

39 Summoned Tomorrow To Testify on Sheriff's Ouster

At least 39 witness have been summoned to testify tomorrow in the trial of Sheriff J. S. Dishman, of King George County, who is fighting ouster proceedings brought by Commonwealth's Attorney Horace T. Morrison.

They are expected to fill a considerable portion of the county courtroom when the case opens at 10 a.m. before Judge Leon M. Bazile.

Thirteen male residents of the county also have been summoned as prospective jurors. County Clerk L. B. Mason said today a panel of either five or seven men will be asked to decide the case.

Mason said 20 witnesses have been summoned for the Commonwealth and 19 for the defendant and others still could be summoned today. They include residents of King George, Stafford, Caroline and Westmoreland Counties.

The case is expected to be the biggest in King George since Morrison himself was accused of contempt of court four years ago by Judge Bazile. That trial was dismissed without a decision by an outside judge.

SUBSTITUTE PROSECUTOR

Morrison is accusing Dishman of "malfeasance, misfeasance, incompetency and gross neglect of duty" and has listed 18 instances which the prosecutor alleges will bear out these charges.

The 68-year-old sheriff who retired from farming 12 years ago

to accept the job has reserved comment on the charges, saying he has left everything in the hands of his attorneys.

Dishman has retained John D. Butzner Jr., of Fredericksburg, and Joseph A. Billingsley Jr., of King George Courthouse. The latter opposed Morrison's bid for re-election three years ago and has engaged in frequent court battles with him.

Morrison has disqualified himself as prosecutor, saying he will be a principal witness. Commonwealth's Attorney R. H. L. Chichester, of Stafford County, will prosecute. He was appointed by Bazile over Morrison's insistence that Bazile instead should have asked the Attorney-General to name the substitute.

ELECTION NEXT YEAR

The jury will be asked to decide whether the sheriff should be allowed to continue to hold his \$3,600-a-year job. Six months ago Dishman was drawing only \$2,000, but he won two substantial raises. The first took a battle with the county board of supervisors who unsuccessfully opposed a decision of the State Compensation Board to raise the salary to \$2,400. Then the General Assembly, in a little publicized act, said no sheriff in the state can draw less than \$300 a month.

Dishman was elected to his present term three years ago when he got more votes than the combined total for three opponents. He would come up for re-election next year.