office of sheriff, he shall be required to turn over to the in-coming officer all books, papers and accounts showing uncollected taxes, licenses and all unfinished business of his said office, and on and after the date when the newly elected officers shall give bond and be inducted into office, he shall perform all the duties of said office of sheriff: Provided further, that nothing in this act shall prevent the person holding the office of sheriff of Randolph county when the tax books for the year one thousand nine hundred and seventeen are placed in the hands of said officer from collecting said taxes for said year and receiving the compensation provided by this act for so collecting taxes.

(The following new section amends the bill requiring the books to be audited:)

Section 15½. The Randolph county board of education may, as often as they see proper, appoint some member of the board or other suitable person to examine and audit the reports required to be made by the public school law to them, or any of them; and shall at least as often as once a year employ an expert accountant or person skilled in such matters to make an examination and audit of said reports and of all other financial interests of the county. Provided said board shall not expend therefor more than one hundred and fifty dollars per annum. The said board of education of Randolph county shall be authorized to exercise all powers and duties and provided for by the public school law as to the board of education of said county relating in any way to the treasurer of said county or to his office.

Section 16. That all laws and clauses of laws in conflict with this act are hereby repealed so far as they apply to Randolph county.

Section 17. That this act shall be in force from and after the first Monday in December (March) nineteen hundred and eighteen (seventeen.)

Mr. Long at Troy

Hon. Zeb V. Long, of Statesville, opened the campaign in the fifth district with a speaking at Troy last week. Mr. Long spoke on national and state issues to a well filled court house. Mr. Long is the Democratic candidate in this district for solicitor, and is well known and liked throughout the state. He was introduced by W. A. Cochran, of Troy.

An ugly cut? MENTHOLATUM is antiseptic and healing.

REPUBLICAN CLAIMS OF ECONOMY WILL NOT STAND

(By Wallace Bassford, Special News Correspondent.)

Washington, D. C., October 10.—There is food for thought in the statement made by the President in his message vetoing the bonus bill to the effect that there will be a deficiency in the revenues during the present fiscal year of 672 millions. The Democrats have insisted for weary months that the economy claims of the Republicans were unfounded in fact and that the government was spending more money than was coming in, and that a private business conducted on such a basis would be considered to be very badly run. Any level headed business man facing such a situation would try desperately to either increase income or cut down expenses. But the Republican administration, in fullest and unrestricted control of all branches of the government, is doing neither. The Wall Street Journal, which surely knows a good deal about finance, takes the position that the Congress does not understand that increases in tax rates above certain points usually reduce the volume of money obtained through that taxation. In nothing is this so apparent as in tariff taxation. The Underwood law, with its moderate rates, brought in almost 400 millions per year; the rates permitted a reasonable amount of importation of manufactured articles, yet not enough to seriously compete with the American made goods. The importations had the salutary effect of restraining the American manufacturer from profiteering off the home market. But quite the opposite is true of the Fordney law, in which a multitude of rates are so high as to prohibit or greatly reduce importations; in many important cases (such as aluminum ware, entirely controlled in America by Secretary Mellon's companies) the rate is practically prohibitive. Mellon now has a monopoly of the American market and can advance rates on every articles made of aluminum in the United States. With aluminum wares shut out, no revenue can be collected at the port of entry on that important item. In the case of wool, there is a difference; this country cannot produce enough for the home supply, hence much will enter regardless of the duty, but the duty will cause an increase in the price of every article into which it enters or is even claimed to enter. The net result of the heavy rate increases on most articles will be a decided drop in the revenue obtained by the treasury, a pronounced increase in the cost to the consumer of every article the importation of which is thus further restricted, and the necessity for the people to pay yet other taxes to make up for those lost through the failure of European goods to enter our custom houses. Already there are hints thrown out of the necessity of laying additional taxation to meet the deficit now piling up—amounting to about $34 for each head of a family in the land. Of course, the burden falls heaviest on the larger families and those who like to buy the better class of goods.

* * *

For three and a half years the Republicans have absolutely controlled the Congress and for nineteen months have had all branches of the government. The war ended almost four years ago; all war expenses have ended excepting interests on bonds, the care of the injured soldiers and the widows and orphans, and certain other smaller items. After deducting all of these, it is found that the present administration is spending more than twice as much per annum as the Wilson administration was using just before the world war began. The full figures can be obtained from the recent very able speech of Senator Simmons in the Senate. For more than a year every Republican who made a speech on the subject has loudly claimed that the administration was saving money and cutting appropriations. They have used every system of juggling known to financial sharpers and three-card monte men, but in the end the President himself, faced by the fear of the bonus adding fresh embarassments to the treasury, had had to admit that all their claims were false. In the necessity of giving a clinching reason why the bonus should not be paid he admits that the expenses of the government in the present fiscal year (from midnight of June 30, 1922, to midnight of June 30, 1923,) are running two thirds of a billion ahead of the income of the treasury. It has not been a month since the Republican leaders in Congress were vociferating loudly about saving 75 millions a month; only a few months ago General Dawes listed hundreds of items as "savings" most of which were unexpended balances of appropriations, some of them 18 or 20 years old. But all were listed as "saved this year". One was an old unspent balance after digging the Panama Canal; another was the sum of $5,000.00 voted 16 years ago to the widow of a New England Senator; she was rich and would not accept it, so it remained in the treasury. It is now claimed as one of the "economies" of the Harding administration. A few years of such "economy" would put Uncle Sam in the hands of the sheriff.

* * *

A Washington tailor named Freeny recently advertised that he had made heavy purchases of cloth from which he could make suits at much lower prices than if he had waited until after the new tariff bill became effective, claiming that the new law would place a heavy burden on all wearers of wool in the United States. Congressman Nick Longworth, who married Teddy Roosevelt's daughter and who is one of the numerous rich men on the Ways and Means Committee, at once attacked Mr. Freeny's statement. Now Mr. Freeny comes back with a full page advertisement printing a letter from the president of the Carded Woolen Manufacturers' Association, admitting the truth of his statement, and showing how Longworth juggled figures. The latter is silent.