

Judge Bazile's Lengthy Opinion Clears Dishman

Sheriff J. S. Dishman has been cleared of "all the Charges," brought against him last month by Commonwealth's Attorney Horace W. Morrison, of King George.

Judge Leon M. Bazile delivered this opinion in King George Circuit Court, Wednesday.

Sheriff Dishman was on May 13, charged with malfeasance, misfeasance, incompetency and gross neglect of duty, by Morrison.

Bazile stated in his opinion that none of the charges placed against Dishman, showed proof enough to measure up to the requirements of the law.

Morrison was the principal State witness at Dishman's trial, held here on Saturday, May 29. He had disqualified himself as prosecutor.

He testified in support of a bill of particulars, filed with the court and of five specific charges listed in the original petition.

Complaints made against Dishman by Morrison were that he was difficult to find, either by day or night; failed to deliver summonses, which were given him to serve; frequently gave defense attorneys information about Commonwealth cases; refused to investigate crimes properly; and had been reluctant to relate facts known to him, when testifying for the Commonwealth in some cases.

Judge Bazile stated in his 16-page opinion of the charges, which Dishman denied, that "the only testimony to support them is that of Morrison."

Nearly all of the Commonwealth's witnesses contradicted Morrison as to the charges.

A number of prominent county citizens testified that they "would not believe him (Morrison) under oath."

Three of the witnesses publicly doubting Morrison's veracity were R. A. Peed, King George Commissioner of the Revenue for 35 years; W. Dandridge Taylor, former member of the school board, and W. Thomas Weaver, countyseat merchant.

T. D. Richardson, a Commonwealth's witness, testified that he

(Continued on Page 5)

Dishman * * *

(Continued from page 1)

never had heard anything derogatory to Mr. Morrison's reputation, so Judge Bazile stated in his lengthy opinion.

Bazile said, concerning the handling of certain cases by Dishman; "The weight of the evidence shows that the sheriff investigated the cases to the best of his ability, in conjunction with the State Police Officers stationed in King George County and a special investigator from the State police . . .

"The sheriff, like the average sheriff, is not a trained police officer. He is elected by the people and he discharges his duty to the best of his ability."

No criticism is to be made of Dishman if he seeks the aid of the State police, according to Judge Bazile.

Bazile had earlier turned down a motion made on May 13, by Morrison which sought the removal of Bascom S. Pribble, as Trial Justice of King George County. Morrison claimed that Pribble could not legally serve in King George, holding the same post in Stafford County, because the King George Board of Supervisors had