

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS HEAR CHARGES

To the Sheriff of Los Angeles County and to Civil Service Commission of Los Angeles County:

We, the undersigned business men and residents of Lomita Township, in the county of Los Angeles, respectfully petition for the removal of one Ed Voris from the office of constable of Lomita Township and the appointment of some person to the office of constable who will exercise efficiency in that office and endeavor to give to the entire township some degree of police protection.

This petition is filed on the grounds that the incumbent, Ed Voris, is inefficient and incompetent, in that he makes no attempt to seek out law-breakers, and has never, to the knowledge of any of the undersigned, even made any arrests of law violators on his own initiative, except at the time when he was receiving compensation from private parties for acting as night watchman, but on the contrary, when he is not actually engaged in serving of process, he spends practically all of his time in playing cards in a public place; and on the further grounds and facts contained in the statement of facts hereto attached, which we believe to be true.

We further state that the office of constable of Lomita township has come to be a by-word and a joke among a great majority of the residents of this township, a synonym for inefficiency, incompetency and lack of police protection; that we ourselves have many times wished and hoped for a marked improvement in the attitude and efficiency of the incumbent or a change in the office, and have been long suffering rather than be the persons to take the unpleasant step necessary to bring the facts to your attention.

Signed by 40 residents of Lomita and Torrance.

The statement of facts that followed and that was attached to the petition was devoted exclusively to the public sale of a certain Dodge automobile on June 29 in Torrance, recited the fact that after receiving several bids the car was knocked down to Frank Sammons for \$122.50.

That the awarding of the car to Sammons was done unexpectedly and without warning and that Messrs. Sharp, Christopher, and Anderson were prevented from making a higher bid on the automobile by the sudden and unexpected closing of the bidding when the car was "knocked down" to Mr. Sammons.

That on complaint of certain bidders Constable Voris stated that he closed the bidding and awarded the auto to Mr. Sammons when he saw Zuver approaching and feared the latter was about to put in a third-party claim.

This "Statement of Facts" was signed by B. M. Anderson, James L. King, Harvey Guttenfelder, and E. G. Christopher, and sworn to on October 25 before Perry G. Briney, notary public.

Standing room was at a premium Tuesday afternoon when three members of the Los Angeles County Civil Service Commission held a session in the chamber of commerce rooms to listen to testimony pro and con in the matter of

the complaint recently filed with them regarding the efficiency of Ed Voris, constable for Lomita Township.

Conducted with due regard for the rights of the defendant and the witnesses who testified against him, the hearing resembled a judicial trial without the red tape of the latter or the formality of the court of justice.

Taking the initiative in the pressing of the charges of inefficiency and incompetency on the part of Constable Voris, City Attorney Briney called to the stand many of the signers of the petition, following the reading of the latter by the commission's clerk.

The first witness to take the oath and face Civil Service Commissioners Sam J. Chappel, Charles R. Burger and F. E. Doty, chief examiner and secretary of the board, was W. A. Sharp, whose testimony was confined largely to the Voris sale at public auction on June 29 of a Dodge automobile under attachment proceedings. It is claimed in the complaint that Voris closed the sale of the car before Sharp and others had an opportunity of bidding. In his testimony Sharp stated that he bid \$121.25 and that a moment later it was sold to Frank Sammons for \$122.50.

James L. King followed Sharp and merely stated that he acted for the plaintiff in the auto transaction and had heard that Voris said as an excuse for closing the bidding suddenly that he, Voris, saw Vern Zuver drive up to the place of sale, and fearing that the latter might interfere with the sale by filing a third-party claim, had knocked the auto down hurriedly to Sammons.

H. L. Guttenfelder, when called on, corroborated the previous witness's testimony, and said that Voris made the remark about Zuver's claim voluntarily, and not on demand, as stated in the complaint.

This was also testified to by the following witness, G. G. Christopher, who bid on the auto, and who, together with Guttenfelder, B. M. Anderson, and W. A. Sharp, signed the statement of facts regarding the constable's remarks and acts at the time of the sale.

City Marshal B. M. Anderson, who followed Christopher to the stand, stated that it was his intention to bid as high as \$130 on the automobile, but was prevented from doing so by the summary manner in which the constable closed the sale.

W. A. Renn, as one of the defense witnesses, followed Judge Hunter on the stand, and testified to the good character of Mr. Voris.

In reply to a question Anderson emphatically stated that he does not intend to apply for the constable's position in case of the latter's removal.

Dr. J. S. Lancaster, who was called next, stated that he signed the petition as a civic duty, and felt that for the good of the township a change in the office of constable should be made.

"The constable's reputation for efficiency is of a negative character," said the physician, "and the community does not consider him an active or aggressive officer in the performance of his duties."

When pressed both by the city attorney and members of the commission Dr. Lancaster recited the facts surrounding the recent murder of Mrs. Treen. The physician stated that the dying woman was brought to the doctor's house, where she later died, and that Voris called the sheriff's office and told them he would remain in front of the theatre, where they would meet him, while Chief of Police Anderson and others went out looking for the slayer.

Noting the reticence with which Dr. Lancaster and the preceding witnesses had given their evidence, Commissioner Chappel interrupted the proceedings by stating that he felt the embarrassment they suffered, but that the object of the commission was to obtain the very best material for positions throughout the county, and that a probe of the charges and the giving of

testimony by those called on was the only way this could be accomplished. He informed the city attorney and witnesses that all court rules of evidence were to be disregarded, so that they might quickly and accurately arrive at the truth.

In reply to questions by the city attorney, Dr. W. J. Neeland, who next took the stand, stated that in reporting the theft of articles of wearing apparel at his home two years ago his wife had informed him that she had reported the theft to Voris, who had replied, "Find out who stole it, and I'll make the arrest." Pressed for an opinion of the constable's office the dentist said he considered the "constable a joke," and that among his acquaintances the officer of the incumbent, is never mentioned "except with a laugh or a smile, at least."

"The office of constable is somewhat of a joke," is the way City Clerk Bartlett expressed his sentiments, but said that he had signed the petition without malice or hard feelings, but with the welfare of the city and township at heart.

G. F. Christopher, manager of the local telephone office, "The petition which I signed expresses my feeling in the matter and covers my knowledge of the case."

Bitter in denunciation of the constable was the testimony of George A. Proctor, who, among other things, said: "Voris has never filled the office of constable as it should be filled. He is to be found in the pool rooms playing cards," and "The city marshal will never confide in the constable where plans are made for a raid or the apprehending of a criminal."

Referring to the selection of a city marshal at the time of incorporation, Mr. Proctor said the application of Voris for the place had never been considered by the trustees, owing to his general reputation for inefficiency. Regarding the "tipping off" of raids, Marshal Anderson, who was recalled to the stand, related an instance during the Fiesta two years ago when he said he was prevented from making a "pinch" of a bootlegger by the alleged connivance of Voris.

Mayor Fitzgugh, who followed the two preceding witnesses, stated emphatically that in his opinion Voris was wholly unfit for the position of marshal, as well as constable.

"The opinion of the board of trustees is not changed," said His Honor, an opinion that was later corroborated when three members of the board were called upon for an expression of opinion.

"The charges against the constable are unfortunate, but necessary," said the Mayor, "but I want to assure the Civil Service Commissioners and the defendant that there is nothing personal in the matter, but the petition, in my opinion, is the expression of the general sentiment."

For nearly two months before the petition to your honorable body was prepared, residents of this city, including myself, made appeals to the sheriff of the county, but without avail, the latter referring the entire matter to the civil service commission."

At this point Mr. Voris contradicted the Mayor in the latter's statement that he had made both oral and written application for the position of city marshal, and demanded that the alleged written application be produced.

The whole trouble is that I'm a Lomita man living in Torrance," said Voris, "and it's a job to get me out of the town down to Lomita, where I belong."

At 12:30 an adjournment was taken until 1:15, when Constable Voris was allowed to call witnesses in his own behalf.

The first of these was Judge L. J. Hunter, justice of the peace of Lomita, who, while acknowledging he had heard criticism of the constable, considered him an "average peace officer."

The question by the city attorney directed to Hunter, "Are you entirely satisfied with Voris as a constable of your court?" the judge said he was not; that there was said to be gambling and bootlegging going on in Lomita, and that the lack of arrests and convictions was excused by the constable on the grounds that he "could not secure the necessary evidence."

Punchboards and slot machines made their appearance in the evidence for the first time when it was admitted that few, if any, arrests for the operation of these games of chance had been made. Breaking in on the judge's testimony Voris declared that there were no such machines being operated, or had ever been operated in this township outside of incorporation, and in answer to the question by one of the commissioners, said that he did not consider it his duty to suppress them in a town that already had a police force.

W. A. Renn, as one of the defense witnesses, followed Judge Hunter on the stand and testified to the good character of Mr. Voris, with whom he said he had had business dealing for many years.

"His general reputation in Lomita is good," said Mr. Renn. "Personally he is a 'straight shooter'; pays his bills, and is respected by everyone in Lomita."

In reply to a question by the City Attorney it developed that Mr. Renn was on the bond of Mr. Voris. Charles Smith: "Never heard of any complaints against Mr. Voris, and so far as I know he has always done his duty. Have had occasion several times to use his services, and always found him willing to do his duty."

J. Isenstein: "Mr. Voris has served many legal papers for me during the past ten years. Have always found him prompt and accurate in making service, and consider him a good officer."

R. E. Johns, auto dealer and garage owner, testified to the good character of Mr. Voris and contradicted other witnesses by saying that Zuver was fully informed

PAIGE'S

HEADQUARTERS FOR

Thanksgiving Supplies

MINCE MEAT—Jevne's and Heinz

PLUM PUDDING—Jevne's, Heinz, R. and R., National Biscuit Company

FRUIT CAKE—Jevne's, Globe Bakery, and National Biscuit Company

Glace and Candied Fruits

RAISINS, CURRANTS, CRANBERRIES  
Olives Nuts Table Raisins

Fresh Strawberries

UTAH CELERY—Crisp and Sweet!

SPECIAL THIS WEEK—

SPITZENBURG Apples 5 lbs 25c  
HOOD RIVER

PAIGE'S

FOR QUALITY PHONE 122

Elrich Quilts Everything Must Go CLOSING OUT. Going Out Of Business

The Fate of this Well Known Store Is In the Hands of the Public. Come! The Opportunity Is Now. No matter what the prices Have Been Before—See Them Now. Nothing Reserved.

LOT TRIMMED HATS WORTH \$7.50, \$10.00—Sale Price \$4.98  
LOT SATIN HATS WORTH \$8.50, \$10.00—Sale Price \$7.50

Lot Hats EXTRAORDINARY Choice 98c  
VALUES GET OUR PRICES ON  
KEISER'S SILK UNDERWEAR MISSION KNIT SWEATERS, AND HOSIERY

ELRICH'S MILLINERY 377 Sixth St. San Pedro

COUPON —This Coupon good for \$1.00 on any hat valued more than \$5.00. But one coupon accepted on each purchase.

MRS. ANNA KING CALLED

Funeral services for Mrs. Anna King, wife of Gus L. King of Cota avenue, were held Monday afternoon from Mottell's funeral parlors, Long Beach, Rev. G. W. McCreery officiating. Interment in Sunnyside cemetery. Mrs. King was a native of Illinois and moved to Torrance with Mr. King, who is employed at the Pacific Electric shop, several months ago from Long Beach. She was a member of Torrance Woman's Mutual Benefit Association. Besides her husband Mrs. King leaves a father, Joseph Schwartz, three sisters, Mrs. A. R. Parkins, Marietta, Wash.; Mrs. L. E. Bell, Santa Rosa, and Mrs. Paul Whitney, Long Beach. Three brothers, Joseph Switzer, Long Beach; Lester Switzer, Bremerton, Wash.; and Charles Switzer, Torrance.

KEEPING STEP WITH THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Next regular meeting—Monday, November 27th, 7:30 sharp. Club Room—American Legion Hall. Very important meeting. We take this means of thanking everyone who was so thoughtful as to save their magazines and discarded records for the patients at Compton. We will call for them on our next trip to the sanitarium. There will be a special meeting of the County Council of the American Legion Auxiliary at Victory Post Hall on Friday afternoon, November 24, at 1:30 p. m. Every member of the unit who can go, and it is hoped that there will be several who can, will please notify Mrs. Post as soon as possible.

MACABEE NOTES

The Marathon Society was entertained Tuesday evening, November 21 at the home of Mrs. Janet Woodington, South Arlington street. A royal good time was enjoyed by all. The next regular meeting of Torrance Review No. 37 will be held at Legion Hall Tuesday, November 28, at 7:30 o'clock. The Court of the Rose will meet at 4 p. m. Don't forget the Macabee dates: Bazaar, Tuesday, December 5; cedar chest raffle, Friday, December 8, at 8 p. m., at Torrance Pharmacy. Food sale, Saturday, December 9, at "Hardware" Reeve.

Torrance Theatre Show Starts Every Evening at 6:30. Second Performance at 8:30 Adults 25c—Including Tax—Children under 15 years, 10c SUNDAY AND MONDAY NOVEMBER 26-27 Alice Terry and Jack Mulhall in "TURN TO THE RIGHT" A REX INGRAM PRODUCTION AND A GOOD ONE TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28-29 Herbert Rawlinson in "DON'T SHOOT." Country Store THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, DEC. 1 SPECIAL THANKSGIVING PROGRAM Madge Bellamy and John Bowers in the Photoplay of Lorna Doone A THOMAS H. INCE PRODUCTION. DON'T MISS THIS PICTURE —KNOWN TO EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2 Conway Tearle and Gladys Hulette in "The Referee," and "In the Days of Buffalo Bill, Chapter 9. SUNDAY AND MONDAY, DECEMBER 3-4 Tom Mix and Palsy Ruth Miller in "FOR BIG STAKES" A MYSTERY ROMANCE OF THE RANGE COMING SUNDAY AND MONDAY, DECEMBER 10-11 Richard Barthelmess in "The Bond Boy." Here Soon "Skin Deep."