

# CARLSTROM PRAISES OBEE MANAGEMENT

Says Obee Administration Secured Liberal Government Aid for Relief Here

The following letter received by William J. Obee from Oscar Carlstrom, former Attorney General, is printed for the information of readers of the Highland Park Press:

"My dear Mr. Obee: I acknowledge your letter of March 15 presenting a number of questions touching the relief problem as affecting townships and the duties of town supervisors.

"Under the Act of the Legislature effective July 1, 1931, Townships must provide for all indigent persons residents of the respective townships. County maintaining paupers at county farm may charge back to township the reasonable cost thereof, including medical care by county physician when necessary. Sections 15, 16 and 17 of the Pauper Act Chapter 107, Smith-Hurd's Illinois Revised Statutes 1931 effective July 1, 1931 imposes the mandatory duty on townships in all counties having a population of less than 500,000; (this excepts only Cook County) to care for their residents indigent or paupers.

"When the law went into effect, townships had no adequate funds on hand and nearly a year necessarily elapsed before funds could be realized by taxation to meet the emergency situation. In the meantime, in the absence of authority to borrow money or issue bonds, town supervisors (who are ex-officio overseers of the poor) had to pledge the credit of the township by purchases on time for necessary requirements where and as best they could. The first levy of taxes thereafter made, could lawfully include these obligations as a part of the base for required taxes to be levied. At the time there was no other way out. Supervisors were indeed confronted with a hard situation in 1931, when the law went into effect. I as attorney general had no choice but to advise supervisors and county officers as to the plain terms and effect of the law as it stood, and hence advised you that you were under the compulsory necessity of taking care of the indigent and paupers at township expense.

"The tremendous added burden of the unemployed created a heavy financial drain on township and a difficult responsibility on town supervisors which could not be avoided. Your own actions in the premises and the loyal and intelligent support of your two assistant supervisors as indicated by you, constitute a courageous fidelity to public duty that should have unstinted commendation.

"It must indeed be a satisfaction to yourself and your associates, and in some measure a compensation for the criticism that always adheres to the performance of an unpleasant duty for you to know that because you had met the situation well, when federal funds became available, your acts were so approved by the Emergency Relief authorities that most liberal allocation of funds and supplies were made to your community

and township needs, lifting to a large degree the burden from your local taxpayers. This should likewise be cause for satisfaction on the part of the citizens of your township. The consequent reduction of taxes was surely welcome.

"You nor your assistant supervisors certainly cannot be subjected to criticism because the Emergency Relief authorities did not purchase supplies at retail locally during the period they controlled the relief situation by reason of their controlling the sources of financial contribution.

"Without discussing the policy followed by the Emergency Relief authorities, it is certainly sufficient to note in passing, that they made their purchases where and in such quantities as their judgment indicated, and for cash, enabling them to secure better prices, and you nor either of the assistant supervisors had anything to say in that matter whatsoever.

"You present the question as to whether relief cases requiring hospitalization should be cared for in the county hospital at a cost of \$3.05 per day per patient, or in your local hospital or hospitals where the cost will be approximately \$6.50 per day per patient.

"This is purely a practical question and in light of the desperate need for holding taxes down to the lowest minimum consistent with meeting recognized and proper obligations of the township (the same reasoning applies to all other political subdivisions) especially in view of the fact that our current demands on taxes are extraordinarily heavy, there can be but one answer to your question and that is that the public facilities of your county hospital should be used with the resultant saving of more than half the cost per day per patient which would otherwise be required. Of course I recognize in this connection that where the disparity in cost is not too great, local facilities should be used.

"All local medical attention to persons on relief, where hospitalization is not absolutely required, I assume of course is furnished by local physicians; and you have indicated to me that that is being done.

"The changes you refer to, namely transferring all unemployable on relief back to local care and responsibility affected in part by orders going into effect March 1 and March 18, 1935, are in pursuance of the policy announced by the Federal Emergency Relief authority, and will rapidly result in placing back on local communities (under the Act of 1931 in our state on townships, except in the County of Cook), the financial duty and responsibility of caring for all indigent persons, paupers and persons on relief who by reason of physical or other incapacity are not susceptible of being employed.

"This will necessitate as a matter of legal required duty, the levy of sufficient taxes by township authorities to meet the resulting anticipated requirements, and to that extent will increase town taxes. There is no choice in this matter and whoever holds the position of supervisor will have to make the levy.

"With respect to plans for the immediate future for work relief as

you state, it is impossible to anticipate what the legislature of Illinois now in session may do in the way of new legislation or new plans. We will just have to wait until they act.

"Make work' plans are useful and to be approved where work proposed to be done produces some benefit to the community and thereafter, that can be planned. Recent orders issued by the Federal Emergency Relief Authority provide for temporary employment of persons on relief, reducing relief allowances by the amount earned in such temporary employment whenever available without jeopardizing the relief status of such persons when such temporary employment ends. If such rules are not followed, we will never reduce our relief problem, and to fail to recognize that fact and apply such rules would indicate a woeful lack of intelligence, or sensible purpose, it seems to me.

"As a personal matter, I have noted the copy of the statement which was enclosed in your letter setting up the duties of your office performed by you during the past four years (with the active assistance and cooperation of your two assistant supervisors, Mr. Charles Harbaugh and Mr. William Bletsch, together with financial statement of the operations of your office for the same period, and certainly it is a record worthy of commendation. In short, it appears you have done a hard job well.

"I am glad to answer your inquiry to the best of my ability because in facing our present trying problems, I feel it the duty of every citizen to co-operate in every helpful way we can.

"Very truly yours,  
"Oscar M. Carlstrom."

In the battle between the U.S.S. Enterprise and the British ship Boxer, during the war of 1812, both captains were killed and were later buried side by side at Portland, Maine.

# Obee Issues First Public Statement

(Continued from Page 1)

the County Treasurer as collection on June 12, 1932 for Poor \$8,000; on July 5, 1932 \$8,000; on August 8, 1932 \$8,000; on January 8, 1933 \$9,326.40. Total for 18 months, \$33,326.40. Later on I will give you the amount I have received year by year.

The committee appointed at Elm Place school and also at the high school meetings never explained this to you. That was not their purpose nor did they inform you that at that time there were in our town over 500 families on relief with from two to fourteen members in each family taken care of by Mrs. Obee and myself. When we were asked to accept the help of the Social Service to carry on and to make investigations that I accepted. Later I was called on by the chairman of the committee and asked: "What are you trying to do to us, you have us swamped!" Not until then did they have any idea of what we had been up against 24 hours a day and 365 days a year—working for you to the best of our ability.

Cash receipts for the 1931-32	
Poor Fund	\$33,326.40
Cash receipts from County Treasurer 1932 Gas Tax	20,833.80
Cash receipts from County Treasurer 1933 Poor Funds	48,221.00
Cash receipts from County Treasurer for 1934 Poor Funds	\$6,760.55
Cash receipts Returned	53.90
Cash receipts from County Treasurer 1935 Gas Tax	4,166.70
Total receipts from 7-1-35	\$103,362.75

You will note that \$25,000 of the above moneys do not appear on your tax bills.

And I am very glad to be able to tell you that all claims to date for

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3rd Floor, Waukegan National Bank Building,  
S.W. Cor. Genesee & Washington Sts., Waukegan.  
Phone: Ontario 7111.

Loans made in surrounding towns

Poor are paid, or can be, up to Feb. 1, 1935 by cash collected. And we may not have to issue any anticipation warrants on the 1934 levy to be collected in 1935, although authorized.

We have had to, under the orders of the I.E.R.C., carry all medical aid, all County Farm, all Hospital and Veterans under the Bogardus Act support, and from March 1, 1935 they have turned over to us the support of all welfare cases because they find that our Township has not used up our cash surplus.

My history is well known to most of the old residents of Highland Park, but for the benefit of our newcomers I will say that since 1886 when I was elected a member of the directors of School District No. 107, I have served as alderman of the old 3rd and 4th Wards of our city,

several years also as town clerk, and as a member of the Highland Park Library board, also as township collector of taxes, and the last 15 years as your supervisor.

What I have been able to do for the benefit and good for our community (which I have always considered the most beautiful residential part of the State of Illinois or any where else) others must judge.

—William J. Obee.

# Rebekah Sewing Circle

The Sheridan Rebekah Sewing circle will hold a Social Card Party at the home of Mrs. Effie Fritsch, 302 N. St. Johns avenue on Thursday afternoon March 21 at 2 o'clock.

Five hundred and buns will be played and prizes will be awarded. The public is invited to attend.

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# SPECIMEN BALLOT

TOWN OF DEERFIELD

Lake County, Illinois

ELECTION TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1935

# ○ Citizen's Ticket

BY PETITION

For Supervisor  
(Vote for One)

☐ WILLIAM J. OBEE  
154 S. Second Street  
Highland Park, Illinois

For Assistant Supervisor  
(Vote for Two)

☐ WILLIAM E. BLETSCH  
382 Moraine Road  
Highland Park, Illinois

☐ CHARLES HARBAUGH  
360 E. Park Avenue  
Highland Park, Illinois

# ○ Township Harmony Ticket

BY PETITION

For Supervisor  
(Vote for One)

☐ WILLIAM W. STEELE  
563 DeTamble Avenue  
Highland Park, Illinois

For Assistant Supervisor  
(Vote for Two)

☐ WILLIAM W. WITTEN  
367 Laurel Avenue  
Highland Park, Illinois

☐ EMMETT MORONEY  
137 S. Green Bay Road  
Highland Park, Illinois

*[Signature]*  
Town Clerk