

TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS.

TO THE JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

In conformity with Section 34 of the Election Law, the Board of Elections of Jefferson County, herewith submits its report for the year 1939, and as part of the same as required by law, will be found a statement of the number of voters enrolled with each political party for 1939, the registration of voters, the vote of the Special Election of March 28th, the Official Fall Primaries, the Nonpartisan Primary of the City of Watertown and the General Election.

The Board of Elections organized pursuant to the State Election Law, which consists of more than 350 sections, is designed to regulate down to the finest point in detail, the conduct of all elections.

The functions and scope of our office are difficult and onerous, but we believe they have been performed with remarkable intelligence, thoroughness and dispatch to the end that all vacancies for public offices and party positions may be filled and that the vote of all elections be properly canvassed and a true and accurate count be given to each candidate voted for.

ENROLLMENT

The 1938 registration of 11695 in the City of Watertown and the 1938 vote in the 22 towns of the county constituted the enrollment of 32763 for the year 1939, which was distributed as follows:

	Rep	Dem	Am. Lab	Soc.	Blank Void
City	7632	3767	26	17	253
Towns	15105	5488	24	10	441
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County	22737	9255	50	27	694

SPECIAL ELECTION, MARCH 28th, 1939.

Governor Lehman called for a special election on March 28th, 1939, to fill the vacancy caused by the passing of Senator Ferley A. Pitcher.

Section 156 of the Election Law, provides that if a special election is called by the governor, the inspectors of election of the various elections districts in the political subdivision for which such special election is held, shall meet in their respective districts on the second Saturday before such election from 8 o'clock in the forenoon until 10 o'clock in the evening for the purpose of revising and correcting the registers.

The Special Registration was held March 18th. There were very few changes. the results were as follows:

	1938	1939, Special
City	11695	11750
Towns	32600	32237
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County	44295	43987

The vote in the Special Election as follows:

City	3138
Towns	7192
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County	10330

Every detail, every preparation and labor entailed in the conduct of a General Election had to be followed in the Special Election, although less than one-fourth of the voters of our county exercised their franchise in naming the new senator. We are advised that the Jefferson County vote was comparable with the vote in Oswego County, the other county in this 27th Senatorial District.

OFFICIAL FALL PRIMARIES, September 19th, 1939.

Because of the intense activities of many candidates 788 changes were made on the two Enrollment Book Registers. These changes were occasioned by voters moving from one district to another, special enrollment on becoming of age, naturalization and errors.

There were 211 petitions filed for the Official and Nonpartisan Primaries. This large number of petitions was caused by the Primary system of nominating town officers in 16 towns. Each petition was stamped showing the time of filing, examined and recorded. There were 79 contests in the Primaries.

All candidates named on petitions were notified by postals of the date of such designation. Notices were mailed to the committees on vacancies appearing on petitions where there were contests that drawings would be held by our Board in the presence of those who saw fit to accept the invitation to attend.

There were fifty-four different ballots printed for the Primaries, distributed as follows:

	Party Primaries	Nonpartisan Primaries
Official	34060	12085
Sample	3185	1085
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Total	37245	13170

The following county offices were nominated; Special Surrogate and District Attorney. In the City of Watertown: City Judge, supervisors in each of the twelve wards, two candidates for mayor and four candidates for Councilman for Four Years.

In the Primary towns, the following town officers were nominated: Supervisor, town clerk, two justices of the peace, assessors for four years, assessors for two years, collector, superintendent of highways and school director.

The following is the Primary vote:

	Rep	Dem	Am. Lab.	Nonpartisan Primary
City	3188	1262	5	4483
Towns	6891	375		
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Total	10079	1637	5	4483

In this report, we wish to extend our appreciation to the Hungerford-Holbrook Company, who assisted this office in developing new forms for statements of canvass and tally sheets, wherein we were able to make a saving of more than \$300.

CENTRAL REGISTRATION \*\* AUGUST

During the month of August, this office serves as a Board of Central Registration, where any elector, whether or not, he or she expects to be absent from the county during regular Registration Days, may apply in person at this office for registration and enrollment. At this time, the qualified voter may make and file an application for absentee ballots. However, in order to apply for such absentee ballots, the applicant must declare, under oath, that his duties, occupation or business require him or her to be elsewhere within the United States on General Election Day. There were more than 75 Central Registrations during the month.

C. C. C. and Veterans Registration.

About 25 applications were received from C. C. C. voters and five from Veterans Bureau Hospitals. Very few, if any, of these applications had proper designations of election districts, and this failure added much trouble in our office. Pursuant to a new law, passed this year, veterans in hospitals were registered by the Commissioners of Elections in Bath, Steuben County. Their charge for such registry was 80 cents, saving the county \$48.20.

Town caucuses were held by the Democratic Party in each of the 22 towns and by the Republican Party in six towns.

Filing of certificates of nominations, providing for filling vacancies after declinations, notifying committees on vacancies, filling vacancies were very arduous tasks.

GENERAL ELECTION, NOVEMBER 7th, 1939.

There were 354 applications for absentee voters ballots in the county, 250 of which were accepted and ballots mailed to all parts of the United States.

In the 95 districts of the county, 96 voting machines were used on Election Day. On the voting machines, there were 607 candidates, comprising 34 different ballots and statements of canvass. We have not heard of an error in any of the printing. For this accurate work, we are indebted to Mr. John Nolan, the printer, who is able to perform this work so well, because he has made a most careful study of the Election Law and the voting machines. Throughout the state, our voting machine printing has been highly complimented and several counties have made requests for samples of our ballots and have adopted these forms.

Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals was the only state office elected this year. One State Amendment, relating to "Pari-Mutuel" was submitted, while in 16 towns, the proposition relating to the election of town councilmen was presented to the voters for approval. This proposition was lost in every town.

The vote which follows, shows the party vote in the General Election.

City	101	Rep	Dem	Am. Lab.	Blanks
	10144				
		4198	1667	155	4124
Towns	19620	10915	4195	257	4253
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County	29764	15113	5862	412	8377

Our board wishes to extend our gratitude to the 25 custodians of voting machines in the county, who work very conscientiously and well. They are deeply interested in their work, and we have no cause to believe that their efforts have not been honorable.

A new amendment to the Election Law provides that the commissioners of elections or a bi-partisan board appointed by the commissioners, must re-canvass every voting machine in the county on or before December 7th. In order to save expense to the county, the commissioners waived their rights to appoint substitutes, and have just personally completed this re-canvass. The commissioners completed their labors in eleven days and found just a few slight errors, which have not the slightest effect on the election of any candidate.

In preparing for this re-canvass, nearly 800 notices were mailed by this office to the state and county chairmen of the three parties having designations on the ballots, to the regularly designated candidates, to the independent candidates and to the custodians.

The Commissioners of Elections urge the county to purchase one extra voting machine for a replacement of a machine in the event of trouble or an increased registration. This machine would also serve as part of the equipment of the Election Office and for demonstration purposes. In the towns of the county, there are 68 machines for 68 election districts; but we have not a spare machine should an emergency arrive. As a comparison, the City of Watertown owns 29 machines for 27 districts. When the increased registration in the Eighth Ward appeared this year, it was a very simple matter to install another machine in this ward. Practically every county in this State has from two to three extra machines and on Election Day, they are fully equipped for voting, placed on county trucks, and ready to be transferred to answer any emergency call within the county.

The Board of Election takes pleasure in presenting the Annual Report of 1939, showing its increased duties, functions and activities; also its continued endeavors to reduce the cost of administration of the office. We can not refrain from including herein

the information that during the present year, callers in our office on business incident to enrollment, registration, elections and applications for information were more numerous than in any previous year. We believe the public has appreciated our efforts and realize that we are ready at all times to serve every inquiry within our jurisdiction.

In conclusion, we wish to express our sincere thanks to your honorable board for your co-operation and we court any suggestion which you believe will be for the betterment of the administration of our office.

Respectfully yours,

Jefferson County Board of Elections

William K. Mott

Ella R. Overton

Commissioners of Elections

Per Kate E. Grant, Clerk.