

4243 Highland Ave.
Kansas City, Missouri

January 27, 1938

Honorable Lloyd Stark,
Governor of Missouri,
Jefferson City, Missouri

Dear Governor:

It may be irregular for a man of my insignificance to address a letter to the Governor of the State but you will pardon me if I intrude too far on your patience. The mail last evening brought notice of my appointment to serve as deputy election commissioner in the capacity of judge in the eighth precinct of Ward 15 in this city at the permanent registration to be held February 3 and 4 of this year.

I am not interested in the compensation, for my time is worth more money doing other things. I have no political ambitions. There is not a job within the gift of the government I would have. I am interested in honest elections and decent government and if this appointment is accepted I shall serve purely through a sense of duty.

On November 3, 1936, for the first time in my life I accepted a similar invitation and did serve as a Republican Judge in the above mentioned precinct* The job is not to be envied by an honest citizen. I thought to obtain the ends of justice against untold odds. The machine organization had such a large force of workers, against which I had to fight almost single-handed, that I felt my efforts were being put forth in vain. In about a dozen cases at different times during the day persons attempted to vote whose rights thereof were challenged and I scared them away by asking questions concerning their eligibility to cast a vote in that precinct. Finally the Democratic precinct Captain disappeared and about the time he returned two persons wearing badges from the Election Commissioners' office appeared and instructed me to give every applicant a ballot if his or her name was on the registration books. With these instructions it was difficult to oppose fraudulent voting. The ballots in the precinct where I served were correctly

counted by the Judges but I have no assurance that all the persons who voted were eligible to vote in that particular precinct. It was an easy thing to get names on the registration books.

I caused the police to arrest a young man attempting to vote the second time but he was merely taken out of the building and released. There was very little protection given by the police force in Kansas City. I have a traveling position that takes me

Page 2 - Governor Stark

over ten States and have never gotten acquainted with very many of the people in my own Kansas City precinct.

I am willing to serve again as Judge and render the best service possible provided I am assured protection when I take a stand against irregularities. Though my vote is usually cast on the Republican side of the fence, I am independent enough to vote for a Democrat when it appears he will make a better public servant than the man who happens to be on my ticket. I would like to know if any protection is to be assured election workers at the polls in the coming city election before I pledge myself to serve.

A number of years ago I purchased a lot of apple trees from Stark's Nurseries and was especially impressed by the honest, upright and business-like methods in which the firm's business was conducted. Permit me to say that you are discharging the duties encumbered on the exalted office to which the people of Missouri have elected you, in the same excellent and diligent manner.

Yours very truly,
E. K. Bonebrake.
EKB GS