

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

**Voluntarism in Crisis: An Exploration of the Effects of the  
Great Depression in Delaware 1929-38**

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by

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## PREFACE.

The choice of Delaware, and indeed the effects of the Great Depression on the state, as the subject of my dissertation may seem strange, particularly as I am a resident of the UK. My connection with Delaware is somewhat tenuous; my brother, an ex-Du Pont research scientist, has spent many of his working years in the state and it is through frequent visits to him that I have established my link to Delaware. From the very beginning of my academic career, which began some ten years ago, I have had an interest in the New Deal era, and in seeking a suitable area for research I was drawn to Delaware, which I perceived as a likely subject for this period. I have not been disappointed; it has proved to be an intriguing topic and I trust that I have done it justice.

Because of the lack of any previous detailed account of this period in Delaware's historiography, I have utilised a largely empirical and narrative format in writing this dissertation. I have also relied heavily on one Wilmington daily newspaper, the Journal-Every Evening, for contemporary reports in order to achieve some sense of continuity. This newspaper was controlled by the du Pont family and inevitably its reporting of events must have reflected Republican opinion. For this reason I have endeavoured to use these reports without this bias. The Democrats did not control any newspapers and those published in the southern counties, which may have given a Democratic view of events, were only issued weekly. This fact was confirmed by Mrs Oscar S. Williams of Georgetown Sussex county, vice-chairman of the Democratic State Committee, in a letter she wrote to the Director of the Women's Division of the Democratic National Committee.

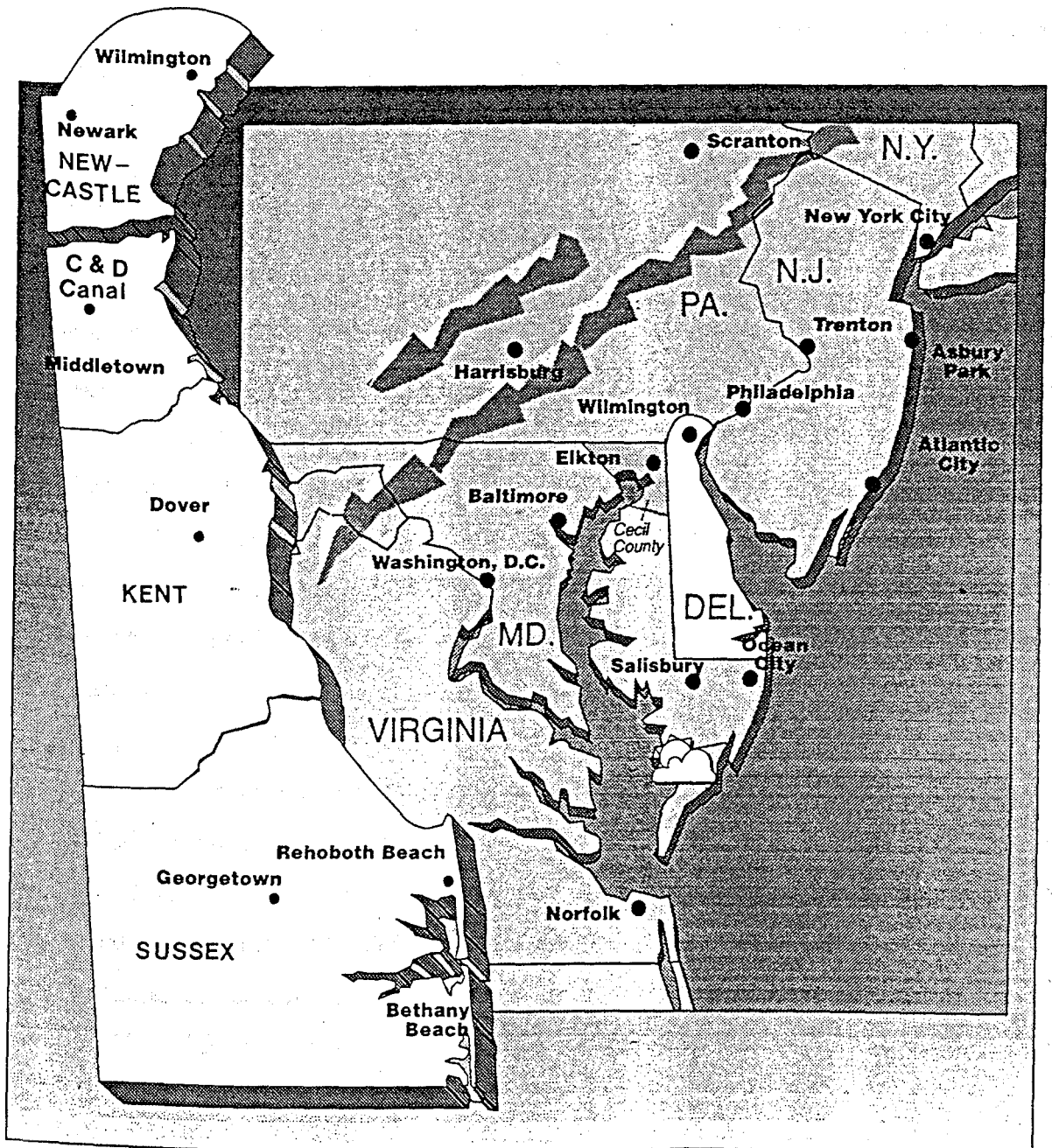


in December 1935: "You know, I am sure, of the very antagonistic attitude of the Wilmington papers, regarding ... all New Deal agencies. It is unfortunate that we Democrats in Delaware have no newspaper for we are helpless to combat the kind of publicity that has recently been given the WPA."<sup>1</sup>

The main reason that I was attracted to looking at Delaware through its welfare activities during the period of the Great Depression, and at the effect that the internal state politics of the era had on the provision of these, was that I believed that a detailed examination of them would give a unique picture of what occurred in Delaware, and perhaps elsewhere; for the state politics of the period were not altogether dissimilar to those of some other states in the Central Atlantic region; for example, they were very close in many particulars to those of Connecticut.<sup>2</sup> I have chosen neither to examine the internal workings of Delaware's politics nor those of the major parties within the state, except where they affected welfare, for these, considered more broadly, should properly be the subject of a separate study. However, because it is apparent that welfare in Delaware became a "political football" during this time, particularly following the shift from private to public sector funding, and was frequently used to disquiet opponents politically, I decided to use the discussion and delivery of welfare in the political arena as my main focus, and to examine the principal programmes operating in Delaware in that context.

My research was made far easier by the ready and expert help of numerous library staffs, particularly those of the Hagley Museum and

Library, Greenville, Delaware, where Dr Patrick B. Nolan made it possible for me to obtain a vast quantity of primary source materials which provided the basis of my research. I am also indebted to the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, the University of Delaware, Morris Library Special Collections Department, the Roosevelt Study Center in Middleburg, Holland, the Historical Society of Delaware, the Delaware State Archives and the National Archives, Washington, DC. I would also like to thank Delaware's leading historians, Dr John A. Munroe and Dr Carol E. Hoffeecker, for the guidance they both provided at the start of my research project. However, my largest scholarly debt is to Dr Stephen W. Baskerville, who not only provided me with expert guidance but encouraged me from the beginning and who gave unstintingly of his time, expertise and insights in talking through questions with me.



## INTRODUCTION: The State of Delaware

The Great Depression of the 1930s was one of the most devastating economic events of modern history and has been described as "the gravest crisis of the industrial age"<sup>1</sup>. Its effects were generally felt throughout the whole of the western world and in particular in the United States where they were far from being uniform; what they were on individual states has only been explored in a relatively small number of good studies.<sup>2</sup>

This thesis is an attempt to explore and document in detail the effects that the Great Depression had on Delaware and the measures that were taken to cope with them. It is also an attempt to fulfil John A. Munroe's hope, expressed in the "Preface" to his History of Delaware, that there might be new studies of the state, particularly in areas previously unexamined. "Unfortunately", he wrote, "in Delaware's historiography, as in the Arabian desert there are 'empty quarters', areas that have hardly been explored"<sup>3</sup>. While the Great Depression and the New Deal hardly fall into the category of "empty quarters" from the national perspective, there have been no detailed studies made and published of this important period in Delaware's history.

Delaware is not one of the best known states; it is located on the eastern seaboard of the United States, bounded by Maryland to the west and south, Pennsylvania to the north, and New Jersey, Delaware Bay and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. It has a total area of 1,982 square miles and comprises three counties: New Castle, the smallest but most densely populated region; Kent; and Sussex, the largest of the three counties. It is 96 miles long and varies from nine to 35 miles in width. Delaware does not fall easily into one of the sectional categories that are regularly used to describe the United States. It cannot be described as a New England state for instance; neither can it be regarded as part of the South, although it was a slave state until the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment in December 1865. Neither has it inherited much from Pennsylvania, of which it was a part from 1681 to 1776. During the Civil War, Delaware was a border state which supported the Union war-effort not only with troops, but also by the production of one of its major

industries. Indeed, E.I. du Pont de Nemours produced a significant amount of the gunpowder used by President Lincoln's army.<sup>4</sup>

Delaware is the second smallest state of the Union, only Rhode Island being smaller. This, however, has not prevented it from playing an important role in the history of the nation. Delaware became an independent entity in 1776, two months after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, not only proclaiming itself free from the British Empire, but also establishing a republican government entirely separate from that of Pennsylvania. In 1786, John Dickinson of Delaware presided over the Annapolis Convention which called for the establishment of the Federal Constitutional Convention which met at Philadelphia in 1787. When the Constitution of the United States was submitted to the states for ratification, Delaware was first among the thirteen original states to ratify and, on 7 December 1787, became the "First State" of the new Federal Union.<sup>5</sup> In the early part of the twentieth century, Delaware's influence on national events continued through the involvement of her most pre-eminent family, the du Ponts.

#### Political Structure and Control

In the 1930s it could be said that Delaware was a microcosm of the United States, in as much as the state had a densely populated, urban, industrialized area as well as a larger agricultural hinterland; but here the comparison ended. Politically the structure in Delaware was the antithesis of that prevailing in the greater part of the nation: for the urban, industrialized segment of the state was Republican, while the rural agricultural part was Democratic. Once the Depression struck, the Democrats were largely opposed to the provision of aid to the worst affected area of the state, and it was the Republicans who became the prime movers in all efforts to afford relief. This political role-reversal occurred not only in the state government, but at many levels of local government as well.

The state's population in 1930 totalled 238,380,<sup>6</sup> the majority of whom were residents of New Castle county. The reason for the population being densest in Delaware's northern county was that it contained the

industrialized part of the state, which was concentrated in and around the only major city, Wilmington. In the 1930s, agriculture was still the state's most important industry; both the southern counties, and those areas of New Castle county outside the city of Wilmington, located mainly to the south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, were almost entirely devoted to farming.<sup>7</sup> In fact, in this era, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal marked the political division of the state, and it was an unfortunate coincidence that it also approximated the line of demarcation between that portion of the state which suffered the worst effects of the Great Depression - namely, that part of New Castle County north of the canal which contained most of Delaware's industry - and the southern counties, both of which were much less seriously affected.

Following the Civil War and Reconstruction period, the Democrats became the agrarian party of Delaware, their greatest support being in the "downstate" counties of Kent and Sussex. Wilmington, and the neighbouring hundreds along the industrialized Brandywine and Red Creeks, became reciprocally the stronghold of the new Republican Party.<sup>8</sup> As elsewhere, however, representation in the state's General Assembly did not reflect the distribution of population, although the 1897 Constitution had awarded additional seats to New Castle county. Still, the result was hardly proportional since, at a time when over half the population of the state were residents of New Castle county, and the majority of these lived in Wilmington, only two senators and five representatives were elected from the city, as against five senators and ten representatives each from Kent, Sussex and rural New Castle counties, all of which districts had smaller populations than Wilmington. It was thus the state's only city that was most disadvantaged by this unrepresentative apportionment<sup>9</sup>.

This gross political imbalance was to prove a significant factor in the state's provision of aid to the unemployed during the Great Depression. In his history of the state, Munroe observed that

the apportionment provisions of the 1897 Constitution were a defensive bulwark thrown up by old, rural, agrarian Delaware against the new, urban, industrial elements in the state, a defense of the few against the many, of the poor against the rich, of the traditional against the innovative. This rural over-representation in the legislature served as a mild brake upon reform and a defense against sudden change.<sup>10</sup>

This statement certainly appears valid for the first half of the 1930s,

especially when viewed in light of the opposition by the Democrats from the southern counties to relief measures for the unemployed, who were mainly from the northern industrial area of the state.

Yet despite the apparent inequality of the apportionment provisions of the 1897 Constitution, the Republicans managed nevertheless to control Delaware, and the Delaware Republican Party was in turn controlled by the du Pont family. This control began at the turn of the century, and a measure of its completeness was that a family member, or one of the family's nominees, served as a United States Senator from the state for much of the first half of the twentieth century: Henry A. du Pont, 1906-1917; Harry A. Richardson, the choice of Henry A. du Pont, 1907-1913; L. Heisler Ball, who was elected with the support of Alfred I. du Pont, 1919-1925; T. Coleman du Pont, 1921-1922 and 1925-1928; Daniel O. Hastings, T. Coleman du Pont's designated successor, 1928-1937; and C. Douglass Buck, T. Coleman du Pont's son-in-law, 1943-1949. An indication of the effectiveness of the Republicans' control was that the Democrats were unable to elect a Governor until Richard C. McMullen was elected in 1937. This did not mean that Delaware was a one-party state, however, for the Democrats controlled Kent County, the centre of their strength; and in 1912, when the third-party campaign of Theodore Roosevelt divided the GOP, Delaware voted for Woodrow Wilson, the Democratic presidential candidate.<sup>11</sup>

During the 1930s, as we shall see, political parties played an important part in the local government of Delaware. Membership of the Wilmington City Council, the Levy Courts<sup>12</sup>, other town councils, and the filling of many other local government posts, was by election. Both major parties contested these with the consequence that the political control of these bodies often determined their actions, which did not necessarily reflect the needs of the electorate. This was evident in the means by which the plight of the victims of the Great Depression was dealt with, particularly the actions taken by both the Wilmington City Council and the Levy Court of New Castle County, which appeared to indicate political bias as the basis of their operations rather than a genuine estimate of the needs of the unemployed.

The 1897 Constitution also gave the governor the right to veto legislation, including items in appropriation bills, and for the first time permitted him to serve a second term, whether consecutive or otherwise. The significance of this change was that it enabled Clayton Douglass Buck, who proved to be a champion of the cause of the unemployed, to serve continuously as governor from 1929 until 1937. In this role he was able to play a very significant part in what proved to be the most crucial period of the Great Depression in Delaware. Another important change made in 1897 was the removal of the legislature's responsibility for chartering corporations; prior to this, special acts of the legislature were required for each charter granted. The new Constitution laid the ground for a general incorporation law. In 1889, New Jersey had passed an extremely liberal law that encouraged businesses to incorporate and pay chartering fees in that state. A decade later, the Delaware legislature decided to emulate this New Jersey's statute. The law did not require companies to do business or to establish more than a token office in the state. Henceforth a Delaware corporation could hold stockholders' meetings wherever it chose and was not restrained from acquiring other companies or from the creation of holding companies. The lenient requirements of the General Incorporation Law of 1899 - low fees, proximity to financial centres, and stable political institutions - gave Delaware an advantage over other states and resulted in 193 companies incorporating there during 1900, its first year of operation. By 1929, this number had risen to 84,146 and the revenue from the franchise taxes paid by these companies totalled \$3,802,802. The franchise tax continued to provide a significant annual sum to the state; and although this income was substantially reduced during the period of the Great Depression, it did enable Delaware to fund its relief programmes and was in fact the main reason for its remaining solvent during this period.<sup>13</sup>

#### The du Ponts

The du Pont family established the E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company in 1802, on the banks of the Brandywine River in New Castle county. The company manufactured gunpowder and the Civil War brought it great



prosperity. In 1902, it was taken over by three du Pont cousins: T. Coleman, Alfred, and Pierre. Under their guidance, and by the acquisition of other gunpowder manufacturers, a quasi-monopolistic control of the explosives industry was created, which equated with those established by the Standard Oil and United States Steel in their respective fields. Pierre acquired T. Coleman's shares in 1911 and with them control of the Du Pont company. Having retained the sole right to manufacture military smokeless powder, even after being required in 1912 to give up its domination of the explosives market under the terms of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act<sup>14</sup>, the company went on to make huge profits from World War 1. Even so, the anti-trust case that broke up the Du Pont company changed the direction of its growth, and the du Ponts began channelling their profits into a wide range of products from chemicals to automobiles, from synthetic fibres to leaded gasoline and from paints to food packaging.<sup>15</sup> Unlike most other major companies of the day that moved their company headquarters to New York, E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company retained its headquarters in Wilmington,<sup>16</sup> thereby ensuring that most of the family resided in the state. The consequences of this were of great benefit not only to Delaware, but also to the victims of the Great Depression there.

Drawing upon their impressive economic base, the du Ponts played an increasingly prominent role in the political affairs of the nation during the 1920s and 1930s. The two most prominent figures in the Du Pont company to be involved in politics were Pierre S. du Pont and John J. Raskob, a Du Pont company insider who, though not a family member, was a part of the Du Pont inner circle and, uniquely, an ardent Roman Catholic. He was Pierre's former secretary and confidant, the pair enjoying an association which had begun in Ohio as far back as 1899. His connection with the Du Pont Company made him a multi-millionaire.<sup>17</sup>

Besides the significant role he played in the development of the largest industrial company in Delaware, Pierre was a figure of great importance not only in national political affairs but also in the history of Delaware education and fiscal policy.<sup>18</sup> He has been described by Carol E. Hoffecker as Delaware's leading Progressive, an ascription resulting from his long-time association with Cleveland's Progressive mayor, Tom

Johnson, with whom he had been involved in a street railway venture in Lorain, Ohio, in 1899.<sup>19</sup> The Progressive movement was a campaign for economic, social and political reform, carried out mainly by urban, middle-class Americans during the last decade of the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth centuries. Its aim was to reorganize and reform a society that seemed to be in danger of breaking into two rival camps, the rich versus the poor. In the Progressive tradition leading members of the du Pont family were reformers and philanthropists, this latter trait being reinforced by the family's belief that "no privilege exists that is not inseparably bound to duty." This principle had been laid down by the founding father of the family, Pierre Samuel du Pont I, as early as 1784.<sup>20</sup> Alfred I. du Pont was the main instigator of the state's old-age pension plan, established in 1931, prior to which he had personally financed a private scheme for almost two years before the state took over the responsibility. In 1924, T. Coleman du Pont too made a major contribution to the economy of Delaware by constructing a north-south highway from Wilmington to the state's southern border at a cost of \$4 million. But it was Pierre who was the most active reformer and the most generous in his philanthropy. He was instrumental in the reform of the Delaware school system, the tax system and the reorganization of government bureaux and agencies throughout the state. He donated \$8,745,626 to the public schools between 1920 and 1935, an estimated \$6 million of which was spent on new buildings. He also funded the development of the state tax department, and paid the costs of a number of surveys which benefitted the state. In October 1936, in speaking of the du Pont's generosity, Delaware's Secretary of State, Walter Dent Smith, remarked that "... in all history there has never been a single family so generous or so philanthropically inclined towards its neighbors and fellow citizens."<sup>21</sup> When the Great Depression struck, its unemployed victims were likewise to become the beneficiaries of the du Pont family's philanthropy, particularly that of Pierre du Pont.

Pierre's involvement at national level was closely linked with that of John Raskob, and it was through the latter that he became involved with the Democratic Party. This came about through Raskob's friendship with Governor Alfred E. Smith of New York, the Democratic nominee for President

in 1928, with whom he shared a Catholic faith, a detestation of Prohibition, and a mutual love of New York city's cultural and social life. In 1928, Raskob became Smith's campaign manager and principal financial backer, and was appointed head of the Democratic National Committee, a post which he held until 1932.<sup>22</sup> To bolster Smith's chances of carrying his home state of New York, Raskob solicited Franklin D. Roosevelt to run as the Democrat's New York gubernatorial candidate, a role he was reluctant to undertake because of, among other objections, his commitment to the Warm Springs Foundation. Roosevelt nevertheless accepted \$25,000 from Raskob as the first installment of what would eventually be a total of \$100,000 donated to the Foundation.<sup>23</sup>

Following Smith's defeat, Raskob set about restructuring the Democratic National Committee and helped pay off the \$1.5 million debt which the party had accumulated. He collected over \$1 million in contributions from himself, Pierre and others to stave off the Democrats' financial collapse; and to cover the remainder, he placed a promissory note for \$400,000 with the County Trust Company of New York. By the end of 1930, he had contributed a further \$875,000 to party funds. Raskob created a permanent Democratic headquarters in Washington, and himself paid the executive committee chairman's salary, which totalled \$232,000 for the two years up to mid-1932.<sup>24</sup> David E. Kyvig credits Raskob with strengthening the "party's image as favoring repeal, which in turn attracted further working-class and ethnic antiprohibition support to the Democrats." This was a major factor in the party's resurgence following its seemingly crushing defeat in 1928.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, it could be argued with some plausibility that Raskob, with some financial assistance from Pierre du Pont, laid the foundation for Roosevelt's election to the presidency in 1932.

This du Pont/Raskob support for the Democratic Party was not entirely due to a change in their political outlooks, however. Both Pierre du Pont and Raskob had previously supported the Republican Party, though Pierre had voted for Woodrow Wilson in 1912; their enthusiasm for the party now was motivated more by their perception of it as the party of repeal. The du Ponts had become involved in the Association Against the Prohibition

Amendment (AAPA) in 1922 when Raskob and Pierre's brothers, Irénée and Lamot, had joined the organization. Pierre himself did not become involved until 1925; he believed that the tax money wasted on Prohibition enforcement and the taxes not collected on liquor manufacture and distribution could be redirected to worthier causes such as a federal effort to eradicate tuberculosis or a reduction of individual and corporate income taxes. The three du Pont brothers gave \$400,000, and Raskob \$70,000, to the AAPA and were finally rewarded when, on 5 December 1933, a repeal amendment was ratified by the thirty-sixth state, Utah.<sup>26</sup>

By 1934, however, both Pierre and Raskob had become disillusioned with Roosevelt and the New Deal, and were both deeply involved with the American Liberty League. Although the Liberty League proclaimed itself a non-partisan group to defend the Constitution and traditional American individual liberties, its primary objective was to prevent the re-election of FDR in 1936. Indeed, George Wolfskill wrote in his history of the League: "It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that not in the history of the country did one organization marshal so much prestige, wealth, and managerial skill to undo a President as the Liberty League did in the fight against Roosevelt and the New Deal."<sup>27</sup> Recognising the threat represented by the League, Roosevelt made his final 1936 campaign address in Wilmington on 29 October. The theme for this address was to be President Lincoln's definition of liberty. A footnote to his address in the published edition of his public papers reads:

Wilmington is the home city and Delaware the home state of the Du Pont corporations ... whose principal owners were instrumental in organising and financing the American Liberty League.... The chief purpose of this organisation was to oppose and defeat the New Deal. That is the reason for the selection of Wilmington as the place to read President Lincoln's discussion...<sup>28</sup>

#### Economic structure of the state

The effects of the Great Depression varied from state to state. At one extreme, in Salt Lake City, Utah, scores of people were slowly starving, because neither county nor private relief funds were adequate; in the coal fields of West Virginia and Kentucky evicted families shivered in tents in mid-winter and children went barefoot; and in Los Angeles people whose gas and electricity had been turned off were reduced to cooking over wood fires

on back lots.<sup>29</sup> Compared to such states the conditions in Delaware could hardly be said to be disastrous, but for Delawareans it was bad enough.

Also, by comparison to other states, Delaware's economy and the state's own finances were far less affected by the depression. There were no bank failures,<sup>30</sup> no significant government borrowing, and the amount of federal aid received was far less than the amount paid in federal taxes during the period 1933 to 1937.<sup>31</sup> The industrial section of New Castle county did have an unemployment problem, but compared to some other parts of the nation it was neither large nor prolonged. Nevertheless, it required intervention, initially by the mayors of Wilmington and later by the state and the county, with some financial assistance coming also from the federal government between 1933 and 1935. The first organisations formed to deal with the problem of unemployment relief in Wilmington were wholly financed by voluntary contributions and supported by the city's principal charitable organization, Associated Charities, which was later renamed the Family Society. Its General Secretary, B. Ethelda Mullen, was to play a major role in the several relief organisations that were subsequently established. This pattern of philanthropy, altruism and voluntarism continued in the northern part of the state throughout the Great Depression. The unemployment problem in the two southern counties was less severe, with state and federal relief being provided only during the period from 1932 until 1935 when the Works Progress Administration (WPA) took care of the comparatively small number of unemployed people remaining. The reason for this was the diversified nature of agriculture in these counties and, in particular, the growth of the broiler industry in Sussex County.<sup>32</sup>

The main question raised by the foregoing discussion is whether Delaware could have coped with the problem of unemployment without any financial assistance from the federal government at all? This is one of the key issues to be examined in the following chapters. Other issues to be considered are the implications of the political division within the state for those worst affected by the Great Depression, and the effects of this, and of the du Pont family's involvement in national affairs, on the relationship between Delaware and the government in Washington, D.C., with

respect to the granting of federal aid.

The measures taken by the private and state organizations to combat the worst effects of the depression and to care for its victims are detailed in subsequent chapters, as is the involvement of the federal government in this urgent task. The political and sectional differences which existed at the time are also examined, and the affects of these on the efforts to ameliorate the plight of the unemployed closely analysed.

## CHAPTER 1: The depression strikes

Delaware's reaction to the initial onslaught of the Great Depression was to deal with it in a manner that was in keeping with the principles of self-help, voluntarism and altruism advocated by Herbert Hoover. The President was a firm and long-standing believer in the "American system", which he contended had previously served the people well in other severe economic crises, and which he defined as encompassing "the best traditions of our past: a concern for and preservation of personal freedom and liberties; ... and the unique value of a decentralized government, which could foster cooperative voluntary action through group initiative and leadership."<sup>1</sup> In December 1929, Hoover asserted: "If we are to curtail the extension of the arm of government into the affairs of our people, we must do it by cooperation with voluntary organizations, that they through their own initiative, through their own action should remedy abuse and initiate progress." And, in 1931, he reaffirmed his faith that "no governmental action, economic doctrine, no economic plan or project can replace that God-imposed responsibility of the individual man and woman to their neighbors."<sup>2</sup>

These principles were the basis on which the organisations formed in Delaware to cope with the problem of unemployment relief in the period before the New Deal came into operation. The philanthropy of the du Pont family and many other citizens of the state enabled these organisations to take care of the needs of those who were the victims of the depression.

According to James T. Patterson the causes of the depression are generally attributed to the stock market crash in October 1929 and the problem of income maldistribution, subsequently identified by economist John Maynard Keynes. There were undoubtedly other contributory factors, such as the collapse of international markets for American goods; the failure of certain European countries to repay the debts incurred during and after the World War; and the world-wide nature of the Great Depression. Jim Potter, however, believes that "it is convenient but unsatisfactory to date it from the Wall Street crash", and raises the important question "why the depression turned out to be so severe and so protracted and why it was

worse in the United States than anywhere else in the world?" His answer is that the causes can best be explained by reference to a combination of two hypotheses involving "stagnation" and "sectoral imbalance". The first describes "a situation of economic 'stagnation' with investment opportunities temporarily, or even permanently, exhausted." The second identifies the imbalance between the agricultural and urban industrial sectors. The phasing of the depression may be derived from federal government estimates of unemployment. These rose from 1.6 million in 1929 to a high of 12.8 million in 1933, before falling to 7.7 million in 1937.

In the late summer of 1937, the economy again slipped into a serious recession and unemployment increased to almost 20 per cent. This was the result of sharp cuts in federal government spending, high interest rates imposed by the Federal Reserve Board and the collection of the new regressive social-security taxes. Fortunately, in Delaware the "Roosevelt recession" had little effect. The Great Depression finally ended in America only because of the defense spending to prepare for World War 2.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1930 - 1931

Delaware did not begin to experience the full effects of the Great Depression until well into 1930, and even then they were not felt uniformly. New Castle county, the smallest but most populous of Delaware's three counties and the only one with a significant urban population, was the first to have to cope with the problem of unemployment. The reason that New Castle county did not suffer the effects of the depression as immediately or as drastically as some other parts of the United States was due in large part to the diversity of industries in the city of Wilmington and its immediate surrounding area. Nevertheless, it was in Wilmington that the problem of unemployment relief was first experienced. This presented special difficulties because of Delaware's traditionally conservative attitude towards public responsibility and because the burden of unemployment relief fell almost wholly upon Associated Charities, a privately financed organization.

This had been established in 1884 to coordinate the charitable activities of three existing agencies: the Friends Benevolent Society; the



St Vincent de Paul Society and the Provident Society.<sup>4</sup> There were also a few other privately funded charitable organizations including the Salvation Army, the Hebrew Charity Association (which became the Jewish Welfare Society in 1932) and the Catholic Welfare Guild. The last two organizations, however, were primarily concerned with providing for the members of their respective faiths.<sup>5</sup> Ethelda Mullen, General Secretary of Associated Charities from 1924 to 1933, later recalled that "the Autumn of 1929 brought new conditions to be met. A greater financial crisis than we had ever known created a new dependency." Associated Charities carried the full burden of unemployment relief until the winter of 1930-31.<sup>6</sup> It did so with increasing difficulty, as the costs of providing relief grew throughout the year and funding from private donations soon became insufficient for it to cope with the growing number of unemployed people. A contemporary assessment of the problem was provided by Lamot du Pont, Chairman of Associated Charities' Finance Committee, who wrote on 18 November 1930 in a fund-raising letter to John J. Raskob: "Never in the history of the organisation have we been called upon to meet so many demands for food, fuel, clothing and shelter. Unemployment and illness are bringing to us men and women who are appealing for assistance for the first time in their lives."<sup>7</sup>

The Fifteenth Census of the United States, carried out in April 1930, showed that unemployment in Delaware was 4.9 per cent of workers in the state, a total of 3,913. Approximately half of these were residents of Wilmington, which contained two-thirds of the population of New Castle county and nearly half the population of the state;<sup>8</sup> moreover by the beginning of the following winter, this number had increased significantly. Towards the end of the year the mayor of Wilmington, George W. K. Forrest, was commenting on the scale of the increase:

No accurate figures are available on the numbers of unemployed. Several individuals and organisations have made estimates. These at best are subject to error and cannot be taken as thoroughly reliable. They do not, for the most part, coincide. In the month of June this year the United States Census Bureau reported that the census taken in April disclosed 1,851 persons in Wilmington unemployed. Unquestionably these figures do not reflect today's conditions.<sup>9</sup>

The mayor's distrust of the accuracy of the official unemployment figures was later justified by a speaker addressing a conference on "Unemployment

as a World Problem", held at the University of Chicago in June and July 1931. As he explained:

... in this country we have never had and have not at the present time any direct measure of the volume of unemployment. We have not, for example, the kind of machinery which is now to be found in some of the advanced industrial countries in Europe -- machinery for the registration of unemployed which is associated with ... unemployment insurance.<sup>10</sup>

#### Mayor Forrest's committee

On 4 December 1930, Mayor Forrest, recognising that the financing of unemployment relief during the forthcoming winter was likely to be beyond the resources of Associated Charities, appointed a committee of 95 representing all interests in the community. The twin tasks of the mayor's Emergency Unemployment Committee were to raise \$100,000 for the relief of the city's unemployed, and to "devise methods, whereby immediate relief can be afforded in the present emergency." The du Pont family was well represented on the committee, whose members included Lamot, chairman of the finance sub-committee, Pierre's cousin, Francis, and Frank A. McHugh, chairman of both the main and executive committees.<sup>11</sup> McHugh was Pierre's confidential secretary and his company salary continued to be paid during the period that he served the city as committee chairman. His successful performance of this role was fully acknowledged by Forrest in a letter written to Pierre on 21 May 1931: "Permit me also to express the thought that one particular action of yours was of incalculable value to the Executive Committee, namely, the use and services of Mr. Frank A. McHugh. His industry, thoroughness and organizing ability undoubtably made possible the great success attained by the Committee."<sup>12</sup> Pierre du Pont was not only a major contributor to the fund, but he also met all the overhead expenses of the mayor's committee, which amounted to more than \$11,000 during the three months (December to February) that it was solely responsible for providing relief to Wilmington's unemployed.<sup>13</sup>

At the committee's first meeting, held on 5 December, Forrest informed its members that he was "convinced that the Associated Charities and like organisations with years of experience behind them" were better equipped and qualified to administer relief, and he was "of the opinion that, if given sufficient funds, these old-established organisations could

adequately handle the local situation." He also told them that, at his request, a committee set up by the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce would audit accounts and handle the funds collected. This committee would also be required to investigate the organisations and individuals applying for aid and to approve or disapprove applications for relief. The funds collected were to be channelled through the Chamber of Commerce committee to the Social Services Exchange, a clearing house for social and philanthropic organisations in the city, which in turn would vet the names and addresses of those requesting assistance to avoid duplication of effort and to "ensure no worthy family was overlooked." The relief funds would then be distributed by the Associated Charities, the Salvation Army and other recognised agencies.<sup>14</sup>

A thirteen-member executive committee was formed from the membership of the main committee to carry out the tasks set out by the mayor. At the first meeting of this executive committee, an employment sub-committee was appointed with the job of finding projects for the unemployed. It solicited work from the city's Park Board, Board of Health, Street and Sewer Department, from the State Hospital, from community service and from citizens interested in a civic clean-up campaign. Unemployed men were first required to register at the Federal-State Municipal Employment Bureau (operating in cooperation with the United States Employment Service, which as a result of the labour shortages caused by wartime production in 1917 had developed into an imposing, nationwide organization<sup>15</sup>) before being directed to the employment subcommittee's headquarters. Initially, men were employed for only three days at a time; later a full six-day working week was introduced. The work undertaken consisted mainly of civic clean-up tasks, but some permanent improvement work such as the grading of streets and sidewalks and the digging of drainage ditches was also undertaken.

The first \$10,000 was subscribed to the mayor's committee fund by Pierre du Pont before the campaign for raising funds had even started,<sup>16</sup> but by the end of December 1930 only half of the initial target of \$100,000 had been raised. Despite this, Ethelda Mullen later estimated that by the year's end almost 1,500 individuals and 280 families "who had never applied

for help before had been given relief because their distress was due to unemployment."<sup>17</sup> The initial estimate for the fund proved to be inadequate and the target for the fund was raised to \$150,000, and later to \$200,000. Subscriptions were solicited from individuals and organisations; among the latter, the Delaware State Federation of Labor not only subscribed to the fund but also enthusiastically supported the work-relief programme, commending Mayor Forrest and his committee "for the excellent manner in which they have provided relief and for their untiring efforts in the continuance of solicitation for funds to carry on the work."<sup>18</sup> At the end of February 1931, contributions to the mayor's committee had almost ceased and despite a three-day intensive fund-raising campaign, which scraped together a further \$28,644, the members decided that funding was insufficient to continue the activities of the employment unit. This was consequently closed and the remaining funds transferred to direct relief. After less than two months of operation, a total of \$160,287 had been paid out in wages to more than 3,600 individuals employed on work projects, and by 4 April a further \$28,967 in direct relief had been distributed by Associated Charities who, according to a pamphlet issued in mid-1931, "had reached areas of need never before touched and had carried a load more than double that of any other period in its history".<sup>19</sup> More than 900 families had received direct relief; some were helped substantially, others received only limited relief in the form of food, clothing or rent. As their contribution to relief, Wilmington's merchants gave garments for men, women, and children to the units recognised by the mayor's committee. The Salvation Army, which had taken on the responsibility for unemployed single men, spent \$3,821 for food and clothing. According to a special report of the United States Bureau of Census, relief expenditure in Wilmington during the first quarter of 1931 totalled \$198,618. This sum was made up of \$188,618 in private contributions and \$9,937 from government, and represented an increase of 1,349 per cent over relief expenditure in the same quarter of 1929.<sup>20</sup>

A total of \$279,506 was raised and spent on Wilmington's work and relief programmes during the three-month lifetime of the mayor's committee. \$188,014 of this sum went out as direct payments of wages to workers who

otherwise would have been unemployed, and \$79,625 of the remainder was given as direct relief. The committee's overhead expenses of \$11,867 were met by Pierre du Pont from his own pocket.<sup>21</sup>

Following closure of the committee's employment unit, the plight of the unemployed was relieved to some extent by Irénée du Pont who not only suggested the removal of highway hazards in the county but also personally undertook to finance this work. He was appointed honorary chairman of the special employment committee set up to organise this task and 40 projects, located throughout New Castle county, were begun providing work for unemployed men. At the same time, the Wilmington City Council, which had previously collected several thousand dollars for the construction of a stadium, decided to donate this money to the mayor's committee to be used to finance the levelling and grading of tennis courts, football fields, baseball diamonds and park land that was being used for athletic activities, so that this work could be undertaken by the unemployed. These two projects provided work-relief for many thousands of Wilmington's unemployed until the beginning of the summer.<sup>22</sup>

The mayor's committee appears to have been very satisfied with the way in which it had dealt with the unemployment problem in Wilmington during the winter of 1930-31. It issued a pamphlet entitled Wilmington's non-Competitive Work Program based on a report ("Aiding a Community To Carry On During An Unemployment Crisis") produced by Frank McHugh and Francis McCann, secretary of the committee, which described their efforts as "one of the outstanding unemployment relief programs of the whole nation." This opinion was supported at the National Conference on Employment Conditions, held at the Hamilton Hotel, Washington, D.C., in late January 1931, where it was stated that Wilmington "had set the mark for other industrial cities to emulate."<sup>23</sup> The success of the committee's unemployment relief programme, according to McCann, was due to its being "of necessity centralized in a strong representative executive committee composed of citizens of prestige who are unswayed by partisan bickerings and the pecking of know-nothing snipers."<sup>24</sup> The pamphlet went on to emphasise the unwillingness of the unemployed to accept either relief or charity, and stressed the benefit of a work-relief programme in upholding

general community morale. It also pointed out that the committee had received "national commendation on the methods pursued in the past emergency in eliminating street mendicancy."<sup>25</sup> The success of this policy was later confirmed by McCann, who observed: "We made no effort to cater for the usual grafters and pan-handlers as we did not consider these people victims of unemployment. Therefore, we had no apple selling or street vending or displays of unemployment distress on the highways and byways."<sup>26</sup>

Subsequently, in an illustrated book entitled Work and Relief In Wilmington Delaware 1931-1932, the committee expressed its belief that:

The worth of the program is best attested by the innumerable instances wherein the work or relief provided by the Mayor's Committee ... has prevented the spiritual and moral debacle of life-long Wilmingtonians who never before had been obliged to undergo the experiences of the past year.... Especially noteworthy ... is the fact that the stigma of charity or polite begging does not attach to the acceptance of the services of the committee.<sup>27</sup>

#### Kent and Sussex counties

In 1930, at the on-set of the depression, Delaware's two other counties, Kent and Sussex, which comprised most of the state's land area, contained little more than one third of its population, and were entirely dependent on agriculture. Indeed, farming was still the most important industry in Delaware at the beginning of the 1930s; her farm products were sold to approximately half the states of the Union, and were widely distributed in Canada and the various countries of South America and Europe as well.<sup>28</sup>

Both Kent and Sussex had been economically depressed since farm prices fell at the end of World War I.<sup>29</sup> They had also suffered from the Japanese beetle plague which, by 1929, had reached Dover and caused the whole state to be put under quarantine.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, although Delaware farmers were adversely affected by the depression, they suffered considerably less than those in the industrialised northern county of New Castle, because of the diversified farming followed in the state, abundant crops and relatively stable markets. A major factor in the economic development of both counties was the construction of the Du Pont Highway. The instigator of this spine of Delaware's state-wide system of roads was T. Coleman du Pont. It promoted the growing of "truck" crops, which included thousands of bushels of peaches, cantaloupes, strawberries,

potatoes and other produce; and more importantly, it facilitated the haulage of vast numbers of crates of live poultry to the markets of Philadelphia, New York and other north-eastern cities.<sup>31</sup> The "Delmarva Broiler" was one of the principal reasons that southern Delaware was saved from the worst effects of the depression. It was a new agricultural product which reached large-scale development just as the depression was spreading across America. This new industry had been started in Sussex county in the late twenties and had spread rapidly. In 1928, 500 poultry farms in southern Delaware produced a million broilers between them; in the following year that total doubled; and by 1930, egg and broiler production combined had become Delaware's most valuable farming sector. Poultry rearing in Sussex county alone increased by a million chickens per year between 1930 and 1935, when it reached a total of 6,000,000, and the industry continued to expand in subsequent years.<sup>32</sup> As a result of such localised, counter-cyclical prosperity, it was not until September 1931, when Governor C. Douglass Buck - a cousin by marriage to Pierre du Pont - invited the mayors of all Delaware towns to a meeting in Dover "to consider a plan to assist those who may be in dire want this winter", so that any coordinated action to combat the problem of unemployment was undertaken in the state as a whole.<sup>33</sup>

#### The Family Society

In May, Associated Charities was renamed "The Family Society", a name which was considered more descriptive of the services it was now being called upon to provide,<sup>34</sup> and a month later it took over responsibility for the provision of relief to Wilmington's unemployed at the request of the mayor's Emergency Unemployment Relief Committee. It also undertook to raise the funds necessary to fulfill this task. Despite the expectation that the coming of summer would lessen the problems created by unemployment, these continued to increase. One of the most serious was the increasing number of evictions that had begun to occur throughout Wilmington. Landlords who had been "unusually lenient" during the previous year were finding it "impossible to continue that attitude further." The consequence was that, unless the Family Society was able and willing to

assist in paying rents, numbers of families would soon be thrown out onto the streets. At a meeting held at the Du Pont Biltmore Hotel on 16 June, Ethelda Mullen told those assembled that more than 1,000 families in Wilmington "must look absolutely to public contributions for their barest necessities"; also that "these families, including children, amount to about four thousand persons."<sup>35</sup> The Family Society's initial appeal did not succeed in raising the needed funds, despite sending out a written request to some 3,000 prospective contributors and publicising the nature of the crisis in local newspapers. It thus had funds barely sufficient to last until the end of July. In the middle of the month, Lamot du Pont, chairman of the society's finance committee, wrote to some 200 wealthy persons, including members of the du Pont family, in an endeavour to raise the \$35,000 which was needed to continue the provision of relief for the months of August and September. He called their attention to "the serious situation ... in Wilmington as a result of the prolonged period of unemployment" and told them that 90 per cent of the donations received had come from "only twenty-two people". Lamot continued, "we do feel, however, that the burden should be distributed over a considerably larger number of people than are now carrying it" and invited them to "have a share or to increase their share in this relief work".<sup>36</sup>

In spite of the initial difficulties experienced by the Family Society in raising funds during the summer of 1931, Governor Buck was apparently satisfied both with the way in which Delaware was coping with problems of unemployment resulting from the depression, and with the plans for unemployment relief in the coming winter. On 3 September 1931, he sent a telegram to President Hoover advising him that "the citizens of Delaware can be counted on to provide such financial help as is required to care for those in need in this State during the coming winter."<sup>37</sup>

#### State finances

Coincident with the onset of the depression in Delaware, the state was experiencing a peak year in terms of the income it received from taxes, fees and licences. At the end of Fiscal 1930 (30 June), total receipts from these sources amounted to \$15,545,518 and the state's cash balance at



this time was \$12,646,806. By the end of Fiscal 1931, although the receipts from all funds had fallen by almost \$1 million to \$14,545,703, state balances had actually risen by more than \$2 million to \$15,010,053!<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, unlike many other states, Delaware had no major bond indebtedness on which to pay interest.<sup>39</sup> The healthy condition of Delaware's finances was no doubt a major factor behind Governor Buck's confidence in the ability of his state to care for those in need in the winter of 1931.

Further indications of Delaware's sound financial position at the beginning of the 1930s were the banking conditions throughout the state (these were exceptionally satisfactory with the state's various banks having total resources, on 30 June 1930, of \$165,537,296); and the measures recommended by the governor to the One Hundred and Third General Assembly on 6 January 1931. Among the measures he put forward was an amendment to the state income tax law to allow a 50 per cent rebate in the amount of tax any citizen might owe on his or her income, beginning with the year 1930, because the revenue collected from income and franchise taxes to support the school system was in excess of actual needs. The governor's budget showed the estimated surplus in the school fund to be more than \$9 million as of July 1933. Governor Buck also recommended that the fees for all classes of licences to operate motor vehicles be reduced from \$3 to \$2. The reason behind this particular proposal was that the Highway Department had financed its 1930 road-building work from its current income, and could continue its construction programme at the same rate without issuing any more bonds. However, the governor placed one condition on this reduction: namely, that the existing bonded debt should be reduced by \$1 million to be transferred from the General Fund.<sup>40</sup>

#### Mayor Spark's committee

As the winter of 1931 approached, the unemployment situation in New Castle county, and particularly in Wilmington, grew worse and Pierre du Pont became concerned at the potential cost of relief. He expressed this concern in a letter to Governor Buck in early September:

The question of money will, I fear, be embarrassing. A rough estimate indicates that \$100,000 will be needed for charitable work. No question of employment enters in. This money must be raised by individual subscription. In addition to the above it may require \$300,000 to \$400,000 to furnish work for those who are unemployed. I feel that it is out of the question to raise this sum by private subscription at this time. On this account I urge you to consider most carefully the question of a special session of the legislature to provide funds for the emergency.<sup>41</sup>

Despite Pierre's misgivings, a more positive approach to the provision of work-relief, or as it was termed "non-competitive" work, was apparent in relief planning for the winter of 1931-32, and on 5 September the new mayor of Wilmington, Frank C. Sparks, announced the formation of an Employment and Relief Committee. The subtle change in title from the previous year emphasised the commitment to work-relief. Stressing that the emphasis was on employment, Mayor Sparks went on to identify the committee's objective as being "to give work to as many of the unemployed as possible." He qualified this statement, however, by adding: "I mean residents of Wilmington district, not floaters."<sup>42</sup> This new committee, which consisted of 58 well-known citizens, was initially chaired by William B. Foster, but he was forced to retire on account of ill health early in November. Foster was then replaced by Frank McHugh who, for the second time, became chairman of a mayor of Wilmington's relief committee. At the same time, Irénée du Pont was appointed as a member of the committee's finance sub-committee and his brothers, Pierre and Lamot, agreed to underwrite the committee's overhead costs.<sup>43</sup> This organisation set up by the mayor was charged with responsibility for raising funds by public and private subscription, and with these to operate an employment and relief programme.<sup>44</sup> As in the winter of 1930-31, the Family Society was appointed to take charge of relief work among those families and single women who were destitute because of unemployment. This task was in addition to the society's primary responsibility of caring for families who, because they were destitute due to reasons other than unemployment, were not entitled to receive aid from the funds collected by the mayor's Employment and Relief Committee. Some indication of the magnitude of this primary task was given by Lamot du Pont, chairman of the Family Society's finance sub-committee, when he wrote in a November appeal for funds: "The Family Society is again facing a most serious situation in regard to the coming winter. We have a

large number of families who are dependent solely upon us ... whose relief will depend entirely on contributions made to us by our friends...."<sup>45</sup> In the event, the demands on the society were such that by October it was already running a deficit of \$8,000. This was only covered by a timely contribution from the mayor's committee.<sup>46</sup>

Relief was divided by the committee into five categories and the agencies to be officially recognised to take the responsibility for these were nominated. In addition to the Family Society, whose primary responsibility was for family relief and the relief of single women, the Salvation Army was again called upon to provide relief for single men without dependents. The Travelers Aid Society was given the responsibility for the relief of transients, who were given a meal and lodgings if necessary and vigorously pressed to leave town.<sup>47</sup> The Visiting Nurses Association supplied of medicines for special cases and the Wilmington Board of Public Education assumed responsibility for providing milk and lunches to under-nourished children.<sup>48</sup>

The mayor's committee set \$200,000 as the sum needed to provide work and relief for the jobless. A salary and payroll deduction plan was adopted under which employees in both private industry and public service were asked to contribute one per cent of their earnings to the fund from October onwards. By mid-October, the Du Pont Company, Hercules Company and more than 60 other corporations and stores had joined the voluntary effort to make contributions from their employees' salaries.<sup>49</sup> Assistant Secretary of State W. D. Denney informed the governor in September that, as all state officials and employees had agreed to contribute to the fund, all three counties would be able to benefit. In 1931 the state's monthly payroll stood at \$257,057. New Castle county, with \$110,055, accounted for the largest share of this, while the payrolls of Kent and Sussex counties amounted to \$77,111 and \$69,890 respectively. Each county's potential contribution, therefore, added up to quite a significant sum.<sup>50</sup>

Lists were compiled of those who had been liberal in their donations to the 1930-31 fund-raising campaign and those named on them were asked to pledge contributions for the four months beginning in November.<sup>51</sup> As an incentive to potential contributors, the mayor's committee, having obtained

a legal opinion on the question of whether contributions to the relief fund were tax deductible, issued a statement confirming that donations could indeed be offset against taxable income on both the federal and Delaware Income Tax returns, up to an amount not exceeding 15 per cent of net earnings. This scheme was later extended to a larger group.<sup>52</sup> The task of soliciting donations from du Pont family members who had generously contributed to the previous winter's campaign fell to Irénée. A list of family contributors was prepared by William du Pont Jr. and sent to Irénée with a covering letter from William Foster, the committee's general chairman. In this letter, he suggested the amounts that they would like to secure from those listed.<sup>53</sup> This solicitation campaign proved to be highly successful, with a total of \$350,057 being raised by the end of 1931.

In an effort to find further work-relief projects, Governor Buck wrote to companies all over Delaware asking for suggestions about ways of relieving the unemployment situation; he even asked recipients to consider undertaking government work in order to provide jobs for the unemployed. His requests met with very limited success. Various school boards submitted details of necessary work that could be carried out to aid the unemployed, and the Delaware National Guard submitted a list of property repairs totalling \$18,000.<sup>54</sup> For its part, the Highways Department issued \$1 million in road bonds to provide the jobless of the state's three counties with employment during the winter; and the City of Wilmington issued \$400,000 worth of bonds to finance various work-relief projects in the city.<sup>55</sup> Indeed, the Wilmington bond issue brought the city almost to the limit of its authorized borrowing, which, when coupled with a fall in revenue from other sources, subsequently forced the city council to cut its 1932-33 budget by \$47,000. As a result of this, the city's Department of Public Safety announced at the end of May that in view of its reduced budget, rather than cutting the salaries of firemen and police, it would "exercise every effort to make every possible economy ... even the cutting of their [own] pay and reducing the pay of the higher grade officers in both the Bureaus [sic] of Fire and Police." Another economy given serious consideration was the abolition, either wholly or in part, of the police motor unit, even though it was realised that "this step would mean that

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many of the patrolmen who are now riding their districts will walk their 'beats'.<sup>56</sup> As an economy measure, the city's Board of Education decided not to raise the salaries of teachers for one year thereby producing an estimated saving to the city of \$50,000. Furthermore, the budget cut also resulted in drastic reductions in the purchase of books and other supplies, and the cutting of funds for repairs to school buildings.<sup>57</sup>

However, the City of Wilmington was not Delaware's only unit of administration to experience financial problems in the early months of 1932; the state itself was beginning to feel the effects of falling revenues. In May 1932, the governor asked all organisations receiving state appropriations to accept a voluntary reduction of 10 per cent in their grant for the year 1932-33; and as the depression deepened in the winter of 1932-33, the General Assembly demanded a reduction in salaries of 10 per cent for all those earning between \$1,200 and \$3,000 per annum; 15 per cent for those between \$3,500 and \$5,000; and 20 per cent for those receiving above \$5,000 a year.<sup>58</sup>

In October 1931, at the request of the governor and in an endeavour to obtain an accurate picture of the unemployment problem in the whole of Delaware, Pierre du Pont, in his capacity as the state's Tax Commissioner sent out a questionnaire about the extent of unemployment to every officially registered person over 21 years of age. The result of this survey gave the number of unemployed men in the state as 5,574; 4,792 of these were white and 782 black. Of this total, 3,271 were residents of Wilmington and the surrounding area, while in the rest of the state the number of unemployed men was found to be 2,303. This represented a little over 7 per cent of Delaware's male work force. In addition more than 1,000 women were also reported as unemployed. It was concluded that the situation was only acute in Wilmington;<sup>59</sup> nevertheless, as a result of the survey's findings, Governor Buck decided to appoint relief committees for Sussex and Kent counties as well. The chief task of these would be to disburse the funds raised by voluntary salary contributions from state employees in those counties.<sup>60</sup>

In November, in answer to an enquiry about relief funding in the state from the Director of the Federal Employment Stabilization Board in

Washington, DC, the governor wrote informing him that

the high spots of Delaware's relief program included the following: State Road Program of \$1,000,000 (bond issue); bond issue by the City of Wilmington of \$400,000 for municipal improvements; a relief fund of approximately \$250,000 from the citizens of the state. In addition to the above all state and county employees are contributing one per cent of their salaries for five to six months.<sup>61</sup>

Confidence in the state's ability to cope with its unemployment situation was also demonstrated in a telegram sent by Pierre du Pont to Walter S. Gifford, Chairman of the President's Unemployment Relief Committee (POUR), in October: "On consultation with Governor C. Douglass Buck and William B. Foster, Chairman of Mayor's Unemployment [sic] Relief Committee City of Wilmington am satisfied that unemployment situation is being cared for."<sup>62</sup>

It was decided early on that all workers employed on work relief projects funded by the mayor's committee should be drawn from the list of unemployed persons held by the Federal Bureau of Employment offices in Wilmington. This list had only recently been brought up to date by a two-week campaign in October to record those who had not previously registered as needing work. This was to make sure that employment was only given to *bona fide* Delawareans. Arrangements were made for the separate registration of those unemployed workers, including women, who were not of the labouring class, to ensure their segregation from the common labourers. The committee also established a Veterans' Department whose objective was to register all unemployed ex-servicemen in Wilmington and its vicinity. Six unemployed veterans were employed for one week to facilitate the registration. The Veterans' Department also cooperated with the various American Legion posts throughout the state to conduct an extensive registration of unemployed veterans. As a result, a total of 1,486 ex-servicemen were found to be unemployed in Delaware and many towns in Kent and Sussex counties, contrary to their earlier beliefs, discovered that they actually did had an unemployment problem.<sup>63</sup>

One of the first work-relief projects to be partially funded by the mayor's committee was the extension of the city's water main to the Ferris Industrial School in Wilmington. An appropriation of \$15,000 had earlier been made by the General Assembly for this project, but the sum had proved to be inadequate. It was decided that the appropriation should now be used for the purchase of materials and that the cost of labour should be met

from relief funds; a further \$20,000 was also provided by the committee to cover the labour costs for this project. Other work-relief projects were carried out in cooperation with the Highway Commission and the state Board of Education. These projects were not confined to Wilmington but spread throughout the state, with one of the early projects being the construction of a school at Selbyville in Sussex county.<sup>64</sup>

By December, the Salvation Army was expending \$250 a week on meal tickets for single men, which were honoured by a number of Wilmington's restaurants. Meanwhile, the Family Society was spending \$5,000 a week providing relief for families and single women. During the first week of December 1931, 950 men and women were employed on "non-competitive" work-relief projects with a weekly payroll of \$13,300. By the end of the following week, 1,000 men and 200 women were being employed on work-relief projects and the weekly payroll had increased to \$14,500; in addition to this \$6,500 was being spent for direct relief.<sup>65</sup>

The cost of relief continued to increase, and in January 1932 \$52,788 was spent on direct relief and \$67,200 on work-relief. The city's budget for this purpose, approved on 17 February 1932, was \$650,057 which covered non-competitive and state road work; a traffic survey; the operating costs of the clothing supply unit and women's sewing unit; as well as direct relief and general expenses. To obtain the additional \$300,000 needed for this budget, another public fund-raising campaign was launched. Once again, William du Pont resorted to his list of the 70 people who had already given the largest amounts to the winter campaign. He informed Irénée du Pont in a letter written on 3 March 1932 that:

Most of them have responded by doubling or more than doubling their contributions. Pierre, for instance, who had given \$55,400.00 and Lamont, who had given \$25,000.00 are both doubling up. This has given us a good start, and I now have in sight from my special list about \$140,000.00. It looks as if salary deduction contributions should be good for \$40,000.00 and the public campaign for smaller contributions should net at least another \$40,000.00. The total of these sums will make up \$220,000.00 and it looks as if the balance to make up \$300,000.00 is going to be a real problem.<sup>66</sup>

His misgivings, however, proved to be unfounded. Governor Buck's opportune suggestion to chairman McHugh that income-tax payers should contribute some of the savings resulting from the reduction of 50 per cent in state income tax may have had a stimulating effect on the campaign which, by 11 March,

had exceeded its target.

Of the work-relief projects included in the budget, the traffic survey was perhaps unique. It was specially devised to provide work for the white-collar unemployed. The survey provided work for "many capable engineers, draftsmen and others not physically able to perform the physical labor of other units of the Work Program." \$24,000 was allocated for this project,<sup>67</sup> \$20,000 of which was provided by Irénée du Pont and his cousin Alfred. The former had promised to contribute \$10,000 to the employment relief fund for the use of white-collar workers provided that the latter would "chip in" the same amount.<sup>68</sup>

The demands on the mayor's committee continued to increase during the following months and by April, despite the additional funds raised by William du Pont's appeal in March, all temporary work-relief had ceased due to lack of funds. This resulted in an increased demand for food orders, and by the end of May 3,000 families, comprising some 12,000 persons, were in receipt of direct relief. The committee's funds were rapidly being depleted and chairman McHugh, in a letter to sponsors in all those industrial and mercantile establishments where workers had been giving one per cent of their earnings, advised them that by 31 May, the date on which the committee had originally planned to cease its activities, its finances would be exhausted.<sup>69</sup>

The total expenditure for relief in Delaware during the eight months from November 1931 to June 1932 was \$1,914,570. Almost half of this amount was obtained from private subscribers. The greater part of this total, amounting to \$1,407,427 was spent in New Castle county, most of it in Wilmington. This expenditure included the cost of direct relief, \$576,885; work-relief, \$813,425; and overhead expenses of \$17,117. In Kent county, a total of \$13,935 was spent on aid to the unemployed, \$10,935 of it on direct relief and the remaining \$3,000 on work-relief. Sussex county spent even less on assisting those without jobs, just \$11,652 in total, of which \$10,302 was for direct and \$1,350 for work-relief. In addition to the sums spent on relief by the three counties, the Highway Department provided \$481,556 in emergency contracts for employment of the jobless.<sup>70</sup>



### The Block-Aid campaign

To raise the additional funds needed to enable it to continue the provision of relief, the mayor's committee now decided on another fund-raising scheme to be known as the Block-Aid Campaign. The objective of this campaign was to collect at least \$10,500 each week for 20 weeks, beginning on 1 June, to provide food for Wilmington's "hungry men, women and children ... who are without work or means of buying food." The campaign's motto was "Hunger Knows No Holiday".<sup>71</sup>

Walter Dent Smith was appointed chairman of the Block-Aid campaign, under which the city was divided into 44 districts. A commander was appointed for each district and tasked with recruiting 2,000 volunteers to solicit weekly contributions from every home, office building and industrial plant in their territory. These collectors were bonded, and accounts were audited weekly and monthly to ensure that "every penny contributed went directly for food orders." Employees were asked to continue subscribing through the salary and payroll deduction plan and contributions now went directly to the Block-Aid campaign. Moreover, the campaign was widely advertised in shops, newspapers and on trolley cars.<sup>72</sup>

The Block-Aid campaign was launched at a mass meeting held in the state Armory in Wilmington on Wednesday, 1 June. The meeting was attended by leading members of Wilmington's religious communities: Rabbi Henry Tavel of Congregation Beth Emeth, Bishop Edmund J. FitzMaurice, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington, and The Reverend Charles L. Candee, Minister of the Presbyterian Church. Final instructions were given to the volunteer workers by Smith himself, in which he explained the methods for obtaining pledges and the manner in which the campaign was to be conducted. This was to be done by the sale of "Stamp Out Hunger" stamps, available in various denominations between 10 cents and \$5. Each subscriber was required to sign a pledge to buy one of these stamps every week for a period of 20 weeks, and was to be given a certificate to show that he or she had enrolled. By the end of the campaign over 15,000 persons had subscribed in this manner. According to the chairman, this was the largest number ever enlisted into a community effort in Wilmington, during either peace or wartime.<sup>73</sup> Workers were told that if they came across a needy

case it should be reported to the Block-Aid headquarters, where immediate action would be taken to give relief. The meeting was also addressed by Pierre du Pont in his capacity as the Delaware member of President Hoover's Committee on Employment and Relief.<sup>74</sup>

The deteriorating situation in Wilmington was not reflected in either Sussex or Kent counties. Frank M. Jones, chairman of the Sussex county Unemployment Relief Committee, informed Governor Buck on 5 May that

"... after making our distributions for May there would be no necessity for any further general distribution [of relief funds] at this time."<sup>75</sup>

And on 14 June, Mrs W. W. Sharp, secretary to the Kent County Committee for the Relief of Unemployment, wrote to the governor advising him of the final meeting of that body and stating confidently: "The Committee feels that another contribution is not necessary ... each member reported a generous balance in hand."<sup>76</sup>

The mayor's committee was finally dissolved on 18 August, and the Block-Aid committee thereafter took over the financing and provision of relief in Wilmington. The committee raised \$238,524 for this purpose and provided food orders to a monthly average of 3,147 homes, representing approximately 13,627 individuals. Families who received food orders were invited to donate their services on useful work-projects. 1,585 men volunteered and were employed felling dead trees on city park land and cutting weeds on vacant city blocks, thereby "contributing greatly to the appearance and sanitation of these areas." Fuel, clothing and shelter were also provided in cases where dire distress was apparent by their absence. Block-Aid funding enabled the Salvation Army to provide single men with 35,642 meals at a cost of \$7,349, and also provided a special fund of \$7,500 for the purchase of shoes and clothing for children "to ensure that no child might be denied schooling due to unemployment conditions". A total of 2,847 children were aided by this fund.

Reporting the successful conclusion of the Block-Aid Campaign on 31 October 1932, Walter Dent Smith in a letter to Mayor Sparks acknowledged the support that the campaign had received from a number of prominent individuals "to whom a deep debt of gratitude is owed by our community".

He was particular to single out two members of the du Pont family:

"Especial citations are accorded to ... Pierre S. du Pont for his ever alert anxiety to serve, which found expression in inspiring leadership as well as great material gifts ... and William du Pont Jr. for energetic promotion of the special gifts campaign which provided \$98,000.00."<sup>77</sup> The achievements of this unique fund-raising effort were very real and impressive; not only did it provide the essential funds needed for the relief of some 68,000 of Wilmington's unemployed during its five months duration, but also publicised their plight and encouraged a significant number of its citizens to participate in this worthy cause. Moreover, it demonstrated once again the philanthropy of the du Ponts and other wealthy persons who contributed more than 40 per cent of the total raised by the campaign, which exceeded its initial target by \$28,524.

In spite of the efforts to provide relief to the unemployed that were still being made during the summer of 1932, there was a growing element of dissatisfaction amongst the jobless. This manifested itself in the formation of the Unemployed Council of Wilmington, an organisation representing both white and black unemployed men, which in June had presented the mayor and city council with a list of demands they claimed would aid the city's unemployed. On 8 July, a delegation from the council was denied permission to hold street meetings in Wilmington by Chief of Police Howard L. Boyd on the grounds that "danger might arise from some remark passed by a member of the audience not in sympathy with the organisation."<sup>78</sup> The council was again active during August. On the first day of the month a mixed-race committee of the Unemployed Council's leaders marched on the mayor's Employment and Relief Committee offices at Sixth and Shipley streets, where Joseph Green, their spokesman, belligerently presented demands to McCann and John C. Saylor for \$5 food orders each week for unemployed men with families, and \$3 food orders for single men without work. These demands met with no success. On 8 August, the Unemployed Council went to Dover to present a petition to the governor demanding a special session of the legislature to provide immediate relief for the jobless.<sup>79</sup> This too was unsuccessful.

The objectives of the Unemployed Council were perhaps not wholly representative of the attitude of the majority of the unemployed, who were generally believed to favour work rather than the dole. They certainly did not reflect the views of those who, rather than suffer the perceived stigma of accepting relief, exhausted not only their own resources but in some cases those of their families and friends rather than accept what was seen as charity from either the state or local organizations. Michael B. Katz, In the Shadow of the Poor House, records that "... many of the new destitute, desperate to avoid the stigma of pauperism, turned first elsewhere, everywhere, anywhere before asking for help."<sup>80</sup> This could be explained by the fact that the middle classes were used to working hard and expected little from government, and may account for the reluctance of the "newly" unemployed to go on relief. They blamed themselves not society; unemployment made them ashamed, defensive, reclusive. They were more likely to berate themselves and were the last to go to the relief office. Patterson asserts this was due to "the persistence of attitudes popular among middle classes: that many, if not most, of the destitute are undeserving; that large numbers of poor people exist in an inter-generational 'culture of poverty'; that social insurance is preferable to welfare, which is wasteful and demoralizing; ... that work, not welfare, is the essence of the meaningful life."<sup>81</sup>

The Unemployed Council comprised a working-class minority organized by activists from the left who, seeing the potential for unrest among the unemployed, strove to build organization and sought (unsuccessfully in Delaware) to make some capital from the situation. This was an objective that was deplored by Saylor, who told Green: "... no group should take advantage of the present economic situation for party or political purposes and establish a class hatred among the workers."<sup>82</sup>

As early as 1929, the Communists had begun a national campaign to form "Unemployed Councils". During the winter of 1929-1930, they worked vigorously on the breadlines, in flop houses, among the men waiting at factory gates, and in the relief offices. They seized upon every grievance as an opportunity for inciting mass action. They were particularly active in the coal regions of West Virginia and New Mexico where unemployment was

endemic; they led hunger marches in Charleston, West Virginia and mass resistance against evictions of unemployed miners in Gallup, New Mexico.<sup>83</sup> However, Anthony Badger speculates that "probably less than five per cent of the unemployed were engaged at any one time in the [Unemployed] Councils" and also records that by the end of 1930 "Communist officials were reporting that the Unemployed Councils are dying out".<sup>84</sup> Therefore, the lack of success of the Unemployed Council of Wilmington in 1932 is hardly surprising.

#### The state relief commission

On 10 June 1932, Governor Buck announced the appointment of the Delaware Emergency Relief Commission. The commission was composed of eight members: two from Wilmington, Pierre du Pont and Walter Dent Smith; two from New Castle county, Reba T. Holcomb and Jasper Crane (who was appointed chairman of the commission); two from Kent county, Mayor J. Wallace Woodford of Dover (vice-chairman) and Margaret Grimm of Smyrna; and two from Sussex county, Ruby R. Vale of Milford and Ernest C. Simon of Seaford.<sup>85</sup> At its initial meeting on 21 June, the commission was requested "to determine the extent and method of employment and relief to be afforded our jobless citizens in the near future and to recommend a program of work and direct relief." The commission carried out an extensive study of the situation and reported its findings at the end of September:

While recognising that under normal conditions the securing of employment is primarily the responsibility of the individual and that relief when it becomes necessary is primarily the function of local as opposed to State agencies, the Commission is convinced that the present emergency is so severe and wide-spread as to imperil the public health and safety of the State and its inhabitants and has thus become a matter of public concern.

It concluded that the situation then prevailing could not be handled adequately by local resources alone and that there was an imperative need for further assistance by the state. These findings were based on information about conditions furnished by the mayor's committee and Block-Aid Committee of Wilmington, by the mayors of incorporated cities and towns throughout the state, and by county welfare committees and Trustees of the Poor. The commission noted that the emergency was most severe in Wilmington where it was found that rents, taxes, and interest on mortgages

were all seriously in arrears, evictions were becoming more frequent, and people whose livelihoods were dependent on rents were becoming greatly embarrassed. It also found that there was much unemployment need throughout the other parts of Delaware. It was estimated that the number of unemployed in New Castle county was 16,000, and in Kent and Sussex counties, 1,800. The combined total of the unemployed represented almost 13 per cent of all adults in the state, or one out of every eight. It was also estimated that about one-fifth of the heads of the 59,000 families in Delaware who were normally employed, were now out of work.

The commission went on to state its belief that the estimated needs of Wilmington's unemployed, judged in the light of the experience of 1931-1932, would have to be based on the assumption that relief would be required "for the continuous and practically entire support of about five thousand families in the summer months and over seven thousand families in the winter months." The total fund required for this provision for the 12 months beginning in November 1932, was estimated at \$2,348,000. This calculation was based on an average monthly budget of \$36 per month "to provide the bare necessities of life for a city family of four and one third persons lacking any other support." The funds required for relief in the rest of the state for the same period were estimated by doubling the amounts spent on relief during the previous 12 months, i.e. \$121,000, making a grand total for the entire state of \$2,469,000 for the year beginning 1 November 1932.

It was the commission's view that:

While this estimate is based largely on the Wilmington experience ... it must be understood that the whole fund is to apply to the entire State. No limitation on the amount to be spent in any particular district is indicated, this will depend entirely on the needs of the various communities.

And it expressed its conviction that wherever possible relief should be extended in the form of work, as unemployed people wanted jobs, not charity. All possibilities for work were explored and the public, as well as the mayors and presidents of town councils, were invited to make suggestions about desirable work projects. The work suggestions were submitted to various specialists for study and report, and a list of projects considered to be of permanent value, involving a high percentage

of wage cost to total cost, was drawn up. These included mosquito control work; the conversion of old school sites in Wilmington into state-owned recreation centres; the grading of grounds at public schools, the state hospital and other sites; sewing units for the employment of women; and state highway department emergency contracts assigned to the state relief administration. In this latter work it was recommended that the state highway department should exclude the use of machinery wherever possible, and that the employment of Delaware labour be made mandatory. The recommended programme of work involved an expenditure of \$1,367,650 throughout the state, including \$862,500 for wages. The commission also recommended that workmen's compensation insurance be provided both for the protection of the men and of the administration, in case of controversy or lawsuit over injuries to workmen.

The amount recommended for direct relief was \$1,408,400, with the provisos that "where work cannot be provided and direct relief must be resorted to, it should not be classed as charity but temporary relief of needy unemployed persons ... and publicity regarding direct relief is to be avoided so as to protect the morale of those who require assistance." The commission's report recommended that the state contribute 80 per cent of the direct relief funds required by any community on the condition that the community itself raised the balance of 20 per cent. Including this contribution and the costs of the emergency highway contracts, the total funds to be provided for the relief programme from November 1932 to October 1933 were estimated at \$2,776,050. According to the estimates of the commission, the amount of state aid required for one year for direct relief was \$1,408,400 and for work-relief \$649,650, making some \$2,058,050 in all; this was subsequently rounded down to \$2 million.<sup>86</sup> However, as the depression was still considered a temporary phenomenon, it was suggested that the state borrow the funds required for relief and repay such borrowings over a term of 10 years by annual appropriations from its General Fund.

Delaware's Attorney General, P. Warren-Green, gave his opinion with regard to the General Assembly appropriating money as follows:

I am of the opinion that the General Assembly has the right to appropriate money for a public, but not for a private purpose. I believe that the money

may be lawfully appropriated to take care of the poor of the State or for the purposes of creating employment, provided the persons employed are performing some public work.

The Block-Aid committee had undertaken to take care of the relief needs of the Wilmington district until November, using funds raised by private subscription. Consequently the Unemployment Relief Commission recommended that the governor call the General Assembly into special session, as soon as possible after the elections on 8 November, to authorise

the issue as and when required of relief bonds maturing in 1942 ... bearing interest at the rate of two per cent in the amount of \$2,000,000 to finance the State's contribution to relief over the year November 1st 1932 to October 31st 1933 or for such longer period as may be authorised but not to exceed an additional six months; that it authorised that \$2,000,000 of the school fund be invested in these relief bonds, thus effecting the borrowing of the necessary funds for relief from the School Fund without any cost to the State for financing.<sup>87</sup>

The commission further recommended that the highway department should carry out emergency highway contracts amounting to \$718,000 for the year, for which they already had the necessary funds available.

Recommendations concerning the administration of relief in Delaware were made following a study of the relief legislation and administration in the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Rhode Island and Wisconsin. The proposal was that relief should be managed by a continuation of central control and decentralized operation, and that the machinery established should be as simple as possible. The commission recommended the setting up by the governor of an Emergency Relief Administration for the State of Delaware consisting of seven members: three to be appointed relief directors, for each of the three counties, and four to be appointed members-at-large. A chairman, vice-chairman and secretary-treasurer were to be nominated from among the last four members to form the organization's executive and all members were to serve without remuneration. This executive administration was to have all the powers necessary to carry out any and all relief acts passed by the General Assembly, to receive funds and disburse them to the county directors, to approve county relief organisations and relief programmes, and to make rules for work and direct relief. County committees, composed of the combined citizens' committees of the incorporated towns of the counties, were also to be formed, with the responsibility for raising the funds



necessary to provide the county's 20 per cent of the total fund needed for direct relief. Optimistically, it was also provided that "if conditions should improve so that it is indicated that the continuation of State aid is no longer necessary, the Relief Administration upon approval of the Governor may terminate its activities upon thirty days' previous notice."<sup>88</sup>

The commission's Report listed rules for the distribution of relief, which included: no discrimination against any applicant on the grounds of race, colour, religious creed or political affiliation; no assistance for those who are always out of a job or the "down and outers" who are a permanent charge upon the community; and every beneficiary of direct relief to have been a resident or a citizen of Delaware for at least one year, or to have been regularly employed in the state for six months. It also listed the classes of persons not eligible for relief as those who received old age pensions or mother's aid from the state, and those who were registered as physically or mentally incapacitated from earning a living. No cash was to be given for direct relief, which was to be furnished by the issue of orders for food, clothing, rent, fuel, light, or other necessities of life. Work-relief wages were to be payable weekly in cash at the full current rate for similar tasks. The commission recommended, as an important influence in combatting unemployment, that encouragement should be given to the efforts to spread work wherever possible.<sup>89</sup>

#### Relief in Wilmington: Winter 1932-33

Implementation of state-wide plans, however, lay in the future. On 6 October, Mayor Sparks announced plans for the relief of Wilmington's unemployed throughout the winter of 1932-1933. The mayor's Employment and Relief Committee was to be reactivated for the third successive year. Its task, as in previous years, was to provide relief to those who had no work, by seeking contributions from those who had regular jobs and who received regular salaries. The Wilmington evening newspaper reported that: "In taking this action Mayor Sparks is not only following his personal view, but has taken the advice of President Hoover, who has ... urged all municipalities to try as much as is possible to care for their own." The mayor himself was quoted as saying: "I am anxious to get the organisation

started so that the committee shall be ready to function by November 1 when the Block-Aid Committee ceases to function."<sup>90</sup> Nominating Frank McHugh again as chairman of the mayor's Employment and Relief Committee, Sparks commented: "This man did excellent work two years ago, and last year I know he did splendid work...."<sup>91</sup> The reactivation of the committee once again demonstrated the self-help and altruism which was so typical of the state's approach to resolving the problems created by unemployment, and provided further evidence that, at least in Delaware, the President's exhortations were not falling on deaf ears!

The Block-Aid committee's activities did indeed end on 1 November 1932, and Mayor Sparks' Relief Committee was called upon to take charge of the relief administration until the General Assembly acted on the recommendations of the Unemployment Commission.<sup>92</sup> Although the Block-Aid committee had been well supported financially during its life-time, it nevertheless accumulated a deficit of \$20,521.<sup>93</sup> Governor Buck, on being informed that the committee had that day ceased operations and also that the Trustees of the Poor of New Castle County had been forced to discontinue relief due to lack of funds, issued the following statement:

From information obtained in the newspapers today I learn that no further relief for the unemployed is to be disbursed by the Trustees of the Poor of New Castle County and it is generally conceded that the Block-Aid Committee ... will cease after tonight. This creates a situation whereby those who are dependent upon either Block-Aid or the Trustees of the Poor for assistance would seem to be without any established source of support.... I desire to inform this class of our citizens that in no event will those who are needy and distressed due to unemployment be allowed to suffer. Arrangements will be made that the same relief that has been disbursed ... will be continued.... To this end the credit of the State will be pledged to those who are called upon to fill these [food] orders until the Legislature can be convened and settlement for the same will be made within the usual time.<sup>94</sup>

The mayor's committee assumed the work of the Block-Aid committee at once and continued to issue food orders until 21 November, when chairman McHugh was informed by Jasper E. Crane, the temporary Emergency Director for the state of Delaware, that the governor had been unable to make funds available to pay for these. The reason for this was the Attorney General's ruling that the act creating the state's Contingent Fund, from which the governor had hoped to be able to meet the costs, did not permit the use of any money appropriated under it to be spent for the mayor's relief committee, or for that matter on any other charitable organisation that was

in need of funds.<sup>95</sup> On receipt of this information, McHugh issued a press release to the effect that it had been found necessary to cease all activities of the mayor's Employment and Relief Committee. "We are without authority to incur any additional credit for obligations on the part of our Committee", he stated somberly. "We are at the present time entirely without funds and unable to pay any obligation."<sup>96</sup> This situation was resolved when the General Assembly provided the mayor's committee with an operating fund of \$75,000, which enabled it to continue to provide food orders to Wilmington's unemployed until 15 December.<sup>97</sup>

The elections of 1932 delayed action by the General Assembly on the recommendations made by the Unemployment Commission, and a further delay, due to the filling of vacancies in the legislature caused by death, resulted in the special session not being called until 15 November. However, these may not have been the only reasons for the apparent tardiness in convening it; for according to a report by a federal representative, Rowland Haynes, following his visit to Delaware in August, it was alleged that the governor was reluctant to call the General Assembly into special session because: "The State's Constitution provides that the legislators shall be paid for a special session up to a period of 31 days." The governor, he believed, was concerned that "the Legislature will dawdle expensively until they get the last dollar of salary available. The Governor wishes to save this expense." The report explained that the special session was not restricted to "action on the subjects specified in the Governor's call" and he was concerned they would "range over a long list of unnecessary and disturbing legislation."<sup>98</sup> Even so, this was only the second time that the Delaware Legislature had been called into extra session since 1917, when the emergency had been occasioned by America's entry into the Great War.<sup>99</sup> X

From 1930 to late 1932, Delaware had coped adequately with the worst effects of the Great Depression, mainly through the generosity of the du Ponts and the altruism of her citizens demonstrating that, in the case of Delaware at least, Hoover's exhortations to self-help and voluntarism were heeded! At this stage, with no federal aid programmes or state help to rely on, the progressive Republicans were prepared to dig into their

pockets. However, as we shall see later, this attitude would be sorely tested when federal help arrived, and so raises the question: did voluntarism only fail when federal aid came? It is evident that altruism and voluntarism were acceptable as a stop-gap measure, but when it became apparent that the depression might become a semi-permanent situation, the perceptions of those giving may have altered appreciably.

By June 1932, however, the incipient realisation that local and private charity could and should be supplemented by state aid resulted in the appointment of the state relief commission, and its findings ultimately in the creation of the Delaware TERC. x

## CHAPTER 2: State and federal involvement in relief 1932-34

The overwhelming Democratic victory in the General Election, and the elevation of Franklin Delano Roosevelt to the Presidency, was the beginning of the resolution of the national crisis brought about by the Great Depression. In Delaware, however, the Democratic surge into power in the state legislature was to prove less advantageous to the unemployed men and women in the industrialized northern county of the state, and particularly in the city of Wilmington.

The Delaware Democrats not only elected the state's sole Congressional Representative-at-large, Wilbur L. Adams, but also captured every county-wide office in Kent and Sussex and gained control of the lower House of the state legislature (by a majority of 22 to 13) for the first time in a decade; this achievement was all the more remarkable because in New Castle county nine of the 15 seats were won by Republicans. It was, perhaps, also significant that Congressman Adams lost in both Wilmington and rural New Castle county, by 2,733 and 1,241 votes respectively, although he had comfortable majorities in Kent (8,002) and Sussex (3,290) counties. Nevertheless, the Republicans managed to retain control of the upper House of the General Assembly, but only by a majority of one. Six Democrats and four Republicans were elected from Kent and Sussex counties, and in New Castle county five of the seven Senate seats being contested were won by GOP candidates. The Republicans, however, did have one significant victory, when Governor Buck became the first governor of Delaware to be re-elected to a second consecutive term and was one of only two Republican governors returned across the whole of the United States in 1932. His election was subsequently to prove of great significance in the fight to obtain funding of relief for the unemployed in the state.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the successes in the state elections, the Democrats were unable to muster a sufficiently large vote to give Roosevelt the state's three electoral votes, making Delaware one of only five states that went to President Hoover.<sup>2</sup>

The Republican ascendancy in New Castle county is surprising in light of the adverse effects of the depression on the northern section of the

state. These might have been expected to undermine the entrenched political bias in favour of the GOP, and to transform it into support for the Roosevelt-led Democrats and the promise of a New Deal. One possible explanation for this apparent aberration is the fact that the leadership in providing relief to the unemployed of New Castle county was provided in the main by Republicans, such as the governor, Mayor Speer and members of the du Pont family, and this may have ensured that the GOP continued to be the most favoured political party in the northern county. Opponents, however, offered an alternative explanation: they claimed that the Republicans spent money to achieve these results. Be this as it may, the change in political control of the House, and the slim Republican majority in the Senate, were both to have marked effects on the provision of relief to the unemployed of Delaware in 1932 and later in 1933, when the intra-state political rivalry over-shadowed the plight of the unemployed.

#### The 104th General Assembly and the Relief Act

On 15 November, the governor called the One Hundred and Fourth General Assembly into special session to consider a measure to provide relief for the unemployed and needy of the state. The proposed bill, which was based on the recommendations of the Delaware Emergency Relief Commission, provided for an appropriation of \$2 million to be obtained from the state school fund. The governor, in his message to the legislature, urged that the business of the session be limited to the subjects of the call. As he told the members:

I have summoned you to the Capitol to ask that you provide for the immediate needs of some 16,000 of our people who are looking to you to save them from starvation this Winter. The State of Delaware is faced with an imperative task. That task, which our duty forbids us to neglect, is to care for those who through no fault of their own are in actual need and will be in worse distress during the coming Winter.

He appealed for an appropriation to be made as soon as possible, because the funds raised by the Block-Aid campaign had been completely exhausted, and "... our citizens are now being cared for with food orders furnished, so to speak, on the credit of the State."<sup>3</sup>

Heedless of the governor's appeal, the General Assembly failed to act

until 1 December when it reached a compromise which resulted in the passage of the relief measure. The delay was caused by opposition from Democrats in both the House and Senate who successfully blocked the emergency relief bill which required a three-quarters majority to become law. It was only after Republican Senator Griffenberg introduced a new bill, at the end November, which could be passed by a simple majority vote, that both Houses succeeded in getting the measure through. In the Senate it passed by 11 votes to six, and in the House by 25 to 10; all votes against the bill were by Democrats from the two southern counties.<sup>4</sup> The chief irony of the delay in passing the relief bill was the cost of the special session, which amounted to \$12,247 in salaries and expenses incurred by members of the legislature, amongst whom were the Democrats who had opposed the measure mainly because of the amount of the appropriation in the bill.<sup>5</sup> The opposition to the relief measure by the Democrats from the southern counties could be attributed in part to the level of need in their own counties compared to that in New Castle county, which would inevitably result in the lion's share of any appropriation going to the northern county, and particularly to Wilmington, the home of the du Ponts who controlled and financed the GOP in the state.

An indication of the seriousness of the effects that the depression was perceived to be having in the state was given in Section 1 of the Act, "Declaration of Emergency":

... the public health and safety of the State and of each county, and town therein are imperilled by the existing and threatened deprivation of a considerable number of their inhabitants of the necessities of life, owing to the present economic depression and the long continued abnormal degree of unemployment resulting therefrom.<sup>6</sup>

Half the appropriation was to be immediately available, and the remaining \$1 million was to be provided on 1 April 1933.<sup>7</sup> The bill made provision for a maximum of \$500,000 to be allocated for work-relief projects in the entire state.<sup>8</sup>

The Act, which included all recommendations made in the Report of the Unemployment Relief Commission, defined the emergency period as

... between 1 November 1932 and 31 October 1933, or such extension period as may be made by the Governor under the authority of the Act or by the General Assembly, or such shorter period as may be fixed by the Governor by his termination of the existence of the commission on thirty days notice.

### The State TERC

The Act created the State of Delaware Temporary Emergency Relief Commission (TERC), and it authorised the governor to appoint a relief commission of eight members, two each from Wilmington, rural New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties. The commissioners were empowered to nominate one of their body as a relief director for each of the districts.<sup>9</sup>

Governor Buck had entered into a gentleman's agreement with the Democratic leadership early in the special session to appoint four of the commission members from candidates whose names they had submitted. Consequently, Thomas M. Monagham of Wilmington; Mayor Frank Collins of Newark in New Castle county; Mrs. James H. Hughes of Dover in Kent county; and Landreth L. Layton of Georgetown in Sussex county, were appointed as the Democrat relief commissioners.<sup>10</sup> The four Republican members of the TERC appointed by the governor were: Jasper E. Crane, who had already served as the state's temporary relief director; Walter Dent Smith; Helen W. Gawthrop; and Everett G. Ackart

On 7 December, the TERC met for the first time and unanimously adopted the following resolution:

As we begin our deliberations, the magnitude of our task has fully come home to us ... the hope and expectations of thousands of our fellow citizens that our actions will save them from cold and hunger this Winter.... No more difficult and important task has been entrusted to a commission in Delaware in this generation.

The commission declared that it would "conduct its work along completely non-partisan lines and be guided throughout its term of service by the principle of administering in the most efficient manner that it could to the needs of those suffering from unemployment." Jasper Crane was elected chairman, and Everett Ackart vice-chairman; he resigned his post at the end of September 1933, although he remained a member of the commission, and was replaced by Frank Collins. A relief director for each county and for Wilmington were also elected: Mrs. Hughes for Kent county; Landreth Layton for Sussex county; Helen Gawthrop for rural New Castle county; and Walter Dent Smith for Wilmington. These latter two regions were subsequently consolidated into one, under the joint management of the relief directors, to save office expenses and to promote efficiency.<sup>11</sup>



On 28 December, Frank McHugh, honorary chairman of the Mayor's Employment and Relief Committee, which had continued to provide food orders during the six weeks from 1 November, when the Block-Aid programme was terminated, until 15 December when the TERC was established, advised the governor: "The officers of the Mayor's Committee have successfully transferred to the State Commission the six main operating divisions of the committee.... The records and personnel were also transferred [sic] to the Commission."<sup>12</sup> On the same date local relief agencies throughout the state were also taken over by the TERC.<sup>13</sup>

To comply with the requirements of the relief act, citizens' relief committees were established in Kent and New Castle counties. The du Pont family were well represented on the latter relief committee. Pierre, his brothers, Irénée and Lamot; his cousin, William, and Mrs V. du Pont were all members of its executive committee. Sussex county, however, failed to form a committee, and as a consequence of this its local contribution to direct relief was obtained directly from the county's Levy Court. The task of these committees was to raise the 20 per cent local contribution required to qualify for the state's 80 per cent grant for direct relief.<sup>14</sup> The New Castle county committee, under the leadership of J. K. Garrigues, was particularly successful and by September 1933 it had raised \$32,000.<sup>15</sup>

Although the responsibility for relief of the unemployed had been transferred to the state TERC, the finance sub-committee of the Mayor's Employment and Relief Committee was still involved in fund raising. William du Pont Jr., in his capacity as chairman of its special gifts committee, wrote to Irénée du Pont thanking him for his continued support and advising him: "Since the State is standing eighty per cent of the greatly increased load of this Winter, it should be an added satisfaction to you to know that each dollar you have pledged guarantees the spending of five dollars in the community for relief."<sup>16</sup> This confirms that the philanthropists, who had funded the several relief organizations in the past, were still prepared to continue their financial support of relief while its provision remained the responsibility of the state. However, it would become obvious later that this was something they were unwilling to do once the federal government intervened.

### The TERC in the counties

New Castle county, because of its large population, was divided into four districts to facilitate the provision of relief; the one centered on Wilmington (where the offices of the relief director and headquarters staff were provided free of charge by the du Pont owned Delaware Trust Company) had the Pennsylvania state-line as its northern boundary, and the Delaware-Chesapeake canal as its southern border. Within this area, the towns of Newark and New Castle were each independently administered districts. The fourth district, from south of the canal to the Kent county-line, had its centre in Middletown. Both Kent and Sussex counties, because of their size and low population density, were operated as single districts. The Kent relief office was established in the state capital, Dover, and the Sussex office in Laurel. The committees in the southern counties were faced with very small relief loads as few families were entirely dependent on state aid. Nevertheless, their overhead expenses were greater than those in urban areas mainly due to the greater distances which had to be covered.

The inauguration of the state-wide programme rapidly extended the provision of relief throughout Delaware. New Castle county, which contained the most severely affected areas of the state, was the greatest beneficiary of the establishment of the TERC, receiving \$127,154 for direct relief in December 1932 compared with \$1,005 and \$1,486 received by Kent and Sussex counties respectively. By January 1933, work-relief programmes had been established in all three counties. During the first six months of the TERC's operation, New Castle county continued to receive the lion's share of disbursements. For example, in March, when the number of unemployed reached a peak and the state-wide relief payments made by the commission increased to \$313,661, it received \$268,716,<sup>17</sup> with the largest proportion going to provide direct relief for 6,974 families.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, during the period December 1932 to May 1933, the county received a total of \$1,381,569 from the TERC and spent \$1,086,840, including \$219,136 contributed by the county's citizens' relief committee, on direct relief for more than 30,000 individuals. This was approximately one-fifth of the population of the entire county and represented an increase of 191 per cent on the number receiving relief in December 1932. The balance of \$294,729,

was used for work-relief projects employing 1,781 men and women, and this too was an increase, of 450 per cent, on the number employed on such projects in the previous December.<sup>19</sup> In the same period Kent county received only \$42,250 for relief (\$17,646 for direct relief and \$25,604 for work-relief) and Sussex county received \$146,666 (\$69,949 for direct relief and \$76,717 for work-relief). Neither had received any relief funds during November 1932, when New Castle county had received \$77,710 to pay for food orders mainly distributed in Wilmington.

### State finances

As the depression continued into 1933, and the burden of relief was taken on by the state, its effects on Delaware's finances were becoming even more pronounced. In January, in his message to the 104th General Assembly, Governor Buck told members:

The extended drastic industrial disorder has had a serious effect on the revenue of our State government and the curtailment of income during the last biennium has been such that I cannot over-emphasise or impress upon you too strongly the alarming situation as regards the State's loss of income, particularly from its two chief sources - initial fees for certificates of incorporation and subsequent franchise taxes for the privileges of these charters.

He informed them that income tax collected had fallen from \$2,853,056 in 1929-30 to \$577,015 in 1931-32, resulting in the general fund having "a negligible, if any surplus, although the school fund, was estimated to have a surplus in excess of \$5 million at the end of the fiscal year." The governor, called for compulsory economy in all branches of government and for legislation to cut salaries paid by the state. He said that this latter measure was required "in order that all employes [sic] within each group may fare the same, as it is manifestly unjust for some employes [sic] to take voluntary salary reductions when others decline to, as has been the case during this year." In spite of the evident adverse effect that the depression was having on the state's revenue, the governor was able to inform the legislature that "it is gratifying to be able to report that the funded debt of the State ... has been reduced [by] \$9,171,785 in the last four years. At the present time State bonds outstanding amount to \$3,180,000, to apply against which the Sinking Fund holds cash and

securities worth \$1,100,000." Speaking on the financial condition of the state's banks, Governor Buck reported that

... as of September 30, 1932, resources amounted to \$161,236,000, with deposits of \$112,988,000 and capital surplus and undivided profits of \$37,832,000; cash on hand and due from banks is \$10,650,000; United States Government bonds and other securities totalled \$61,628,000, while loans are at the lowest level in the past ten years.

"Delaware", he continued, "may be justly proud that during the financial debacle of the past year, there was not a bank failure in the State."<sup>20</sup> This healthy position of the state's banking, and in particular the reserves of the Wilmington Banks and Trust Companies, caused Delaware to be the last of the 48 states to observe the bank-closing order issued by the newly elected President in March 1933.<sup>21</sup>

#### Federal action

One of the most urgent problems facing President Roosevelt when he took office in March 1933 was the plight of the estimated 15 million or more unemployed in the United States. On 21 March, in an attempt to redress this problem, the President sent an unemployment relief message to the Congress, which had been convened in special session on 9 March at his request. In this he included recommendations for the establishment of a conservation corps, public works projects, and the provision of federal grants to states. On 31 March, the Congress enacted legislation under which the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) was authorized to borrow \$500 million for relief. This was to be a grant, not a loan, to the states but expenditure from this fund was the exclusive responsibility of the new Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) - created by congressional action on May 12, 1933 - modelled after FDR's emergency relief programme in New York, and led by its director, Harry Hopkins. \$250 million was available as matching funds whereby one federal dollar was put up for every three state dollars, and each state received a grant equal to one-third of its expenditure on relief during the preceding three months. The remaining \$250 million formed a fund at the disposal of the federal relief administrator from which he could make discretionary grants on the basis of need. Hopkins allegedly disbursed \$5 million to hard-pressed states within a few hours of taking office.

Among the early regulations issued by the FERA, the most important was a ruling that federal money should be handled only by public agencies. The FERA also insisted that each state must have a central agency in charge of relief and state relief directors had to be approved by it. Notwithstanding this, the need for speed left Hopkins no alternative but to use existing state agencies to administer relief. FERA money was intended to relieve distress caused by unemployment resulting from the depression; and local governments were to continue their traditional care for those who were destitute for other reasons. Restrictions were placed on the use of federal funds; they might be used to pay for medical attention, but not for hospital bills; they could be used to assist families, but not mothers eligible for aid under existing laws. Relief was to be given to all the needy unemployed and their dependents, and might also be given to employed men whose wages were too low to provide their families with the necessities of life.<sup>22</sup>

Between late May and the end of December 1933 the FERA had allocated over \$324 million to 48 states and all the Territories. By March 1934, nearly 3,700,000 families and single people were receiving relief; one month later the figure jumped to 4,500,000. In its life-time, May 1933 to the end of June 1936 when it was finally terminated, the FERA spent over \$3 billion.<sup>23</sup>

#### The CCC comes to Delaware

The Congress also authorized the establishment of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Unemployed men aged 18-25 from families in need were sent to work camps, primarily in rural areas, and were required to allot most of their money earnings to their respective families. In Delaware each young man serving in the CCC had to send between \$22 and \$25 a month to some dependent member of his family. The War Department, the only branch of the government with enough experience, administered the programme through existing agencies. At its peak, in August 1935, the CCC employed 505,000 young men in 2,600 camps. It closed in 1941 when the problem of manpower became a shortage rather than a glut.<sup>24</sup>

Federal assistance in relief first came to Delaware through the CCC. In April and early May, 490 unemployed youths out of a quota of 500 were enrolled in the Corps; 358 from New Castle county's initial quota of 380; 67 from Kent county; and 65 from Sussex county.<sup>25</sup> After a period of initial training at Fort du Pont, these youths were sent to forestry camps in other states. One of these recruits, James A. Kelley of Seaford, later recalled:

During the first six months Delaware did not have any [CCC] camps but a few weeks after President Roosevelt recommended and Congress passed the legislation, two hundred Delaware young men arrived at Fort du Pont to begin their training for work in the Western States.... I was among the second one hundred from Delaware who were inducted into the Corps on May 24, 1933.<sup>26</sup>

In October, two CCC camps were allocated to Delaware to house two companies of 200 men for mosquito control work. These camps were initially to be in operation from 16 October 1933 to 15 April 1935, but their establishment was placed in doubt when the Democratically controlled lower house of the General Assembly threatened to kill the bill appropriating the state's contribution of \$800 a month for 18 months towards the running costs of the camps. It is difficult to understand this threatened action as both camps were to be located in the southern counties and, although the number of recruits from these counties would be relatively small, the work to be carried out was to be of direct benefit to them. Additionally, as conservation was one of FDR's most favoured measures, it would not seem unreasonable to have expected members of his own party to support this non-political experiment. It was only after a threat by Robert Fechner, the director of federal emergency conservation work, that the camps would be withdrawn that the legislature passed a bill providing for the state's contribution. The 400 men required were to be obtained from "some five hundred and fifty Delawareans who were scattered in various camps outside the State and from the replacements being recruited."<sup>27</sup> This was an early indication of the problems that the unemployed were to face, created by the political divisions within the state. During 1933, a total of 890 men were assigned to the CCC. In selecting these, precedence was given to persons on relief and subsequent preference given to "border-line" cases in which CCC employment saved the family from having to apply for relief.<sup>28</sup>

### Wilmington city council elections

In June 1933, the manifest political control of the Republicans in New Castle county was brought into question by the successes of the Democrats in the Wilmington city council elections. According to a report in a Wilmington newspaper, "the Republicans were subjected to a humiliating defeat", although the GOP retained overall control of the council by a single vote. The Democratic candidate for the office of mayor, William H. Speer, defeated the Republican incumbent, Frank Sparks, to become the first Democrat to hold the office since 1917, winning in 23 of the city's 29 districts; and Democrat John C. Hazzard was elected president of the council, defeating Walter Dent Smith the Republican incumbent.<sup>29</sup> The GOP's control of the city council was short-lived. A coalition was formed by Republican Councilman Fred Brown joining forces with the Democrats, which gave them a single-vote majority and control of the council. The Brown-Democrat coalition, as this alliance became known, was later to play an important role in the council's involvement in relief in Wilmington.

### Unemployment survey

In June and July 1933, a comprehensive survey of unemployment was carried out as a work-relief project. The survey established that 24,925 people were unemployed in the state, 84 per cent of whom were residents of New Castle county. It also discovered that 5,932 families were without resources and required full relief, and that more than 90 per cent of these (5,517) lived in New Castle county; the remainder resided in Kent (193) and Sussex counties (222). It further disclosed that 3,861 families were receiving occasional relief to supplement their slender resources, and 8,396 persons were employed only on a part-time basis.<sup>30</sup> Contrasting the survey's findings, a report by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia stated that employment in Delaware had begun to rise in May and had reached a peak in September.<sup>31</sup> Also a biennial Census of Manufacturers, conducted by the Federal Bureau of the Census for 1933, revealed that there were still 201 industries in New Castle county employing an average of 12,993 wage earners, not including salaried employees, and that 51 of these, employing an average of 9,820 wage earners, were located in Wilmington.<sup>32</sup>

These conflicting reports are indicative of the problems both the federal and state relief agencies faced nationally. The lack of accurate statistical information on the number of unemployed persons apparently created a misleading picture in the light of seemingly credible official reports indicating an upturn, albeit a temporary one, in the economy.

In Fiscal 1933, ending 30 June, the imbalance in demand for aid continued. The TERC disbursed \$1,708,097 in relief, the greater part of which, some \$1,410,673, went in direct relief. New Castle county was the recipient of the largest portion, \$1,215,947; Kent county received only \$52,339; and Sussex county, \$142,387. The balance of \$297,424 was spent on work-relief: New Castle county was given \$233,514; Kent \$31,642; and Sussex \$32,268.<sup>33</sup> This must have confirmed the fears of those in the southern counties, who opposed relief legislation, that their counties would benefit least from it. On 8 June, Governor Buck, concerned over the high level of spending on relief, wrote to the TERC's chairman urging "that every effort be made to curtail expenses for unemployment relief, to the end that the two million dollars appropriated ... shall care for the emergency until November 1." He reminded him of "the days that passed while the General Assembly was in special session and the unwillingness of the members to appropriate as much as two million dollars."<sup>34</sup> Jasper Crane responded to the governor's appeal informing him:

the Relief Directors for Sussex, Kent and Rural New Castle agreed that relief expenditure could be cut down to a fraction of former expenditures, in as much as relief needs in rural communities are very slight in the summer time.... The great difficulty in cutting down expenses was found to be the continuance of unemployment in Wilmington and New Castle city.

He assured the governor that the commission "will do everything in its power to comply with your wishes."<sup>35</sup> Evidence of the efforts being made to curtail relief expenditure was contained in the July budget for the Wilmington and rural New Castle county district. This showed that the sum budgeted for direct relief had been cut by almost \$40,000 from the expenditure in the previous month and that a reduction of more than \$24,000 had been made in the work-relief budget compared to the amount spent in June.<sup>36</sup>



### Federal grants to Delaware

The first federal grant-in-aid to Delaware was \$223,386; this was the FERA's matching funds for the first three months of 1933, and by the end of June a total of \$481,815 had been received by the state. However, the grants did not include the contributions from the county committees<sup>37</sup> and, on 19 June, Crane wrote to Hopkins in an attempt to obtain matching funds for these donations. He informed him that "none of the money appropriated by the State may be used for Direct Relief in any county unless that county contributes ... 20% of the whole cost of Direct Relief in the county.... Private contributions are thus the keystone of the arch of our relief work in Delaware." This attempt was unsuccessful and Hopkins' reply explained that "for matching purposes ... private money cannot be taken into consideration". He did, however, add: "The State may use the money granted to it from Federal funds ... for matching purposes with local communities on any basis that seems reasonable." This decision was seen by the TERC's vice-chairman as "working hardship on our State and discouraging private citizens from making private contributions to our Relief Funds." The contributions made by the county relief committees during the six months ending 30 June 1933 totalled \$211,204.<sup>38</sup> It must also have served to discourage the philanthropists, who in the past had been responsible for providing the bulk of private contributions, from continuing their donations.

Although matching funds had already been obtained from the FERA, there is some evidence that the procedures for obtaining these were not fully understood, and Hopkins had cause to write to the governor in September 1933 to explain the situation:

I fear, however, that you do not understand correctly the procedure in making applications to us ... there is no need of submitting an application for funds [with monthly reports] inasmuch as under the Federal Emergency Relief Act we shall be unable to make a grant against any one of the months ... until the third quarter itself has been completed.<sup>39</sup>

Notwithstanding the receipt of federal funds, by August Walter Dent Smith, Wilmington's relief director, was warning the governor that "all resources made available to the Temporary Emergency Relief Commission under the Unemployment Relief Act will be exhausted by October 1st."<sup>40</sup> And on 28 August, a headline in Wilmington's evening newspaper announced: "Relief

Body May Have To Cease Work". As the article beneath reported: "It may be necessary for the State Relief Commission to cease operations at the end of September if sufficient funds are not made available from the Federal Government."<sup>41</sup> This warning in the du Pont-owned newspaper was not altogether accurate, for in the body of the article it stated that the governor had approximately a quarter of a million dollars in federal matching funds and that a similar sum was expected for the three months of July, August, and September.

In August, however, the number of persons receiving direct relief had begun to decline. It had fallen from almost 25,000 in July to less than 20,000 at the end of September. The number of families on relief had also decreased from nearly 6,000 to under 5,000, and according to one report "this was a greater proportionate decline than in the nation at large."<sup>42</sup> As a result of this reduction in the demand for relief, Jasper Crane was able to tell the governor that the funds available at 1 October amounted to \$571,815 and that he believed these, together with the FERA grant of \$148,652 for the third quarter of the year which had been applied for, and an estimated federal contribution of \$125,000 for the final quarter (making a total of \$845,466), would be more than sufficient to cover expenditure to the end of April 1934. He made this assumption "on the basis of present expenditures with the diminution in the relief load from month to month at the same rate as ... over the past four months." This expectation of decreasing relief needs was based on the likely continuation of the apparent improvement that had recently begun to occur in the state's economic situation.<sup>43</sup>

The warnings given, both by Smith and in the newspaper, of the TERC's impending short-fall in funding, although subsequently proved to be without foundation, are indicative not only of the almost total reliance on federal funds for relief and of the inadequacy of the state's appropriation to the TERC, but it could be implied also it was the end of the reliance on the philanthropy of those who had previously been the main source of funding for relief.

### Additional benefits of federal relief

To encourage states to care for transients, the FERA agreed to pay all expenses in those states which implemented the arrangements it laid down for meeting the problem. Each state was required to set up a transient bureau under a director appointed by the state relief agency and approved by the FERA. The state bureau was to establish local centres to provide food, shelter, training and education, and, where appropriate, work camps, farms, and rehabilitation units.<sup>44</sup> In September, Delaware established a state transient bureau for the aid of non-resident unemployed and within the next two months relief centres had been set up in Dover (Kent county), Laurel (Sussex county) and Wilmington. These were entirely financed with federal funds, which were separate from those provided for emergency relief and were given outright, not on a matching basis. The transient bureau came under the supervision of the relief director for rural New Castle county, Helen Gawthrop, and provided aid, on an individual case basis, for families and single men; it also maintained a shelter for single transient men.<sup>45</sup>

In October, further benefits came to the state when the Surplus Food Corporation was incorporated in Delaware as a non-profit making organisation with no capital stock. Its objectives were to purchase surplus agricultural and other commodities and products, and to distribute these "to relieve hardship and suffering caused by unemployment and to adjust the severe disparity between the prices." The corporation made commodities such as pork, butter and eggs available to the TERC for distribution to families on relief. Delaware was allotted a maximum of 320,000 pounds of pork<sup>46</sup> and was given a grant of \$80,000 to defray the costs of distributing this and other commodities.<sup>47</sup> Clothing and household articles, including bedding and blankets, were also distributed to families on relief. Most of this clothing was made by women employed on work-relief in sewing units, some was donated by the Red Cross, and additional clothing, to the value of \$190,600, was purchased from Delaware merchants.<sup>48</sup>

### Landreth L. Layton and relief in Sussex county

On 30 October, the TERC published its Interim Report in which it summarized the status of relief work in the state and recorded some of the more important events of the first eleven months of the operation of the relief programme. Among the events recorded was the apparent failure of the commission's relief efforts in Sussex county, which compared with the other two counties were badly mismanaged and not only failed to take care of many people in need, but were costly as well. The Report revealed that people receiving direct relief were warned publically they would be given no further help if they patronized chain stores, and men employed on work-relief projects were paid with food orders instead of cash. Expenditure on direct relief per family was said to have averaged more than three times that in New Castle county, mainly because of the excessive administration costs, which were 60 per cent of the total spent on relief, compared to 7.4 per cent in the northern county. A comparison was made between 1932-33 and the previous year, when relief was provided entirely from private funds, and this showed that for every dollar spent then, Sussex county had spent \$18.58 despite the fact that the county had about 5 per cent of the unemployed of the state, and only 4 per cent of these required full relief. When compared to the corresponding amounts spent in New Castle (\$6.87) and Kent counties (\$1.56), Sussex's expenditure does appear to be rather excessive. The disbursements in Sussex county were 8 per cent of the total expenditure for relief in the entire state. Although this figure may seem small it needs to be put in perspective, for the county contained only 19 per cent of the state's population and its agriculture-based economy, which was boosted by the growing broiler industry, was relatively healthy.

All efforts to correct these difficulties under its relief director, Landreth Layton, were apparently unsuccessful. Layton had been the Democratic nominee for governor in the 1932 election and was also one of the Democratic nominees for TERC commissioner. His perceived shortcomings were listed in the Interim Report;

... he disregarded the rules of the Commission, did not submit monthly budgets for Direct Relief as called for by the rules, and was unable to report with any accuracy the number of people receiving relief in Sussex County.... Appropriations ... were exceeded month after month by large sums. Work Relief Projects which by the rules must be expressly approved by the Commission were

undertaken without authorization. He purchased cotton goods for sewing units outside of the State, although the Relief Act stipulates that purchases should be made ... from merchants of this State.... He distributed seeds to farmers of Sussex County at the huge expense of approximately \$26,000.... All these seeds were furnished to the distributing merchants by Layton and Layton. Furthermore, a large proportion of the food, clothing, and other necessities of life, were supplied on Direct Relief orders from stores who purchased these goods from Layton and Layton.

The report concluded: "There can be no doubt that Landreth L. Layton as Relief Director increased the volume of his private business and therefore its profits, although the Relief Act stipulates that the members of the Commission shall receive no compensation." A recommendation was made to the governor that relief in Sussex county be investigated by the Attorney General.

Some of his friends, in both houses of the General Assembly, alleged that the TERC's report was politically motivated; that Layton himself claimed the criticism of his administration of relief was "intended to deceive, rather than to inform"; and that facts concerning some of the statements in the Report were distorted.<sup>49</sup> However, as early as mid-September, the administration of relief in the county had been called into question in a confidential memorandum submitted to Governor Buck. On 12 October, Harry Hopkins was informed of this by Jasper Crane at their meeting in Washington and requested more information. In response to this request Crane informed him: "As there has not been any definite evidence of outright fraud we have not yet decided to prosecute Mr Layton, but are completing our investigation of all phases of his administration." On receipt of this letter, Hopkins requested his staff to have a "special survey made of this State."<sup>50</sup> On 6 November, Crane again wrote to Hopkins advising him of "new facts having been disclosed which indicated an even more serious state of affairs than had been hitherto known" and also informing him that the TERC had recommended the governor to instruct the Attorney General to investigate the operation of relief in Sussex county.<sup>51</sup> A copy of the TERC's Interim Report was sent to Hopkins, and in the letter accompanying it the governor confirmed that the "alleged mismanagement of relief funds ... has resulted in an investigation by the Attorney General"; he went on to invite Hopkins "or the Department of Justice ... to send a representative to the State to assist the Attorney General in his

investigation." Hopkins, however, now chose to distance himself from the proposed inquiry, replying that

In view of the fact that the funds involved all belong to the State of Delaware and not to the Federal Government, I can see no occasion for sending a Federal officer to work with you in regard to any investigation you may be pursuing that concern misappropriation of State funds.<sup>52</sup>

The investigation of Layton's alleged mismanagement of relief was complicated by several factors, revealed in a confidential report made in November. In this it was disclosed that the Assistant Attorney General had not only given legal advice to Layton but was indebted to a bank owned by him; and to complicate matters still further, the two investigators assigned to examine Layton's financial accounts both lived in Sussex county. It was considered that "it would take a great deal of courage on the part of any local person to prosecute the former County Director." Yet another problem arose from the fact that a member of the auditors Mack, Attix and Company, who were employed by the TERC, had also been employed by the Sussex county relief director to produce his monthly financial reports. In view of this, the confidential report questioned why the auditors had failed to "uncover discrepancies in Mr Layton's reports several months ago."<sup>53</sup>.

On 25 September, Landreth Layton's resignation was secured and he was replaced on 6 October by John Wiley Trought, who, in the opinion of FERA field representative Richard Stilwell, was "an active, dependable, business man ... rapidly getting the Relief Work organised."<sup>54</sup> Although the sums involved were small by comparison with those expended in New Castle county, the excessive spending in Sussex county contributed to the rapid depletion of the appropriation made for the relief of the unemployed in Delaware. However, this unfortunate situation was not seen as significant in the overall provision of relief by Pierre du Pont who, in January 1934, wrote: "It seems to be true that in Sussex County certain irregular practices have been developed, fortunately [this is] a section of the State of minor importance with respect to unemployment."<sup>55</sup>

On 18 October, a copy of the TERC's Report was given the legislature, and although there were a number of unsuccessful attempts by the Democrats in the House to delay its reading, a joint committee was established to

investigate not only the allegations against the Sussex relief director but also the overall administration of relief by the TERC. The committee, chaired by Senator W. A. Simonton, President pro-tem of the Senate, with Senator E. B. Griffenberg as vice-chairman, comprised Senator James H. Latchum and Representatives Alex R. Abrahams, Clifford Pryor, and William T. Bennett; the latter was appointed secretary. On 1 April, the committee submitted its report to the governor. This was produced following prolonged hearings lasting from 11 December 1933 to 23 February 1934, during which the committee heard the testimony of "upwards of three hundred witnesses". The transcript alone "comprised more than fifteen hundred pages." The investigation was limited to the administration of relief in Sussex and New Castle counties, as there were no serious charges concerning the administration of relief in Kent county.

The allegations of mismanagement of relief in Sussex county were the first to be investigated, and revealed that Layton and Layton Inc., "the largest wholesaler in lower Delaware, had profited by some \$12,000, the equivalent of 117% ... on the purchase and distribution of seed to farmers" and had made profits of "over two hundred per cent on the sale of needles, cotton, and incidental sewing items" supplied to sewing units. It was disclosed that although Layton was not a stock-holder in the company, all stock of Layton and Layton Inc. was held by members of his immediate family. It was also found that he had

demanding that certain outstanding bills due either to him or the firm of Layton and Layton Inc. or the Georgetown Trust Company, with which he was identified, be paid conditioned upon payment to certain individuals of a State Treasurer's check due them for goods sold and delivered on account of the State or the Relief Commission.

No recommendations were made by the committee, which instead offered the conclusion that

the Sussex County Relief Director did not intentionally violate the law but ... was a businessman of the old school unaccustomed and perhaps unwilling to accustom himself to modern business and bookkeeping methods, but that he persisted in directing the administration of relief in Sussex County in accordance with his own ideas.

On 14 June 1934, Landreth Layton died and consequently the matter of the alleged mismanagement of relief was not pursued.

The investigation of the administration of relief in New Castle county found that allegations of political influence in the employment of

individuals on work-relief projects were unfounded. The committee's report stated: "In no instance was there any connection shown between any officials or any party workers and the head of the Relief Unit in New Castle County". The administration of relief in the county was praised, and the report concluded that "on the whole in the County of New Castle relief was dispensed fairly and justly and with regard to the immediate needs of all the relief recipients."<sup>56</sup>

#### Special session of the General Assembly

On 18 October, Governor Buck again called the 104th General Assembly into special session, for the second time in the year, to sanction a loan from the federal government under provision of Title Two of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) to secure the benefits of the Public Works Administration, (PWA). The PWA was established by the Congress in June 1933 to administer the \$3.3 billion allocated under the NIRA for a programme of construction of public highways, buildings and parkways; an extensive series of projects for the conservation and development of natural resources; and a general low-cost housing programme. Grants-in-aid, not exceeding 30 per cent of the costs of labour and materials on projects, were to be made to states and municipalities and reasonable security of repayment was required. The PWA was under the leadership of Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, who was determined to construct high-quality projects and prevent his agency from turning into a pork-barrel. This resulted in all proposals being carefully reviewed by the PWA's engineering, law and finance divisions. As a consequence, the PWA moved slowly, and, although it funded the construction of important public facilities, it did not stimulate employment quickly.<sup>57</sup>

Prior to the opening of the special session, the governor was asked to confirm reports that he would adjourn the General Assembly if attempts were made to push through legislation other than that concerning public works and relief, or to prolong the session to give the members advantage of the 30-day pay and mileage allowances. In answer to this question, Buck replied that "While I would be sorry to have to resort to the Constitutional privilege which authorizes the Governor to adjourn the



Legislature, I feel the general situation is so grave that the business of the special session must be confined to the emergency purposes for which it was called."<sup>58</sup> Like many other state governors, he was reluctant to call special sessions of the legislature because of the likelihood of the uncontrolled costs that these could incur.

Governor Buck, in his message to the legislature, announced that he had extended the life of the TERC for two months. He also informed the members he did not expect to convene the General Assembly again in special session, and consequently requested that, before it adjourned, appropriate legislation should be enacted "to provide such money as may be deemed necessary to meet the direct relief requirements in the state for March and April 1934." (The Act authorising the establishment of the commission specified that its term should not extend beyond April 1934.) This, he said, was necessary because the commission had reported that, even with the matching funds expected from the FERA, it estimated only sufficient funds would be available to meet relief demands until the end of February 1934.<sup>59</sup>

The governor again warned the legislature of the state's deteriorating financial position: "The balance in the General Fund is fast disappearing and to acquaint you with the situation I need only to tell you that for the first three months of this fiscal year, July, August and September, withdrawals exceeded receipts by \$435,309.13." On a more positive note, he reported that he had received information from a reliable source that "Delaware bonds or other obligations in the open market today will sell at a premium because of the excellent condition of our State." He then turned to address the main business of the session: "The State for its own projects, as I see it, will require a loan from one and a half to two and a half million dollars depending upon the completed program of the Public Works Advisory Board." And the chairman of the Board, L. Lee Layton, followed this up by telling members he could not see "any necessity for a prolonging of the special session of the Legislature as the amount of work that is presented should not take more than four or five days of the Legislature's time."<sup>60</sup> Further encouragement for the General Assembly to act positively came from both Alfred du Pont and the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce. The former sent a telegram to the president of the Senate,

reminding him and "his collaborators in the Assembly ... of the necessity of providing funds ... [for] the employment of those in Delaware who are in need of direct help" and stating that "No political issue or question of partisanship should militate against the main issue which is work for willing hands and bread for hungry children." The president of the Chamber of Commerce, I. B. Finkelstein, wrote to Senator Simonton: "We sincerely hope that there will come out of a spirit of compromise, some concrete measures that will make possible the alleviating of distress ... by providing work for those who ... are able to work."<sup>61</sup>

The Wilmington evening newspaper reported optimistically on 18 September that "every effort will be made to curtail the expense of the special session ... [I]t is expected that the program will incorporate every project deemed worth while in the State and in consequence of this and the large amount of work that will be thus provided, vast numbers of unemployed will receive work."<sup>62</sup> This optimism was ill-founded; the special session of the legislature not only lasted until 8 December but also failed to agree on the necessary legislation either to obtain the federal loans or to meet the direct relief requirements in the state for March and April. One of the main areas of disagreement between the Republican-controlled Senate and the Democrat-controlled House was over the funding of the state's public works programme. The Republicans contended that it would be cheaper for the state to borrow \$2.5 million from the school fund at 3.5 per cent interest than it would be to borrow the money from the federal government, and a bill to this effect had been introduced in the Senate. The Democrats insisted that it would be best to borrow the money under the NIRA.<sup>63</sup> But at the heart of the disagreement was a dispute over which area of the state was to benefit most from the moneys to be borrowed: the northern industrialized New Castle county or the two agricultural southern counties of Kent and Sussex. Another possible explanation for the legislature's failure to agree may have been the unfamiliarity of dealing with the unique opportunity of having federal funds on offer, for this was the first time that these had been made available to states for such purposes. Alternatively, it might be inferred that, even at this early stage of federal funding, there were already those

in Delaware who fully appreciated the extent to which the state was likely to lose out in the balance between federal funding and federal taxation, and that by taking advantage of what was now on offer they could rapidly find that it was Washington that called the tune. In the absence of any evidence, however, this must remain a matter of speculation.

As a result of this impasse, Governor Buck in an unprecedented move dissolved the legislature<sup>64</sup> and the Evening Journal-Every Evening reported that "after thirty two days of squabbling between the Democratic House and the Republican Senate, Governor Buck adjourned the deadlocked General Assembly on December 8 until March 6." The cost of the special session was \$53,905.<sup>65</sup> In his proclamation dissolving the General Assembly, the governor could scarcely conceal his frustration:

Having reached the conclusion that further continuance of this special session for the immediate future at least will bring no beneficent results to the citizens of our State and firmly believing that the interests of the State will be best subserved by adjournment of the session ... in view of the disagreement between the two Houses of the General Assembly ... [I] declare an adjournment....<sup>66</sup>

However, the legislative session was not a complete waste: 15 bills did manage to gain the approval of both Houses and were sent to the governor for his signature. The most important of these were Democratic Senator Edward I. Glenn's bill to allow the city of Wilmington to borrow \$750,000 for public works projects; Republican Senator Carl Ray Van Sant's bill appropriating \$375,000 for a high school in the 5th senatorial district of New Castle county; Representative Scott's bill to allow Wilmington's board of education to accept a 30 per cent NIRA grant towards the construction of the P.S. du Pont High School; Representative Jackson's bill to enable incorporated towns and cities outside Wilmington to issue bonds for public works projects; and Republican Senator G. Clifton Maull's bill which made provision for appropriating the state's contribution towards the administrative expenses of the two mosquito-control camps to be built by the federal government. This last measure also created a Mosquito Control Commission "in the interests of public health and comfort, to promote and encourage public works projects in cooperation with the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, and to provide the moneys necessary for carrying out the projects on behalf of the State of

Delaware."<sup>67</sup>

Further evidence that the inter-party rivalry was not confined to relief measures was demonstrated when the chairman of the Democratic state committee, John Biggs Jr., claimed that three Republican Senators, Ernest V. Kieth, J. Burton Wharton, both of Dover, and C. Clifton Maull of Lewes, as well as Republican Representative Frank W. Schroeder of Delaware City, were holding their seats in violation of the state Constitution, and that vacancies should be declared in their respective districts because each held an additional office. His claim was rejected.<sup>68</sup>

Although the legislature was divided on political grounds over relief, it was in accord when it came to anti-prohibition legislation. Action by the General Assembly resulted in Delaware becoming the eighth state to ratify the new Amendment to the federal Constitution which repealed the 18th Amendment. It also passed three bills providing for local option elections for each county to determine whether they desired to continue prohibition within their own jurisdiction. A temporary beer bill was passed permitting the sale and distribution of 3.2 per cent beer in the state, and legislation was enacted establishing a Delaware Liquor Commission of one member. It was only this last measure that caused disagreement between the respective parties, and this was only over the number of persons who should be on the commission and how it should be named. Finally, both Republicans and Democrats agreed to a one-man commission on the understanding that Governor Buck would name Pierre du Pont to the post.<sup>69</sup> The ratification of the 21st Amendment in December 1933 must have been pleasing to Pierre du Pont who, the previous month, had written to the president congratulating him on his "very brave stand against prohibition and the wonderful effect that it has had on repeal of the XVIIIth Amendment...."<sup>70</sup> The benefits of the repeal of prohibition soon became apparent, when the state liquor commissioner reported that in the first six months of 1934 \$93,465 had been collected in tax and from the issue of licences.<sup>71</sup>

By the end of the year the 104th General Assembly had met, in one regular and three special sessions, for a total of 131 legislative days, 119 of which were during 1933. The cost of this record number of

legislative days was \$243,231. However, only the 12-day special session, which was called immediately after the 1932 general election, had taken any action to aid the unemployed victims of the depression by enacting the bill which appropriated \$2 million for relief and established the TERC. The 32-day special session, called by the governor in October 1934 to provide a policy to finance a public works programme in the state, failed to reach agreement. Although, this session did pass some bills, which were of marginal benefit to the unemployed, and also the anti-prohibition legislation already referred to (including the repeal of the Klair law, the state's prohibition enforcement act<sup>72</sup>), its usefulness was decidedly limited and could not justify the sums spent on it.

Once again it was the unemployed men and women of Delaware who were the losers in an inter-party dispute which reflected the political/geographical division within the state. Undoubtedly, the most unfortunate outcome of the disagreement between the two houses of the General Assembly was the failure to act on the governor's request to appropriate sufficient funds to meet the direct relief requirements of the state for March and April 1934. This failure made the provision of adequate relief during these months difficult, and state-wide relief ended when the State of Delaware TERC ceased operations on 30 April 1934. As we shall see later, the inter-party dispute continued to the disadvantage of the unemployed. However, the immediate problem of aiding the unemployed in the oncoming winter was to be ameliorated to a large extent by the establishment of the Civil Works Administration (CWA). An account of the CWA's involvement in Delaware is given in the next chapter.

The participation by the federal government in the funding of unemployment relief and the consequent reduction in the requirement for private funding appears to have had a two-fold effect in Delaware. Firstly, it produced a manifest increase in expenditure, and a concomitant lack of accountability in some at least of those administering it, as the actions of the Sussex relief director demonstrated; and secondly, there was a discernible increase in the amount of inter-party and intra-state antagonism, which resulted in a lack of action to alleviate the distress of the unemployed by the 104th General Assembly. This was to continue and, as

we shall see later, was to produce another, perhaps even more important and unfortunate consequence, at least as far as the unemployed were concerned. For now those philanthropists who had been almost the sole source of finance for relief in the state prior to the federal government's involvement appeared disinclined to continue their benevolence.

### CHAPTER 3: The Civil Works Administration in Delaware 1933-34

The Civil Works Administration (CWA) was the experiment that established the pattern of future work-relief projects in the United States at a time of greatest need, and was arguably the pre-eminent benefit to be derived from the federal involvement in relief between 1933 and 1935. Recognising that millions would face extreme privation in the coming winter unless the federal government acted quickly, Harry Hopkins explained the critical need for emergency measures to the President. As a result, on 9 November 1933, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 6420-B creating the CWA as a branch of the FERA and launching an emergency programme of public works. It was intended primarily as a short-term measure to aid the unemployed, whether on relief or not, during the winter of 1933-34 and until the projects to be established under the Public Works Administration (PWA) came on-stream.

On 10 November, Jasper Crane chairman of the TERC in Delaware, received a telegram from Hopkins, who had been appointed administrator of the CWA:

The Temporary Emergency Relief Committee is hereby constituted the Civil Works Administration for the State of Delaware with you as chairman. You will be charged with responsibility for execution of the civil works program in your State under the Federal civil works administration. The present emergency relief committee for each county of your State is hereby constituted the civil works administration for that county ... under the State civil works administration.... Detailed plans for putting the civil works program into effect will be presented at Washington meeting November 15.<sup>1</sup>

The CWA proved to be of great benefit to the unemployed in Delaware, as it did in the majority of other states, and it compensated in part for the failure of the General Assembly to agree on legislation which would have enabled the state to take advantage of the loans available under the NIRA. In late November, Walter Dent Smith, Wilmington's relief director, expressed this view in a letter to the governor:

The outlook for relief to the unemployment situation during the coming winter was not, to say the least, encouraging. However, the appointment on November 18 of the State Civil Works Administration, with its immediate function to put a total of 6,000 men to work throughout the entire State, by December 1st, considerably brightens the picture."<sup>2</sup>

The Delaware delegation to the President's conference in Washington

was headed by Governor Buck and included: Mayor Speer; Secretary of State Grantland; Chief Engineer of the Water Department, Wills; E. R. Mack, of the Parks Board of Wilmington; City Engineer, Harry Maier; Everart Ackart; Jasper Crane; Frank Collins; and Walter Dent Smith. They were informed that the state's quota in the civil works programme was 8,000 men and women, 6,000 to be assigned immediately. These were to be made up of 3,000 from the relief rolls, with the other half coming from those registered with the Re-employment Bureau offices in the state. The remainder of the quota were to be assigned to federal projects at a later date. Federal funds totalling \$800,000 were allocated for the civil works programme in Delaware.<sup>3</sup> In an interview with the Wilmington Evening Journal Every Evening, Crane stated: "The Conference held at Washington yesterday, at which the program of the Civil Works Administration was set forth, is the most important meeting in my opinion to relieve unemployment of any since the depression fell upon us."<sup>4</sup>

On 19 November, all existing work-relief projects in the state were transferred to the CWA<sup>5</sup> and Charles H. Gant, manager of the Wilmington marine terminal was seconded to the new agency as chief engineer. Mrs. James Hughes of Kent and Wiley Trough of Sussex were appointed CWA administrators for their respective counties.<sup>6</sup> The Delaware CWA allotted quotas to the counties on the basis of 75 per cent according to population and 25 per cent on the extent of their relief rolls. On 18 November, the state's re-employment director, Howard P. Young, issued unemployment figures for the state, which showed that 18,028 were unemployed in New Castle county; 1,463 in Kent; and 1,502 in Sussex. Quotas were calculated from these and the population of each county taken from the 1930 Census, giving New Castle 4,416, Kent 654 and Sussex 930.<sup>7</sup> This distribution was hardly equitable, since it meant that for every family on relief or out of work in New Castle county, there was 0.9 of a CWA job available compared with about three jobs in Kent, and six in Sussex.<sup>8</sup>

State and local government agencies were notified of the proposed civil works programme through state-wide press notices, and this brought an immediate response. Projects were quickly submitted for approval by these agencies, and within the first week of the programme 17 projects had been



started, 14 for men and three sewing-unit projects for women, employing a total of 785.<sup>9</sup> The CWA required local governments to contribute 20 per cent of the costs of the works projects undertaken; moreover these had to be socially and economically desirable, commenced quickly, and be carried out on the basis of day labour.<sup>10</sup>

### Problems in Wilmington

On 16 November, the mayor of Wilmington called a meeting of the city council, department heads, engineers and a number of public officials, to formulate plans for expediting the distribution of federal CWA funds allotted to the city. As he told the meeting: "We are not thinking of politics, or factions, but solely of how we may best aid the unemployed .... While there is no suffering in Wilmington at this time ... we realize that the winter is approaching and there is an urgent need for help for the unemployed...."<sup>11</sup> Shortly after the meeting, the president of the city council announced that they were contemplating borrowing \$120,000, to qualify for the \$600,000 expected to be spent by the CWA in the city, which sum represented the 20 per cent contribution required. However, on 30 November, despite Mayor Speer's request for an appropriation of \$100,000 for CWA projects, the city council approved a resolution agreeing to contribute only 10 per cent of the costs. The reasons given were that the finances of the city did not permit any additional appropriations from current revenue, and that the city was contemplating an improvement programme, to be carried out in cooperation with the PWA, which required the issue of bonds to finance it.<sup>12</sup> At the same meeting, the council unanimously approved 16 local improvement projects, at an estimated cost of \$266,886, for presentation to the state CWA for its approval.

On 4 December, the Delaware CWA sanctioned work projects costing \$160,000 in the vicinity of Wilmington, together with a number of projects in other parts of the state. These latter projects included mosquito control in Kent and Sussex counties, employing more than 500 men, and a tick-prevention project at picnic sites which aimed to employ another 80. Other projects approved involved drainage at Cheswold and the widening of Commerce Street in Smyrna, both in Kent county.<sup>13</sup> The state CWA failed to

approve the projects submitted by the Wilmington City Council, presumably because of the reluctance on the council's part to contribute the required 20 per cent of the project costs. The United States Conference of Mayors', which had its headquarters in Chicago, was much concerned at the delay to the start of CWA projects in Wilmington, and called Mayor Speer's attention to the desirability of "laggard states" speeding up their co-operation on CWA projects or facing the likely transfer of unassigned quotas elsewhere. On receipt of this communication, the mayor commented: "It is apparently up to the legislative bodies of all communities to expedite [sic] things, or else the communities will be the losers."<sup>14</sup> Despite this warning, the council took no action to increase its contribution to the proposed CWA projects in Wilmington.

On 7 December, in an attempt to resolve the *impasse* Mayor Speer and city solicitor, E.E. Berl, went to Washington to confer with the federal Civil Works Administrator. As a result of this meeting, Hopkins issued an ultimatum: Wilmington must take action within 48 hours to appropriate an amount equal to 20 per cent or more of all CWA funds allotted to the city, or else see these being diverted to other municipalities. Mayor Speer, re-echoing President Roosevelt's call for a non-partisan approach to the administration of the CWA, responded immediately:

It is a matter of vital necessity that the government's offer be accepted at once and that politics must be put aside.... The matter is squarely up to the Council to accept or reject the government's offer of assistance, as it has been for the past two weeks when I asked them by letter to make an appropriation to meet the government's offer under the Civil Works Administration.<sup>15</sup>

On his return from Washington, he called a special meeting of the council for Saturday, 9 December, to again consider raising the level of appropriation necessary to secure the CWA funds allotted to the city. However, the President of the Council, John Hazzard, pre-empted the mayor by calling it into special session on the evening of Friday, 8 December.<sup>16</sup> The outcome of the special session was perhaps predictable: a resolution pledging the council to contribute an amount equal to 20 per cent of all federal money allotted for CWA projects was adopted, and the issue of bonds to cover the requisite amount was agreed to.<sup>17</sup> This was yet another example of political division, albeit this time at local-government level,

adversely affecting the unemployed; for although the Democrats controlled the council, and despite the fact that its president was himself a Democrat, there was a sizeable faction opposed to Democratic Mayor Speer. This was the Brown-Democrat coalition, headed by John Hazzard and comprising both Republican and renegade Democratic members of the council. The leading Republican member of the coalition was Wilmington's First Ward councillor, Fred Brown.<sup>18</sup>

#### Initial problems in quota filling

From 15 November to 1 December 1933, 1,065 persons were placed on CWA projects in the state; this represented less than 20 per cent of Delaware's quota and fell far short of Hopkins' expectation of the federal appropriation to the state being fully taken up by mid-December. All CWA employees were taken from the relief rolls of the TERC, with the exception of a headquarters staff who were for the most part employees of the relief commission, transferred from work in the city of Wilmington and adjacent New Castle county. The main cause of the delay in filling the CWA allocation was the adoption of a rule that, until half of those employed were taken from the relief rolls, no CWA employment could be offered through the National Re-employment Service (NRS). As a result of this ruling, only 128 persons were recruited through the NRS in the first six weeks of CWA operations. Wilmington City Council's reluctance to appropriate the required funds for its contribution to CWA projects was also a significant factor in the state's failure to fill its quota more expeditiously.

There was, however, very close co-operation between the NRS and the state CWA. The administrators in each county provided the NRS with the names and addresses of those placed in work from relief rolls, which indicated those who had not been previously registered with the NRS and enabled it to amend its records. The NRS in its turn notified the TERC of the names and addresses of the persons it had placed with the PWA and on private projects, so that these could be removed from the relief rolls.<sup>19</sup>

### Administrative changes

On 8 December, Jasper Crane withdrew temporarily from the chairmanships of the relief commission and the Delaware CWA, due to business commitments outside the United States, although he continued to serve as a member of both organisations. He was succeeded by Walter Dent Smith, who was elected secretary and treasurer of both the TERC and state CWA with executive authority. His appointment was in accordance with an FERA recommendation which resulted from a study of the relief situation in Delaware. This had been carried out in November by F.R. Stillwell, an FERA representative from Washington, who proposed that the relief programme throughout the state should be operated in a unified manner under Smith's direction as executive secretary. An additional administrative change made all county offices directly responsible through their deputy administrators to the executive secretary. The objective of this was "to bring about an integration of initiative and responsibility and to enable relief work throughout the state to be carried out with uniformity and greatly increased efficiency." The role of acting chairman was taken by Frank Collins, and he was replaced as vice-chairman by Thomas M. Monaghan.<sup>20</sup> On 1 January 1934, a further change occurred when Everett Ackart resigned from the TERC because of the additional activities and responsibilities placed on him as chief engineer of the Du Pont Company. J. George Stewart, a member of the contracting firm of Stewart and Donohue, was appointed to fill this vacancy and, because of his special training and experience, was appointed as a committee of one to work in conjunction with the CWA chief engineer on all on-going projects.<sup>21</sup> On 20 January 1934, yet another change was announced when the state's CWA chief engineer, who had been "on loan" to the Delaware CWA, was required to resume his duties as manager of the Marine Terminal, effective 1 February, although it was agreed that he should remain as a consultant to the agency. He was replaced by John J. Haley, whose services were "made possible without charge through the courtesy of Pierre du Pont".<sup>22</sup>

### Civil Works Service

One of the problems facing the Delaware CWA was how to find suitable projects for the "white-collar" unemployed - a problem that, in this state at least, was unique and confined mainly to Wilmington. Because of the large number of businesses that had established their offices in Wilmington, encouraged to set up in Delaware by the state's favourable Incorporation Laws, a disproportionate number of the unemployed were, as a Wilmington newspaper described them, of the "white-collar class". One solution to this problem was to be the establishment of the Civil Works Service (CWS). The CWS was specially created by Hopkins to provide help for the white-collar and professional unemployed, and at the end of January a grant of \$50,000 was made to the state CWA to finance CWS projects.<sup>23</sup> These projects were to cover areas such as public health, public property improvements, conservation, and preservation of public records. Project which were undertaken in Delaware included a farm survey, to assist the federal government "to learn how life on a farm proceeds, the data giving more intimate details of farm life and whether the farmer has need for other things than [these with] which he is now provided"<sup>24</sup>; a historic buildings survey; painting the interior of public buildings; and a housing survey in Wilmington, New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties.<sup>25</sup>

### Benefits and problems of the CWA

In December, the CWA issued instructions that wages must be paid on the Saturday before Christmas and on the Saturday before New Year. As a result CWA employees were paid some \$25,000 on 23 December, and a further \$20,000 on 30 December. Evidence of the benefit of this ruling was to be found in a report carried by Wilmington's evening newspaper, which stated that retail stores in the city were experiencing an increase in Christmas business that was about 20 per cent higher than the previous year's.<sup>26</sup> The benefits derived from the CWA were not solely those associated with a boost to the economy by putting extra money in circulation; the most important effects were those experienced by the workers themselves. The employment provided not only gave men and women steady jobs on permanent improvements (which would not otherwise have been attempted due to the financial

condition of towns, counties and the state) but also did more to raise the morale of the unemployed than anything else.<sup>27</sup> A contemporary report summarised this boost to morale as: "... the dissipating of the natural feeling of discouragement and near hopelessness resulting from months of idleness ... [M]en and their families have regained their self respect and usual dignity on once again becoming independent and self-supporting."<sup>28</sup>

In the opposing scale, a major problem created was the implementation of the CWA central-zone wage rates. These were set at \$1.10 per hour for skilled labour, and 45 cents per hour for unskilled labour; the rate for timekeepers and sub-foremen, on all projects, was 60 cents per hour and for foremen 80 cents per hour. In Kent and Sussex counties, where the prevailing wage rates were 60 cents per hour for skilled labour and 25 cents an hour for unskilled labour, such rates were clearly excessive, and a CWA report explained that "... such a rate being unheard of in the past, even during the period of the World War ... its effects on the farmer ... and on industry in the smaller towns can readily be seen."<sup>29</sup> This anomalous situation was criticised by Pierre du Pont, who wrote:

I believe that the minimum rates of wage - 45c for unskilled and \$1.10 for skilled workers - is a mistake as applied to all parts of the State of Delaware. In many cases the rate is higher than that prevailing in prosperous towns and tends to prevent the undertaking of work, and also tends to interfere with the flow of labor to normal employment, which would tend to be at a much less rate at this time, and thereby fails to provide for normal living conditions.<sup>30</sup>

In spite the employment provided by the CWA, the number of registered unemployed in the state had risen to 26,408 at the end of 1933. Wilmington and New Castle county continued to be the worst affected, with 21,091 unemployed; Kent county had 2,294 and Sussex 3,023.<sup>31</sup> By the end of January 1934, the number of men and women employed by the CWA in Delaware had reached 4,410. Although this was little more than two-thirds of the state's quota, nevertheless, CWA programmes had been responsible for the removal of some 1,500 families from the relief rolls.

New Castle county had the largest number of unemployed, despite this it was slow to fill its allocation, due mainly to the delay in starting projects caused by Wilmington City Council's reluctance to provide its required contribution. Kent and Sussex counties were more successful in filling their smaller quotas, thanks to the early establishment of projects

like pest and mosquito control, the latter run jointly with the Mosquito Control Commission, which employed 550 men from both counties.<sup>32</sup>

CWA employees were placed on projects as near as possible to the district in which they resided, and the only occasion on which workers from Wilmington were used in rural districts was when the supply of men in the local area was exhausted. In the city, the supply of labour was always greater than the demand; hence, with few exceptions, men residing in rural New Castle county were not given employment on projects in Wilmington.<sup>33</sup>

#### Curtailement of CWA activities

On 19 January, Hopkins announced that no new CWA projects were to be started; working hours were to be reduced from 30 to 24 per week in cities with populations in excess of 2,500, and to 15 hours per week in smaller and rural communities and no additional men and women were to be employed on existing projects. This caused Governor Buck to send telegrams to President Roosevelt and to the state's Democratic Congressman, Wilbur Adams. He told the President that "it would be a tragedy if the ... program ... is to be discontinued before the Winter is over", and to Representative Adams he declared:

Discontinuation of the Civil Works Program in Delaware before the end of the winter will increase the State's relief burden and bring further distress to the unemployed who are now being helped. It is felt by some of the leading citizens of our State that the CWA program should continue through the winter months....

Adam's comment on receipt of this advice was terse: "Presumably he wants to save the State's money and is in favor of CWA because he controls it." And his reply to the governor was: "... I frankly believe quota of six thousand workers, half from relief rolls and remainder from employment register should have been on the CWA's payroll in Delaware by December 15 as promised...."<sup>34</sup> On 8 February, the Congressman convinced that the CWA in Delaware was not free of partisan politics, told the House:

It is my belief that the CWA in Delaware is to some extent in the hands and under the control of those not in full accord and sympathy with the policy and program of this Administration. It is charged that they are using it to make stronger an already strong reactionary Republican State organisation. Many complaints are coming to me daily of political discrimination in favor of Republicans in the placing of employees under the CWA in Delaware.

His belief was supported by the Delaware Democratic State Committee, which

passed a resolution to the effect that both the state directors of CWA projects and the NRS "have exercised the function of their offices in an extremely partisan manner", and requested the federal administrator to dismiss both of them because "they firmly believed and know their administration is exercised solely along partisan lines...."<sup>35</sup> This claim was based on the fact that Dent Smith was the Republican ex-president of Wilmington's city council and as state director controlled the state re-employment director, Howard Young. There was, however, little or no evidence to support these accusations, which it would appear were motivated more by politics than fact. As James T. Patterson has written: "nothing prevented dissident politicians from making capital out of exaggerated charges".<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, action had already been taken to ensure that the Delaware CWA was free of political discrimination. Dent Smith had told the heads of all departments throughout the state that any discrimination in hiring CWA workers would result in "immediate dismissal ... with prosecution to follow...."<sup>37</sup> Pierre du Pont, in answer to a question from Joseph Brodinsky of the National Labor Advisory Board, was equally certain that the state CWA was free from political favouritism when he wrote: "While the question of politics undoubtedly enters into all public enterprise, I doubt very much the claim that politics has entered injuriously into the Delaware situation."<sup>38</sup>

On 26 January, an allotment of \$100,000 for materials was made to the state CWA, enabling work on projects to continue until 7 February; a spokesman later stated that "if this extra money had not been given to Delaware the CWA program would have collapsed." The allocation was accompanied by an instruction from Harry Hopkins to the effect that public-office holders or candidates for public office were not to be employed, and any already employed as CWA executives were to be dismissed immediately. Walter Dent Smith's comment on this edict gives a clear indication of the altruism of those involved:

... this will not affect the organisation of the CWA in Delaware inasmuch as the members of the State TERC ... receive no pay.... The only member of the combined TERC and CWA who holds public office is Mayor Frank Collins and as the ruling ... is aimed at duplication of salaries Mayor Collins would not



be affected ... as he draws no salary either as Mayor or as member of the Commission.<sup>39</sup>

On 15 February, President Roosevelt signed the Appropriations Act which granted \$950 million for federal relief, and by Executive Order on the same day allocated \$450 million of this to close out the CWA by the end of March 1934.<sup>40</sup> Consequently, on 16 February, Hopkins announced that only industrial cities were to be permitted to retain their full CWA quotas until late March 1934; elsewhere, workers in rural areas were to be demobilized at a rate of about 10 per cent per week. This ruling created an even greater division between Delaware's northern and southern counties in the provision of relief. It allowed approximately 2,000 men to continue on the CWA payroll in the Wilmington industrial area, defined as all the section north of the Chesapeake and Delaware canal, but resulted in some 600 workers employed on projects south of the canal to lose their jobs immediately, since it was considered that their comparatively small numbers did not warrant a phased reduction. Another reason for this decision was that the great majority of these were farmers or farm labourers, who might be expected to find work at their regular occupations as the weather improved.<sup>41</sup> The elements, however, did not permit the anticipated improvement, and according to a CWA report "during the month of February ... work was curtailed to a great extent by severe weather."<sup>42</sup> As late as 23 March, a headline in the Wilmington Evening Journal Every Evening read: "Snow over State sets back Spring". The report continued: "Stubborn winter apparently does not intend to abdicate easily and readily." The temperature in Wilmington fell to 11 degrees above zero [Fahrenheit] and it was "the coldest March 23 in the history of local weather statistics."<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, on 27 and 28 February, the inclement weather did at least prove to be of some short-term benefit to the unemployed, when approximately 1,000 men were employed removing snow in Wilmington and other locations throughout the state.<sup>44</sup>

By early February, as a result of the reduction in federal funding the CWA was furnishing only part-time employment to 3,384 persons in the state. This being only an inconsiderable part of the 25,903 unemployed registered with the state's public employment offices. These were made up

of 12,974 men and 7,184 women in New Castle county; 2,389 men and 73 women in Kent; and 3,124 men and 159 women in Sussex. Those working on CWA and PWA projects were not included in this total. The TERC expressed its disappointment that "CWA employment did not reduce our relief load to the extent anticipated", and, more worrying, revealed that the number of unemployed exceeded that of April 1933 by almost 1,000.<sup>45</sup>

#### CWA operations cease

On 2 March, Delaware's quota was cut to 3,000 with Hopkins ordering that this figure was to be further reduced by 250 per week until it stood at just 2,000 by the end of the month. All Civil Works Service projects became CWA projects on the same date; with the exception of necessary clean up work, all activity was stopped at the end of March.<sup>46</sup> At the close of CWA operations, 293 projects had been undertaken, (although several were unfinished) at a cost of \$706,379, 85 per cent (\$606,000) of which had come from federal funds. These ranged from sewerage works, installation of water mains, grading and construction to the collection of vital statistics, and a scheme for diphtheria immunization throughout the state. Both the latter were CWS projects.

Of course, the CWA's involvement in Delaware pales almost into insignificance when compared to its achievements, and the cost of these, throughout the United States as a whole. In the 136 days of the CWA's existence, it built or improved some 500,000 miles of roads, 40,000 schools, over 3,500 playgrounds and athletic fields and 1,000 airports, at a total cost that exceeded the combined FERA, state and local relief budgets during the entire year of 1933, spending \$200 million a month compared with the latter's expenditure of just \$60 million.<sup>47</sup>

The objective of employing 50 per cent of its workforce from the relief rolls, and the remainder from the re-employment service, was not achieved. When activities were curtailed, it was estimated that only 27 per cent of workers had been taken from the NRS. Because 36 per cent of these were also receiving some relief, the actual percentage of employees who were self-sustaining prior to obtaining CWA employment was a mere 17 per cent. On the other hand, the Delaware CWA had a good safety record:

there were no fatal accidents and only 49 time-losing mishaps occurred; 11 compensation claims were made, just one of which was for permanent partial disability (i.e. the loss of an index finger due to frost bite, not an actual traumatic injury).

Although it was intended that CWA employment be regarded as regular work, it was generally seen as work-relief, especially in the rural sections of Delaware, and on this basis its administration was seen in some quarters as unjust. The most frequent complaint was that work was given to persons who did not need it, while many who were in distress failed to get jobs. Yet despite repeated explanations, a large group of people remained unconvinced that the CWA was a badly handled work-relief programme.

Although in Delaware, as in many other states, it was seen as at best "a makeshift proposition which can accomplish no permanent good", it was generally conceded that a work programme was superior to direct relief and popular with the general public. The attitude was, that if people were to be given help they should work for it, and not have it handed out to them as dole.<sup>48</sup> This was a sentiment that was echoed by Irénée du Pont, who in May wrote to Governor Buck asserting his view that "... a public dole is inheritantly wrong for the same reason that our corporations are not permitted to give away the assets of their company."<sup>49</sup> However, not all comment was critical. A magazine article published in January 1934 recorded that "... when the CWA is ended, Delaware not only will be greatly improved ... but there will be most interesting records, industrially, commercially and from an agricultural standpoint, that never would have been possible except for the CWA."<sup>50</sup>

The main achievement of the CWA was identified by journalist-investigator Lorena Hickok in a report she made to Harry Hopkins on 5 February 1934:

Well - CWA came, fulfilled its purpose and, I believe, should go. We made mistakes. They were bound to be made. No doubt there's been graft. No doubt there's been politics. No doubt there's been misuse of the CWA.... And yet - I think that it did more good than harm. It just pulled us through what might have been one nasty winter.<sup>51</sup>

At the end of March 1934, there were 8,978 families on relief in Delaware, representing the largest load the state had had to bear since the start of the depression. Surprisingly, though, despite the rundown of CWA

employment during the month, the rate of increase was less than in previous years. The explanation for this was that many of the persons given employment by the CWA were not removed from the relief rolls because the unusually bad weather throughout the winter had made it necessary to supplement reduced wages with additional relief payments.<sup>52</sup>

#### The TERC's financial problem

Unfortunately, as the CWA was being curtailed, the TERC found itself in the middle of a financial crisis. On 17 February, the commission informed the governor that not only had it run out of funds but would also have a deficit of \$30,733 by the beginning of March. As the report stated:

A critical situation faces the people of Delaware. Funds available to the Temporary Emergency Relief Commission are exhausted; yet we are confronted with the necessity of providing the essentials of life to over 28,000 of our neighbors. Few realize that at the present time nearly one-eighth of our population looks to the State for direct relief.<sup>53</sup>

Fortunately, help was at hand in the form of a grant from the FERA. On 13 February, Governor Buck received a telegram from Hopkins: "Grant one hundred sixty-five thousand five hundred forty-one dollars is made to you under subsection C Section four Federal Emergency Relief Act of nineteen thirty-three to aid in meeting costs of unemployment relief in your State." This grant was to permit the continuation of relief activities until the General Assembly met in special session on 6 March 1934.<sup>54</sup>

The CWA achieved its objectives, which were two-fold: it averted the severe humanitarian crisis that undoubtedly would otherwise have occurred in the winter of 1933-34; and, perhaps more importantly, it enabled the federal government to gain the experience of a national work-relief programme which later enabled the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to be introduced with minimum delay and maximum effectiveness. Some important lessons had been learned in Washington, as well as in the states.

#### CHAPTER 4: Failure of state relief

During the winter of 1933-34, bad weather and the slow implementation of CWA quotas had combined to reduce the effectiveness of the work relief programme in Delaware. Consequently, the expected significant reduction in demand for relief did not happen and the TERC was forced to continue to provide aid, not only to those who were unable to obtain employment on CWA projects but also to many others who required relief to supplement their CWA income. In the other parts of the United States the programme was launched with breathtaking speed and by mid-January, little more than two months from its inception, the CWA workforce nationally totalled 4.2 million.<sup>1</sup>

A measure of the TERC's additional burden was given in the commission's Report of Operations to February 1, 1934 which recorded that the number of persons requiring direct relief increased significantly with the on-set of winter: in New Castle county, this grew from 19,259 in October 1933 to 22,932 in January 1934; in Kent county from 332 to 2,051; and in Sussex county, 289 to 4,029, in the same period. The cost of this, which involved the issuing of 12,000 food and miscellaneous relief orders, 6,000 fuel, and 2,100 rent orders each month, was \$583,659 in New Castle county, \$16,699 in Kent county and \$24,140 in Sussex county. The increased need in both Kent and Sussex counties was almost entirely due to the seasonal fall in agricultural employment, which normally occurred at this time of the year. Families which did not qualify for unemployment relief from the TERC were directed by its officials to the "proper welfare agencies in order to alleviate their distress and suffering", and in most cases this was the principal private welfare agency in Wilmington, the Family Society.<sup>2</sup>

On 23 October 1933, the annual meeting of the society was told that during the year 616 families were entirely dependent on it because they were destitute from causes other than unemployment and consequently received help from neither the city nor the state. As the society's president, J. Thompson Brown, informed the meeting: "The pressing problem during the past year has been to secure the necessary funds to carry on

this worthy work. The year ends with no funds in hand and with an indebtedness to the bank of ten thousand dollars."<sup>3</sup>

In spite of this, the TERC managed to achieve its primary objective of keeping families together and this was acknowledged in the commission's Report: "To have attempted to administer relief in any manner tending to breakdown the family group would have proved disastrous. Every effort has been made to maintain families on a plane of decency and respectability and to enable them to preserve their self respect."<sup>4</sup>

#### Requirements to qualify for relief

Although the numbers receiving relief were large, obtaining relief was not easy. Persons applying were required to make a signed application stating their inability to provide the necessities of life for themselves and their families because of unemployment. They also had to sign a waiver allowing their bank accounts and insurance resources to be checked; and steps were taken to determine whether or not they had any other source of income, such as aid from relatives, support orders and the like. Each application had to be supported by a written work-record, attested by former employers; this was an essential requisite to establish eligibility and unless the commission was convinced of extreme urgency no relief was given until the facts as to employability, eligibility and need had been verified. A social worker then visited the home of the applicant and references were taken up to corroborate the information that had been given. When relief was eventually granted, constant checks were made by a special investigation and checking division, established under the terms of the state Relief Act to investigate complaints regarding eligibility. This division investigated insurance policies, state income-tax office reports, bank deposits and Old Age and Mother's Pension lists. Payroll lists of local industries and employers and the United States Employment Bureau's "Return-to-Work Lists" were also checked to ensure that the person receiving relief had not found employment. The objective of these investigations was to ensure that relief was not fraudulently obtained, and they resulted in 116 persons being found to have obtained direct and work-relief to which they were not entitled during the first four months of the

TERC's operation. These procedures were not exclusive to Delaware; William Brock records that Social Workers generally "agreed that investigation of each case was essential and that surveillance should continue after relief had been given".<sup>5</sup>

The commission set relief budgets which were more liberal than those used by most other states in providing for the living standards of the recipient. Family relief visitors budgeted each family in accordance with set standards, and where there was some income the amount of this was subtracted from the budget and the difference allowed in direct relief. Also, in variance with the policy of some states, a system of paying a rent allowance was adopted; this was sufficient to cover a landlord's fixed costs of mortgage interest, taxes, water and other charges on their properties to a maximum of \$9 per month. In the four months to the end of January 1934, an average of 2,144 families in New Castle county received rent allowance at a total cost of \$215,418. The FERA did not reimburse or make any contribution towards this expenditure.<sup>6</sup>

#### Relief surveys

On 6 September, the FERA administrator ordered "a general survey of the whole subject of food orders and food prices" in Delaware. This was required, he wrote, because of "the rapid advance in retail food prices" which had increased some 18 per cent in 51 cities throughout the nation "during the past four months", as a result of the measures to increase the price of farm products being taken under the Agricultural Adjustment Act. The review was to include a check that full advantage was being taken of large-scale purchasing power, that the mark-up of wholesale food prices was reasonable and that food prices in all important localities were regularly monitored. Hopkins told the TERC's director: "It is essential that the amount of money allowed for food requirements of families and individuals be revised to make adequate provisions for increased prices", and adding that "the unemployed must not be allowed to suffer because of higher food prices." The outcome of the survey was a Hopkins' directive that budgets were to be readjusted to take account of the rise in commodity prices, especially food, and this resulted in a raising of the food schedule by 20

per cent.<sup>7</sup>

In November, in compliance with FERA instructions, an assessment of the future relief requirements in the state was made, and on 18 December Dent Smith wrote to Governor Buck giving an estimate of these, for the period December 1933 to April 1934 inclusive, the latter date being when the TERC's mandate expired. This was based on the assumptions that: (1) the number of families needing relief would approximate the current relief load, plus an increase for the winter but excluding those expected to be supported by CWA work, which it was assumed would continue until April 1934; (2) there would be no up-turn in business; (3) PWA projects would not start within the following three months; and (4) the costs of relief would not increase. He estimated that an average of 3,921 families per month would require relief, with a peak of 5,042 expected to occur in December, decreasing to an average of 2,200 by April. The estimated cost of providing this was \$660,498, set against anticipated receipts of \$533,446 from state appropriations and private funds. Consequently, Smith forecast a deficit of \$127,052 at the end of April 1934 and warned:

... to this indicated deficit ... should be added some estimate of the cost of providing the necessities of life to those of our citizens who are still unable to support themselves and families.... Our best judgement would indicate that ... after the expiration of the TERC there will remain the urgent necessity of caring for a considerable number of our people.<sup>8</sup>

However, in December the finances of the TERC were unexpectedly enhanced by the payment of federal matching funds for the amounts raised by the county committees and the contributions by the Levy Courts of Kent and Sussex counties for direct relief - this though Hopkins had earlier ruled that these would not be eligible for matching funds. Payment was retroactive to 1 January 1933 and provided a substantial amount of extra cash to compensate for the forecast deficit; moreover, it seemed possible that the relief programme could now be carried on into March 1934. The chairman of the New Castle County Citizens Relief Committee advised Irénée du Pont of this development and also of Hopkins' decision that these federal funds should be applied to the costs of relief in the previous months, for which the committee had paid its 20 per cent contribution; as a result, it had a substantial credit with the TERC from which its future contributions, up to



and including February 1934, were to be taken. And he went on:

Accordingly, it has not been necessary to have a [fund-raising] campaign this fall and we called off the payroll deduction plan as of October 14, 1933. We did not discontinue collections until we had enough cash in reserve to take care of any further amounts the State might require of us to cover our 20% of the direct relief costs in the county. <sup>9</sup>

During October and November, a study of the effectiveness of relief work in the state was carried out by Richard Stilwell of the FERA's Washington staff; this was in accordance with Hopkins' instructions and also at the request of Jasper Crane. Stilwell reported that the standards and the methods of providing relief were generally satisfactory and in particular that "The work in the Wilmington - New Castle Unit, which includes considerably more than three fourths of the volume of work in the State, is being handled both efficiently and effectively ... and compares favorably with the best standards established in unemployment relief administrations in other States." However, he criticised the administration of relief in Kent county because it was "granted on a basis of inadequate knowledge and understanding of the facts which resulted in the giving of insufficient relief to those eligible with resulting pauperism." This, he stated, was due to lack of experienced personnel. Only four investigators, one of whom was a volunteer, were employed for the whole county and they did not make written reports. He also made a number of recommendations, including the appointment of a full-time executive secretary to coordinate the entire relief programme in the state who would have supervision and control over relief in each county. On 28 November, FERA field representative Robert W. Kelso endorsed this recommendation and Walter Dent Smith's appointment was agreed by Hopkins and Crane. In mid-December, he took up the new post for which he refused to accept a salary.<sup>10</sup>

#### Transient relief

During December, 1,187 transients were given aid and this indicated the scale of the problem which was to become the responsibility of the state from January 1934 when, in accordance with an FERA instruction, the care of transients would be transferred to individual states.

In Wilmington, transient white men were provided for at the single men's shelter. Coloured male transients were sheltered in homes and at the Sunday Breakfast Mission, and fed at the coloured men's unit. In the rural districts, transient relief cases were handled by local relief centers under the supervision of the central office. An important task carried out by the transients bureau was the investigation of cases referred by other states, and determining whether or not the return to Delaware of those involved should be authorized.<sup>11</sup>

#### The demand for relief increases

Smith's pessimistic forecast of the number of families requiring relief in the event proved to be too conservative, for in spite of CWA employment the actual number in February had reached 8,749 and the costs of providing for these stood at \$203,000. Approximately 15 per cent of the population of Delaware (35,490) were now entirely dependent upon relief, the majority of whom, 24,108, were residents of New Castle county; the remainder were divided between Kent county, 3,862; and Sussex county, 7,520. The reason for this unexpected increase was the almost complete curtailment of CWA and other outdoor employment, caused by adverse weather conditions during February, "which placed a burden on the TERC which ordinarily it would not have had to assume". Many families were put back on the relief rolls even though a family member was working on a CWA job, in order to supplement reduced wages with direct relief. The situation in rural districts was especially aggravated by the weather factor. Those who could normally glean some subsistence from the land were prevented from doing so by the extreme cold and unusually heavy snows, and on 10 February Sussex county suffered "the worst floods ever experienced" according to C. R. Snyder, the agricultural agent for the county. He reported that the floods had destroyed "acres of tomatoes and sweet corn as well as acres of soybeans, hay and corn"; these latter crops were to have been used for live-stock feed. Consequently, Snyder asked the governor to obtain help from the federal government. Governor Buck, in response to this request, applied for a grant of \$155,000 to feed the live-stock in the distressed areas of the county. This was turned down by the FERA, who advised that although "it is

permissible to grant such feed for the feeding of live-stock and poultry when the products ... are for home use" it was not possible to grant the funds requested as the Delaware situation did not fall under this categorization.<sup>12</sup> The abnormal situation resulting from the unusual severe weather also created a further problem which caused the Kent county's deputy relief director, E.T. Rickards, to inform his investigators:

We are receiving complaints from farmers that they are unable in many instances to secure help on their farms. They, the farmers, maintain that one reason for this is that some of our clients refuse to accept work when it is offered.... I feel that caution should be exercised on the part of the Investigators in keeping those clients on our Relief rolls when they have been offered ... farm work.

This problem was not surprising in view of the wage scale being paid by farmers, which was from 10 to 15 cents per hour.<sup>13</sup>

#### The TERC's funding problem

The deteriorating relief situation and consequent increase in spending caused the TERC to report that it anticipated a deficit of \$30,733 at the beginning of March.<sup>14</sup> In the light of this, and possibly in anticipation of the ending of its official status on 30 April, it issued a report entitled Delaware's Unemployment Relief Problem. The opening paragraph of this stated: "A critical situation faces the people of Delaware. Funds available to the Temporary Emergency Relief Commission are exhausted; yet we are confronted with the necessity of providing the essentials of life to over 28,000 of our neighbors." The commission, which was by this time spending some \$200,000 per month on direct relief, predicted that "the burden of furnishing relief to our people must be continued for months to come", and appealed for everyone to "promptly, patriotically, generously and whole-heartedly, study the full implications of this problem, casting aside all personal or partisan feelings, in order to do whatever may be necessary to cope with this situation." The appeal was no doubt primarily directed at the members of the General Assembly, which was scheduled to meet in special session on 6 March to consider both legislation and the required appropriation for the continuation of unemployment relief.<sup>15</sup>

On 13 February, the federal government came to the TERC's rescue when Governor Buck was informed by Harry Hopkins that a grant of \$165,541

had been made to the state "under subsection C, section four of the Federal Emergency Relief Act ... to aid in meeting the costs of unemployment relief". The governor had applied for this grant at the end of January and two weeks later Smith had sent a telegram to Corrington Gill, the FERA Research and Statistics Director, informing him that the state's auditors had advised that Delaware's relief funds were "about depleted", and asked him to expedite the grant. Smith's telegram was passed on to Aubrey Williams for a ruling, with a covering memorandum which stated that the grant had been held "pending some decision concerning Delaware" and asking: "What do you think we should do with it?"<sup>16</sup> This was another example of the FERA questioning the need for the federal government's continued involvement in the funding of relief in the state, particularly as the provision of matching funds had been suspended shortly after 1 October 1933 and all subsequent federal grants were made on the basis of specific needs of the state. Hopkins told Governor Buck: "I have approved this grant subject to the understanding that further grants will be made to the State only if adequate provision is made by the State to finance two-thirds of the cost of public unemployment relief from March 1st on."<sup>17</sup>

Even so, the federal grant was insufficient to cover the increasing relief costs caused by the curtailment of CWA work and the unusually severe weather, and on 20 February the governor sent a telegram to the federal relief administrator requesting an additional \$170,000 to cover the deficit and the costs of direct relief until the special session of the legislature had had time to take action to resolve the problem of relief finance.<sup>18</sup> On 27 February, the additional grant was made and Hopkins told Dent Smith he was to make it clear that this was the last grant that would be authorised until the legislature approved an appropriation for relief for the remainder of the year.<sup>19</sup>

The irony of the TERC's financial problem was that, although Delaware had received more than \$1 million from the federal government in matching funds and other grants during 1933, as its contribution towards the cost of relief the state had paid over \$12.5 million in federal income and miscellaneous taxes for the year. Indeed, the citizens of Delaware paid the highest per capita income tax in the whole of the United States, and

only 13 states paid higher total federal taxes in Fiscal 1933.<sup>20</sup> In the light of this incontestable evidence of wealth, it is hardly surprising that Hopkins was reluctant to approve further grants to the state, and it also brings into question the need for continuing financial support from the federal government for relief in Delaware.

At the end of February, the urgent need for action by the politically divided General Assembly was recognised by a correspondent who wrote to Pierre du Pont seeking to enlist his help in overcoming the problem of factionalism in the state legislature: "The next step as I see it, seems to be to harmonize the Legislature itself. It seems almost incredible that the sympathy of this group of men cannot be aroused in favor of the almost thirty thousand desperate dependents known to the Relief Commission."<sup>21</sup>

In early March, pressure was exerted on the members of the General Assembly when Robert Kelso, appearing before the state's legislative investigating committee at the request of its chairman, Senator Simonton, elucidated the federal relief administrator's requirement which had to be met before the state would qualify for future federal aid:

If and when the Delaware Legislature adopts a relief program, it will receive the fullest and careful consideration of Mr Hopkins. If it is found favorable the Federal Government will augment the State relief funds.... The FEBA is not coercing Delaware's Legislature, we are not advocating anything, we are not petitioning. Delaware must take the initiative and make the next move. We promise nothing only Mr Hopkins' high sense of justice and fair play.<sup>22</sup>

On 5 March, a final appeal was made to Hopkins by Smith who reminded him the legislature was meeting the next day and that, unless money was appropriated for relief, the TERC would have to "close up shop after March 15." "While we all hope that our Legislature will do th [sic] right thing for our unemployed people," he wrote, "it is not inconceivable that they may get snarled up in partisan politics. It would seem therefore that you occupy a crucial position through your ability to control relief grants and C.W.A. continuance in this State."<sup>23</sup> Hopkins, however, was not going to become involved as he told Crane:

I hate to get my neck to [sic] far out doors in Delaware for I don't believe I ought to give much more money to Delaware. If I tell them how to do this the implication is that Hopkins is dictating and he must be going to put a lot of money in.<sup>24</sup>

### Special session of the General Assembly

On 6 March, the governor in his message to the special session of the General Assembly called the members' attention to the seriously impaired financial condition of the general fund, and the necessity for action to continue emergency relief to the needy and unemployed of the state. He told them that, despite the efforts to gather income from every source into the general fund, the net cash available to meet budget appropriations for the remaining four months of the fiscal year was only \$209,010. The budgeted expenses against the fund to June were \$539,320 and the additional revenue required to augment it was therefore \$330,309, if the state departments, institutions and agencies which depended upon the fund for their general expenses were to continue to operate during the remainder of the fiscal year. In spite of this, he said, he did not regard this contingency itself as critical as he saw a ready solution to raise the money necessary to retain the solvency of the general fund. The resolution he offered was the transfer of the responsibility for the redemption of County Aid Highway Bonds from 1 April 1934 to 30 June 1935, which was an obligation of the sinking fund, to the Highway Department, thereby releasing \$385,000 to the general fund. However, the governor pointed out that

the vitally serious aspect of the situation relative to the financial affairs of the State lies in the fact that the income from all sources is still decreasing and we are confronted with a condition as to the General Fund in that the receipts in the next fiscal year will undoubtedly fall short of the estimated budgeted income as set up in the fall of 1932 by at least one and a half million dollars ... and this sum will have to be raised to supplement the income to the General Fund.... The realization of this situation confronting the General Fund of the State Treasury is such that it should not be ... overlooked ... if you are called upon to pass an appropriation the approval of which will place an additional burden upon the resources of that fund.

Against this background, the governor then came to the main business of the special session - the continuation of relief. He told the members that for the second time within 16 months they were faced with the problem of financing a relief programme and drew their attention to the TERC's Report which recommended an additional appropriation of \$1.5 million for the remainder of the year. He reminded them of the necessity for prompt action, and suggested that as soon as possible a joint committee consisting

of members of both the Senate and the House be appointed to consider the problem and to submit its findings "at the earliest possible moment" to the respective branches of the legislature.<sup>25</sup>

### The Joint Legislative Committee

The governor's appeal apparently fell on deaf ears because before the House had been in session half-an-hour it had become involved in a serious political dispute over the composition of the committee which he had suggested. Democratic Representative Scott W. Rees of New Castle county moved that the Speaker be authorized to appoint a committee of three from the majority side of the House. This motion was disputed by Kent county Republican Representative Morris Simon.<sup>26</sup> The disagreement over the establishment of the committee continued until 13 March when Representative Scott, the majority leader of the House, proposed the appointment of one comprised of four members from each House to formulate a relief bill, and for the Speaker to nominate the House committee to confer with the Senate's. This was adopted without opposition,<sup>27</sup> and resulted in the formation of a joint committee later on the same day. Senator Charles A. Neugebauer (Democrat, Kent county) was elected chairman and Representative Alexander R. Abrahams (Republican, New Castle county) secretary. The other members were Senators James B. McCabe (Democrat, Sussex county); W. Mailly Davis (Republican, Wilmington); Carl Ray Van Sant (Republican, Wilmington); and Representatives Charles T. Jackson (Democrat, Kent county); William T. Bennett (Democrat, Sussex county); and John W. Burris (Republican, Sussex county). The latter was the only Republican to be elected from the county.<sup>28</sup>

### Further funding problems

On 13 March, the TERC announced that its funds would only last until the end of the week, and the Wilmington evening newspaper reported: "This afternoon the Commission with its money very near to the zero mark will meet in special session in an effort to work out some way that relief may continue."<sup>29</sup> This, however, may have been a stratagem to induce the legislature to resolve the *impasse* over relief appropriations, because at the meeting it was announced there was in fact sufficient cash available to

continue relief until 25 March. This had been discovered by an audit of the accounts up to December 1933, which showed that, due to credits from discounts taken, plus additional money made available through the closing of the CWA's account and the transfer of its balance to the commission's credit, the available funds were larger than expected. Nevertheless, Mayor Collins warned, "it will be necessary for the Commission to cease providing the essentials of life to the unemployed families ... unless the Legislature ... makes available additional funds or officially authorizes the Commission to use the credit of the State." He emphasized the need for "speedy action", pointing out that in February "35,490 citizens, which was one out of every seven persons in the State, were dependent for the necessities of life upon the TERC."<sup>30</sup>

#### Relief plans

The formation of the joint committee, however, did not resolve the problem of the political division between the two Houses of the General Assembly or the factionalism within each House, and by 16 March it was no nearer a resolution of the deadlock over legislation for the continued financing of relief. A staff correspondent of the Wilmington Evening Journal Every Evening reporting the situation wrote:

The difficult task of settling the age old problem of sectionalism among members of the General Assembly may fall upon the joint legislative committee seeking to draw up a relief bill satisfactory to the majority of the solons.... Two plans, each of which represents the opinion of members whose districts are divided north and south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal may be submitted to the committee today or Monday.

Both plans included a bond issue and the creation of independent relief boards but their other provisions were widely divergent. Members from north of the state favoured the setting up of an executive committee to control all relief expenditures in Delaware with the money to finance this plan coming from the school fund either directly or by diverting the revenues from franchise taxes. It was also proposed that the governor be empowered to apply for further grants from the federal government. The amount allocated to each county was to be based on population and past record of relief work, and the committee would determine how much should be allocated for work-relief and direct relief. The proposed executive



committee would also organise relief committees in each county to raise a percentage of the money it was allocated.

Under the plan advocated by legislators from south of the Chesapeake and Delaware canal, Wilmington would be authorized to borrow \$750,000 by issuing bonds yielding 2.5 per cent, which were to be purchased by the school fund. Other cities and towns would be authorized to issue bonds to finance relief, and these were also to be purchased by the school fund. Alternatively, the plan proposed that the Levy Courts of each county be given the power to raise funds for relief to a maximum of \$1 million for the entire state. It proposed that the cities and towns, including Wilmington, would set up boards with complete control of all relief expenditure. However, it appeared unlikely that if this latter plan was to be adopted the federal government would provide any more grants, as Hopkins had indicated FERA would only deal with the state. The southern plan, in an endeavour to placate farmers in Kent and Sussex counties who strongly opposed any kind of relief programme, also proposed that they would be paid half the cost of the wages of farm labourers out of relief funds.<sup>31</sup>

#### Funds for the continuation of relief

During the second week of March, Jasper Crane returned from a business trip to South America and resumed his duties as the TERC's chairman, only to be faced with the prospect of the imminent end of relief due to the lack of funds. However, on 22 March, the legislature passed a bill appropriating \$108,000 to enable the continuation of relief until the end of April, when the TERC's term expired. This bill, which transferred the requisite sums from the sinking fund to the general fund to cover the appropriation, significantly contained a clause that it was passed "with the understanding and agreement on the part of the Commission and the General Assembly that no additional amount was to be requested by the Commission or appropriated". The bill received only just enough votes in each chamber to pass, 18 in the House, a majority of six; and nine in the Senate, a majority of four. Opposition to the bill, in both the House and Senate, came from Kent and Sussex county members. In the House this was led by Democratic Representative Rees of rural New Castle county, the only member

from the county to vote against it. He was supported by Representatives English, McCabe, Phillips, Owens, Wheatley and Speaker Robinson - all Democrats from Sussex county; Hughes, Minner, Outten, and Poore - all Democrats from Kent county; and a single Republican from Kent county, Representative Jones. Five were absent: Elliot and Van Sriver, both Republicans from Wilmington; Jester, a Democrat from Kent county; Thompson, a Democrat from Sussex county; and Schroeder, a Republican from rural New Castle county. Opposition in the Senate was led by Senator Latchum who was supported by other Democrats from both Kent and Sussex counties: Frasher, Cannon, and Steen; and McCaulley, a Republican from Sussex county. Three senators were absent: Griffenberg and McIntire, both Republicans, and Hart, a Democrat, all from New Castle county. One of the reasons given for the opposition to the bill was that the expenditure of the \$2 million initially appropriated for relief was under investigation by a joint legislative committee, and Senator Latchum, a member of the joint committee, considered that the TERC should not be entrusted with the additional relief funds. "Here you are giving the same people the spending of the [additional] money", he complained. "I am opposed to turning this money over to the same gang for the same purpose." Mayor Collins, commenting on the senator's statement, made clear the willingness of each member of the commission to be relieved of his duties rather than stand in the way of adequate relief funding.<sup>32</sup>

A surprising aspect of the vote in the Senate was that despite the absence of three New Castle county senators, which left it equally divided between the two parties, five senators from Kent and Sussex counties voted with the four New Castle county senators present to pass the bill. Nevertheless, the appropriation was not considered sufficient to meet the cost of providing relief at the existing level, which in the opinion of Dent Smith would require \$281,000. Consequently, he sent a telegrams to both the president pro-tem of the Senate and the Speaker of the House warning that, as a result of the inadequacy of relief funding, the

needy people ... must be deprived of all relief except an inadequate food ration. Clothing, medical services, light and fuel, medicine and shelter must be eliminated and food cut one-third.... Our State and particularly

the children of our unemployed families will suffer permanent damage in health, morale and self respect by any prolonged maintainance on such an inadequate basis as present appropriation compels ... strongly urge quick preparation and passage of permanent relief measure providing adequate aid.<sup>33</sup>

Smith also sent Hopkins a copy of a resolution passed by the TERC authorizing him to put into immediate operation a revised programme of relief which included "only an adequate supply of food and emergency requirements of fuel and medicine but no other necessities of life"; it was estimated that this programme could be continued until "about April 21" with the funds available.<sup>34</sup> Other reactions to the news of the legislators' parsimonious appropriation came from the relief director for rural New Castle county, who said it misunderstood the immensity of the relief problem in Delaware. Stronger comment came from Frank Collins who was "stunned by the meagerness of the appropriation", and pointed out that "the unduly severe weather had brought in its wake an increase in sickness that, with the curtailment of medical services, fuel for heating and cooking", would soon present a serious problem.<sup>35</sup> Fortunately, through the public spiritedness of the Delaware State Medical Society, numbers of doctors in the state undertook to provided free medical services during the period that funds were insufficient to pay for them.<sup>36</sup> On the day after the General Assembly had reluctantly provided the inadequate appropriation for relief, the Senate voted by 13 to two to pay its members a total of \$1,194 for mileage expenses for the 12 days from 6 to 17 March.<sup>37</sup>

On 25 March, faced with the necessity of making the appropriation cover a period of over a month, the TERC was forced to introduce a greatly restricted relief programme. Practically all relief, except for a reduced food allowance, had to be stopped and this was reduced from 14 to seven cents per day for each person. Also a large number of families who had been given supplementary aid were now removed from the relief rolls. In spite of these cut-backs, it was estimated that funds would be exhausted before the end of April, and Crane notified the General Assembly, through Senator Neugebauer and Representative Abrahams, of the TERC's inability to provide relief up to the end of its tenure. On 28 March, a joint session of the legislature was convened. This was attended by some 400 persons representing all sections of the state. A hundred of these were labour

representatives including James O'Kane, president of the Central Labor Union, who urged that "the Legislature cut out any petty politics which may be hindering the [relief] program". Robert Kelso, adhering strictly to his brief, also addressed the joint session. "Distress is so much greater in many places", he observed, "that by comparison the people of Delaware haven't seen a depression"; and he believed that the problem in the state had not reached its peak which he estimated would occur by the end of March.<sup>38</sup>

#### The relief situation deteriorates

The relief situation in Delaware continued to deteriorate during March and by the end of the month, as predicted by Kelso, the number of individuals depending on relief was 36,723, an increase of 1,233 over the February total, all of which occurred in Kent and Sussex counties. The number of unemployed in New Castle county actually decreased by 48 during the month. The rise in Sussex county resulted in the adoption of restricted budgets and the amount of relief per family was reduced by \$2.25 to \$6.12. In sharp contrast, the average amount of relief per family had increased in New Castle county by \$3.15 to \$29.47 during the same period. This was the result of the ending of the supply of coal by the federal Surplus Fuel Corporation so that all fuel provided to relief families had to be purchased with relief funds. Federal surplus food to the value of \$16,771, and clothing made by the sewing units, valued at \$4,067, were distributed during the month. The cost of these was not included in computing the average amount of relief per family.<sup>39</sup>

#### The du Pont's influence in the state

An indication of the continuing influence of the du Pont family in state affairs occurred in late March, when Governor Buck consulted some of its members to obtain their views on the drafting of a new relief bill. On 23 March, he wrote to William du Pont Jr. requesting him to confirm in writing the verbal suggestions that had been made at an earlier meeting with the family. The next day William responded, quoting Lamot du Pont's suggestion of a waiting period before a person who had been taken off

relief could get back on. He also added his own recommendation that the period of residence of an applicant be increased before qualifying for relief, commenting that "certainly there should be no occasion for expecting Delaware to take care of the people who have come into the state within a comparatively short time." He suggested, "one point in which the giving of relief might be tightened up applies to farm help and other forms of labor, which ordinarily only work part of the year", and went on to explain that he knew of "a number of cases where in winter months men doing that sort of work have gone on direct relief, whereas ordinarily they would manage to look out for themselves, having built up a reserve when the weather was good and they could work outside."<sup>40</sup>

A relief measure is produced ...

By the end of March, the joint legislative committee had produced a relief and work programme to be incorporated into a proposed relief bill, which was based on "the suggestions and ideas of numerous citizens." On 29 March, an outline of this was sent to Hopkins and at a subsequent meeting the committee told him that they believed they had produced "a comprehensive program for a State the size of Delaware". They asked for his "serious consideration of our request for assistance in carrying out our program about to be presented to the Legislature." The programme called for an appropriation of \$2 million, the greater part of which (\$1.5 million) was to be spent on work-relief - \$1 million for public works, comprising new buildings, and additions to other structures; and \$500,000 for work-relief on secondary roads, ditches, and jetties. The remaining \$500,000 was to be for direct relief.<sup>41</sup> At the beginning of April, the joint committee presented its proposal to the General Assembly. In the introduction, as if anticipating the reaction of the members to their proposal, it observed: "The needs of one are not the needs of another. There must be common sense, diplomacy, shrewdness and an understanding of composite conditions. Sectional, personal, political and selfish ideas must of necessity be put in the background". In an attempt to win the legislature's support, the proposed work-relief projects were carefully selected with an eye to necessity, usefulness and real benefits, and were

carefully distributed throughout the state. The committee suggested that the money to finance their relief proposal could be raised by increased income taxes; a one cent tax on gasoline; the introduction of a sales tax, estate tax, and capitalization tax; and they went on to assert that the proposed \$2 million relief programme, if added to the other planned public works programmes in Delaware, would bring the total expenditure during the period from 30 April 1934 to 31 January 1935 to \$8,302,086. Representative Abrahams, secretary and spokesman for the committee, told the legislature that Hopkins "had very positive doubts as to the amount we set aside for direct relief being sufficient and suggested one million dollars and said if passed with the balance of the program, the government would match the one million dollars." He also told them Hopkins had warned that "... if either ... the public works bill was approved and the direct relief bill killed or vice versa, he would be of the opinion that Delaware had no serious problem and did not need support or help from the government." The committee, concluded with the plea: "we believe all of the foregoing worthy of your serious consideration, and urge you to give this more than just a snap judgment; consider please the various conditions prevailing throughout the State."<sup>42</sup>

The proposed means of raising revenue to pay for relief was opposed by the governor, who suggested that instead of increasing existing taxes, or levying new taxes, the road and school building programmes could be curtailed and the unexpended public money be used to finance relief. He argued that both the Department of Public Instruction and the Highways Department were in excellent financial condition; the estimated uncontracted balance in the latter's fund amounting to \$450,000, and the school fund was estimated to have a balance of \$3.6 million at 1 July 1934. As he told the General Assembly, he believed "the State's first duty to her citizens [was] to provide that they shall not suffer" and, he added, "no deserving citizen of our State must be allowed to suffer for want of food and shelter". It was for these reasons he suggested the curtailing of the highway and school building programmes, in order that "we may be certain of having enough money to care for those who are in need."<sup>43</sup>

... and fails

Despite the pleas of the governor and the joint legislative committee, the legislature was unable to agree on a relief measure and, on 9 April, a concurrent resolution calling for *sine die* adjournment on 13 April was adopted. The governor's reaction to this was to write to the General Assembly asking:

Am I to understand that in the next four days you contemplate being able to enact legislation that will provide some means of relief for hundreds of citizens in our industrial centers...? Are you not unduly optimistic, realizing as you must that four weeks have passed since ... you reconvened and that as yet nothing whatsoever has been accomplished in the way of relief legislation.... I cannot believe that you will permit it to be said of you, that lacking foresight, courage and ability to meet an acute crisis, you ran home to hide.

He implored members to make personal investigations of how serious the situation was in Wilmington and its immediate vicinity which, he said, was so different from that prevailing in the rural communities where, according to a number of members of the General Assembly from the two southern counties, relief was no longer needed.<sup>44</sup> The adjournment was postponed, and the legislature continued to debate the joint committee's proposed bill (House Bill No. 166) which had been introduced by Representative Abrahams. On 12 April, Senator Neugebauer telephoned Hopkins and gave him an outline of the bill, explaining that commissioners were to be appointed for each county and for Wilmington, and that these would be independently responsible for the administration of relief. He also stressed that funds were to be allocated according to population and not to need; but when he asked Hopkins what he thought about the proposed bill, he was told that "it sounds like a very bad thing."

A major reason for the legislature's failure to agree was the composition of the commission which would be responsible for the administration of relief. Crane saw this as a problem which it appeared impossible to resolve by legislative procedure, and he appealed to Hopkins to send a message to the governor and the legislature to help resolve it. As he told Hopkins, "such a message from you should be helpful in finally eliminating politics from the situation and promoting immediate action which is imperative." On 19 April, in a telephone conversation between Hopkins, Kelso and Crane, Kelso told Hopkins that: "This situation is

decidedly more than politics -- it is town against the county", and he endeavored to convince him that he was the only person the legislature would listen to. But Hopkins was reluctant to get personally involved. After some discussion on the possibility of the federal government dealing directly with Wilmington and not the state as a last resort, and despite Crane telling him that relief was to be discontinued on 20 April, Hopkins' reaction was once again negative: "I am not disposed to do anything in this administrative jam. I think it is up to Delaware. I am disposed to let them stew in their own juice."<sup>45</sup>

One possible reason for Hopkins' apparent reluctance to employ what Anthony Badger describes as "his ultimate weapon", the taking over relief within the state, as he did in six states where political interference was too blatant,<sup>46</sup> may have been that the evidence of Delaware's ability to pay for its own relief needs was very strong and consequently the provision of federal funds unnecessary. There is ample corroboration of this, for not only was the state one of the largest contributors in federal taxes but it had also managed to maintain a healthy financial position internally at a time when other states were being forced towards bankruptcy.

#### More relief bills

Both the Senate and the House now produced new relief bills. In the Senate, New Castle county Republican Senator Van Sant's bill contained the joint committee's proposals and was passed on 20 April, having been amended to provide that the state judiciary should appoint a bi-partisan relief commission of eight members. In the House, the bill presented by Democratic Representative Scott of rural New Castle county also provided for a commission of eight, but this time to be named by the Senate and House presiding officers. It also called for an appropriation of \$1 million for work and direct relief, but significantly included provision for feed for farm cattle. Governor Buck told a joint session that if it should be passed he could not sign the Scott bill in its present unsatisfactory form because he had been informed that the federal government would not give funds to match the appropriations in such a bill. He appealed to the House to enact satisfactory relief legislation,



suggesting that New Castle county be allowed to borrow \$750,000 for relief purposes. A bill to this effect, introduced in the Senate by Republican Senator Simonton of Wilmington, had already been passed. Representative Scott, the Democratic floor leader now raised the stakes by telling the governor that Simonton's New Castle county relief bill would be kept in House Committee until the Senate reported out his relief bill as passed by the House.<sup>47</sup> This action was yet another illustration of the serious division that existed between the two Houses. The Wilmington evening newspaper commenting on the inability of the legislature to agree observed sadly:

Political and sectional differences have entered into the situation in a way that even the optimistic advocates of adequate relief legislation doubt whether the Legislature ... would provide even one dollar to carry on a further relief program even though ... 36,723 needy persons, including 8,976 families were on the State relief rolls in March.<sup>48</sup>

#### TERC's operations cease

While the legislature continued its lengthy but unproductive session, setting the record for a single prolonged sitting which began at noon on 20 April and lasted until the Senate recessed shortly after midnight and the House at two-o'clock on the following morning, the TERC ceased operations at midday on 21 April when all its funds were finally exhausted. This decision had previously been deferred in the hope that the General Assembly would agree on legislation to enable the continuation of relief. The only relief remaining took the form of a small number of packages of food and 30,000 pounds of pork supplied by the Surplus Food Corporation,<sup>49</sup> and this was distributed during the week of 23 April. Bakers in Wilmington donated bread which enabled the TERC to give out half a loaf per person with each ration of pork. With the distribution of this, all foodstuffs were exhausted and relief stopped entirely. For the first time since the onset of the Great Depression, Wilmington experienced bread-lines, and the Wilmington evening newspaper reporting this event noted: "Wilmington's bread line increased in size this morning ... but there wasn't enough bread to go around.... The week-end looms cheerless and cold for thousands of needy unemployed...."<sup>50</sup> In spite this disturbing report, Bertha N. Borton, who had been dispensing direct relief at the TERC's Wilmington headquarters

at Sixth and Shipley streets, found that "the optimism among the large portion of the thousands who are on relief rolls is astounding. These unfortunates ... still believe that something will come to pass whereby relief will continue."<sup>51</sup>

During April, as in previous years, the improved weather conditions had brought about an expected reduction in relief load and the number of individuals receiving relief fell by 6,793 to 29,918; nevertheless, this was still 13 per cent of the entire state's population. The greatest decrease was in Kent and Sussex counties, where almost 5,200 individuals were removed from the relief rolls. However, the reduction was not solely brought about by the favourable weather conditions; almost half (3,200) of it was due to the dropping from the relief rolls of families which had been receiving relief to supplement their inadequate incomes. From 1 to 21 April, relief was provided on a vastly reduced scale, with only food and emergency orders for fuel and medicine being issued.<sup>52</sup> In his report for April, the TERC's executive director wrote that

when relief had stopped entirely there was a noticeable increase in the number of grocer's bread boxes which were broken into and robbed ... bakeries issued orders that their early deliveries should not be made until after daylight ... milk deliveries were also postponed to daylight schedules ... and there has been a noticeable increase in begging....<sup>53</sup>

On 27 April, the federal relief administrator apparently unaware that the TERC had ceased operations, but in the knowledge that its mandate expired at the end of the month, sent a telegram to the governor:

I understand that a complete shutdown of relief is imminent in Wilmington. I have repeatedly stated that Federal Government was prepared to cooperate with Delaware to the fullest whenever the State took appropriate action to provide its share of the funds and provided for an administration of relief which would assure to the needy unemployed the kind of service to which they are entitled. It surely cannot be said but that the State of Delaware is able to provide funds to meet the legitimate needs of the unemployed. I can only repeat that I am ready to make funds available at a moment's notice whenever the States [sic] does its share. It seems to me therefore that the failure to provide funds in any part of Delaware rests squarely upon the Legislature and other constituted authorities of the State.<sup>54</sup>

Hopkins' criticism went unheeded and the General Assembly continued to concern itself more with sectional differences than with the collapse of relief in the state.

### The Harmony Committee

The Speaker, in an effort to get a relief bill that would win sufficient support to pass both Houses, now appointed a committee of 12 members made up of six members of each party. Eight were from New Castle county (four Democrats: Kelly, Price, Rees and Pryor and four Republicans: Abrahams, Bonham, Dugan and Roy), while the other members were two from Kent County (Democrat, Poore, and Republican, Simon) and two from Sussex county (Democrat, Robinson, and Republican, Burris). The new committee, known as "the Harmony Committee", produced a draft bill providing for an appropriation of \$1.5 million, half for direct relief and half for work-relief,<sup>55</sup> and this was introduced into the House by Representative Kelly, where it was passed by 25 votes to eight. Seven of those voting against it were Democrats from Sussex county, while the only Republican voting against the bill was Representative Wilson of Kent county. The bill named eight relief commissioners: four Republicans (Walter Dent Smith of Wilmington; William du Pont of rural New Castle county; Wallace S. Handy, and Frank J. Hurley, both from Kent county) and four Democrats (Wright C. Dizer of Wilmington; George H. McGovern of rural New Castle county; Charles R. Brown of Kent county and Henry B. Mitchell the sole representative from Sussex county). The committee had experienced considerable problems in naming the commissioners and it was expected that amendments would be offered to change some of them when the bill was called up for final passage. This had also proved to be a stumbling block in the drafting of earlier legislation and had previously been described by Crane as: "Log-rolling and trading ... going on in the Legislature to select the ... members of the proposed Commission". The bill provided for direct and work-relief allocations by county as follows: direct relief - New Castle county, 88 per cent; Kent county, 5 per cent; and Sussex county, 7 per cent. Work-relief - New Castle county, 56 per cent; Kent county, 19 per cent; and Sussex county 27 per cent. The reason for the imbalance between direct and work-relief allocations for the southern counties was the contention by the Kent and Sussex members of the committee that their counties were more in need of work-relief than direct relief. Under an amendment offered by Representative Rees, the money to fund relief would be taken equally from

the highway and school funds. This was the most important of the 13 amendments adopted, and eliminated the need for a bond issue bill which would have required a three-quarter majority, representing 27 votes in the House. As Rees put it, "we are a little leery that that can be done", because of the likely of the opposition from Sussex county members. The Rees amendment was adopted by the House together with another significant amendment which made provision under which needy farmers could secure direct relief aid for cattle feed and seed.<sup>56</sup> On 24 April, Crane had written to Hopkins informing him of the introduction of the Kelly bill, which he said had "most of the objectionable features of the Scott Bill" and also told him that six of the eight members of the commission named in the bill were purely political appointees. He concluded: "I still have the hope that the legislature will realize that it cannot deny the Wilmington district the right to raise its own funds and carry on a proper relief program."<sup>57</sup>

The Kelly bill was passed in the House by a vote of 23 to eight. Seven of the ten members from Sussex county voted against it, all of whom were Democrats, and the remaining vote against came from Republican Representative Wilson of Kent county. The bill was then sent to the Senate, where it was amended to "take the politics out of it and to remove any doubt of obtaining a Federal grant of money under it", before it was passed. The amended bill was returned to the House where the Senate amendments were rejected and the problem of enacting relief legislation once again was unresolved.<sup>58</sup> The only hope for those unemployed who were totally dependent upon relief in the worst affected part of the state, the urban areas of New Castle county and Wilmington in particular, now depended on the House passing the Simonton New Castle county relief bill, which had already been approved by the Senate and was supported by the governor. This bill gave the county authority to issue bonds to the value of \$750,000 to fund relief.<sup>59</sup> The House not only refused to permit a vote to be taken on the amended Kelly bill but also side-lined a Senate bill extending the life of the TERC until 15 June 1934 together with the Simonton bill.<sup>60</sup> By the end of April, all hope for the enactment of a relief programme by the legislature had been abandoned by the governor. On 2 May, he announced

that the people of Wilmington and rural New Castle county would be taken care of regardless of what the legislature did.<sup>61</sup>

An audit subsequently carried out by Mack, Attrix and Company showed that in the 18 months of its existence, from 1 November 1932 to 21 April 1934, the TERC had spent a total of \$3,668,271 on the provision of relief. The greatest part of this sum, \$3,269,029, was spent in New Castle county. Kent county received \$140,605 and Sussex county \$258,636. In addition to this, the commission handled a further \$600,000 in its capacity as the state's Civil Works Administration.<sup>62</sup>

Although the TERC had done its best to provide for the needs of the unemployed during a particularly hard winter, it was severely handicapped by the partisan and sectional discord within the General Assembly. The state's finances during this period were evidently sound, and the satisfactory financial condition of many individuals may be gleaned from the federal taxes paid. In spite of this, it seems that little or no help was forthcoming from the philanthropists who, prior to the intervention of the federal government, had borne the lion's share of the burden of supporting the unemployed. The establishment of Citizens Relief Committees, which were responsible for raising the required 20 per cent to qualify for the state's contribution for direct relief, may also have discouraged further benevolence from these philanthropists. The reluctance of the federal relief administrator to authorize further grants until the legislature agreed the state's contribution for relief is defensible. It could be argued that he was aware of the state's sound financial position and for this reason alone saw no reason to intervene, even though the TERC ceased operations and relief was discontinued.

The deteriorating relief situation and shortage of funds to meet the increasing demands of those affected, particularly in the northern county, apparently had little effect on the political and sectional divisions within the state legislature, as demonstrated by the politicians' inability to agree on a relief measure. It was indeed fortunate for these victims of the depression that, as we shall see later, Delaware had a governor who was willing to take action himself to alleviate the plight of the unemployed of New Castle county.

## CHAPTER 5: The funding of relief May to September 1934

Governor Buck's solution of the problem of continued relief funding, resulting from the legislature's intransigence, was the creation of the Relief Commission Inc. (RCI). Its task was to take over responsibility for the unemployed in New Castle county, and this action at least assured the continuation of relief in the region where it was most needed. He achieved this by resurrecting the charter granted by the legislature in 1885 to Associated Charities of Wilmington. Under this the association was incorporated with "perpetual existence", and its purpose and objectives included the item: "To obtain from the proper charities and charitable individuals funds and supplies for the relief of the deserving classes." The charter also provided for the appropriation of money to Associated Charities, stating: "The Levy Court of New Castle County is authorized and empowered, at its discretion ... to make appropriations out of the funds of the said county, for the use and disposal of the officers of this Association in the pursuance of its charitable purposes...." The state Attorney General, P. Warren Green, gave an opinion confirming this and advised the governor that "the Levy court is authorized to appropriate moneys to ... Associated Charities, ... to enable it to furnish direct or work relief to those deserving such help", and "that the amount of money that the Levy Court may appropriate is entirely discretionary...."<sup>1</sup>

### The Levy Court

In the 1930s, Delaware's counties still retained a great deal of the autonomy they had exercised in colonial times. Traditionally, county government revolved around the Levy Court, a small elected body that assessed and collected county property taxes. The origins of the county Levy Courts dated back to a law passed in 1775, by which overseers of the poor were appointed to levy special taxes for maintenance of the needy of the county. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, the Delaware state legislature made changes and amendments to this system, the most important of which was made in 1793, when it became established that each court should be composed of commissioners elected by the people; thus

politics were introduced into the court. Subsequent laws, passed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, further defined the court's scope and functions. Under these it gathered more statutory power each year and became the most important executive power in the county. Amongst its many responsibilities, it appointed the Board of Assessment; fixed the capitation rate and other county taxes; and appointed tax collectors. It appropriated moneys for various charitable organisations and for the workhouses, to pay for the maintenance of inmates held there; and to pay the salaries of the judge, clerk, and bailiff of the Court of Common Pleas. It was required to approve and to pass all bills for the county before they could be paid, and was responsible for the cost of maintaining roads and bridges. In July 1935, all public roads, highways and bridges were placed under the control of the state Highway Department and taxation for road purposes was transferred to the state.

From 1901 until January 1937, when legislation enacted in 1935 reorganizing the New Castle county court came into effect, it had seven commissioners, one elected from each of the seven districts of the county. This reformation redivided it into three Levy Court districts, the first being the city of Wilmington, the second comprising the remainder of New Castle county and the third being made up of Pencader, St Georges, Red Lion, Appoquinmink and Blackbird Hundreds. The court's name was also changed at this time to "The Levy Court Commissioners of New Castle County".<sup>2</sup>

#### Establishment of the RCI

On 3 May, the governor summoned a conference of former members of the board of Associated Charities and other interested parties. This was attended by ex-directors Mrs A. D. Warner Sr., John S. Rossell, George A. Rhoads, Grace Beadenkopf and Clifford E. Iszard. Also present were J. Thompson Brown, president, and Ethelda Mullen, executive director, of the Family Society; Attorney General Warren Green; Secretary of State Charles H. Grantland; and Walter Dent Smith.<sup>3</sup> At the conference, Smith handed over the records and remaining assets of the TERC to Mullen, who was appointed acting executive director of the new organisation in charge of the relief programme.

Pending the organisation of a permanent board of directors, a temporary board was chosen. This was comprised of Mrs Warner (president); George Rhoads (vice president); John Rossell (treasurer); and Clifford Iszard (secretary). The new relief organization began functioning without delay, and by 4 May food orders were once again being distributed on the governor's promise that he would obtain the necessary funds to pay for them from the Levy Court and from private donations.<sup>4</sup>

Immediately after the conference, Governor Buck and Secretary of State Grantland went to Washington to confer with Aubrey Williams in order to secure federal funds for the new organisation. Williams told the governor that the federal government was "anxious and ready to deal with any municipality or county in the State". This statement indicated a change in the FERA's own rules which stated that it could not deal directly with any city, county, township, or other subordinate units,<sup>5</sup> which had accordingly ruled out the bills previously introduced by legislators from south of the Chesapeake and Delaware canal proposing to establish municipally run and funded relief organisations. Had this apparent change in policy been known sooner, it might have been possible for the General Assembly to have enacted a relief measure based upon these bills as early as the beginning of March, assuming that the political and sectional differences had not precluded it. It appears that Williams' statement was based on information he had received from Robert Kelso, and also on subsequent telephone discussions with Harry Hopkins, Dent Smith and Governor Buck.

On 28 April, Kelso had sent a telegram to Williams informing him that the governor expected to raise "perhaps as much as three hundred thousand dollars" to finance relief in New Castle county and urged him to match these funds for the first month to "get quick relief ... for the families in desperate need and in danger of riot." Williams had later written to Hopkins to confirm their discussions regarding "entering into arrangements with cities and counties and matching funds which they put up for relief." He had also told his boss: "The Governor of Delaware is ready to make application for funds for relief in New Castle County on a basis of our matching dollar for dollar ..."; and stated that if Hopkins



"was agreeable he would make one hundred thousand dollars available". However, it seems that the federal administrator was not yet prepared to agree to this, and noted on Williams' memorandum: "see me about this". Hopkins' reluctance is not surprising in the light of the apparent reversal of this FERA ruling; however, it was also due in part to the continuing uncertainty as to just who would be responsible for administering relief in the county. On 1 May, Williams telephoned Smith to clarify this, and asked him whether, if a federal grant for relief were made, it would be administered by the TERC. Smith explained that the TERC's term of office had expired at the end of April, and that the legislature, which seemed "to be hopelessly deadlocked over administration rather than the needs of people", had failed to agree on relief legislation, with the consequence that no relief had been given since 21 April. As he told Williams, "We are having people living on stale bread, and stealing milk". He suggested contacting the governor direct. Williams did so the same day, and having received an assurance that a capable relief administrator would be appointed, told Governor Buck: "We will make money available to you and you can designate your agent as far as we are concerned."<sup>6</sup>

On his return to Delaware, the governor conferred with Arch Mandel, the FERA field representative appointed to replace Robert Kelso,<sup>7</sup> to determine when the federal funds promised by Williams would be made available. Mandel had previously informed Hopkins of the creation of the RCI had advised him that "... in my judgement ... it would be more advisable to deal with [it] ... than with the Levy Court as the administrators of the Federal funds", an opinion based on his belief that "administration by the Levy Court would risk throwing the whole business into politics".<sup>8</sup> He now assured the governor that "an initial contribution of an amount necessary to keep relief going for some weeks" would be provided shortly. He also told him that the federal government would consider matching whatever funds were appropriated to the RCI. But he qualified this by adding that he was unable to promise anything positive until he had conferred with Hopkins. Nevertheless, he reassured the governor that the federal relief administrator would give "all assistance possible".

On 7 May, Governor Buck, apparently not satisfied with this affirmation, made a further attempt to expedite the promised funds, sending a telegram to Aubrey Williams to ask if he could be advised when Delaware would be getting federal aid, and telling him that he expected the legislature to adjourn without passing any form of relief measure. He also informed Williams that it was unlikely Wilmington would make a contribution towards the cost of relief and consequently only \$300,000 of county funds would be available during the RCI's first six months of operations. <sup>9</sup>

On 5 May, Mandel had sent Hopkins a report on the situation in Delaware confirming that the General Assembly was no nearer agreeing a relief measure which, he said, he doubted would be produced. He also reported:

It seems to be the consensus that Kent and Sussex offer no problems. There have been a few hundred families in each of these two counties receiving relief, but these families, it is felt, can see their way through on their own during the summer. The leaders, political and others, in these two counties want no money provided for relief in these jurisdictions. The problem in New Castle County ... is acute. Approximately 5,500 families are on relief in this county, the great majority in the city of Wilmington.<sup>10</sup>

#### Relief funding by the court

Relief continued to be provided, on a restricted basis, in Wilmington and New Castle county while arrangements to obtain the necessary funds were pursued. Social workers, returning to their districts after the ten-day break caused by the lack of relief funding, found appalling conditions. These were particularly bad in Wilmington, where there were some cases of slow starvation and of babies suffering from the lack of food. They also discovered that the hungry and needy had been subsisting largely on what dairies and bakeries had been giving them.

Because of the limited finances, the only direct relief being given was in the form of food orders, and these were restricted to \$1.50 per week for a single person living alone; \$2.50 for a family of three; \$4.50 for a family of four; and \$5 for a family of five. Larger households were given food orders varying from \$6 for a family of seven to \$7.50 for a family of ten or more. No provision could be made for medical attention, clothing, fuel for cooking, or other necessities<sup>11</sup> until 8 May, when the Levy Court

appropriated the \$300,000 which had been requested by Associated Charities on behalf of its subsidiary. This was to be given in six monthly instalments of \$50,000. Emalea Warner, in her request for funds, had informed the court that "... no agency has been created or funds established for the supplying of relief which is urgently needed in New Castle County.... We therefore ... request your honorable body to appropriate ... \$300,000 for the purpose of furnishing relief to the needy residents of New Castle County."

To obtain the money for this appropriation, the court made \$100,000 available from the county's general fund for May and June, and included the balance in the county's budget for Fiscal 1935 (commencing 1 July).<sup>12</sup>

Governor Buck commended the court's action:

As Governor of our State, entrusted with the responsibility of caring for the needy among us, I would be remiss in my duty to its citizens should the opportunity not be taken to express to your honorable body ... our appreciation of your magnificent display of the exercise of benevolence when by unanimous vote you made available the funds to ... succor the needy and destitute of ... Wilmington and rural New Castle County.<sup>13</sup>

On 14 May, the problem of raising the funds for relief was removed when the state Highway Department adopted a resolution agreeing to assume responsibility for the construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of bridges and roads in the county for the remainder of 1934 "to the extent of three hundred thousand dollars". This meant that the appropriation would in effect cost the county taxpayers nothing, because under normal circumstances the court would have funded this work. However, the circumstances under which this decision was made were seen by the Highway Department as being far from normal, and this was reflected in the resolution itself which stated: "... in the judgement of the State Highway Department ... a public emergency exists which makes it imperative that the ... Department ... cooperate with the ... Levy Court ... so that the Levy Court may be able to make the ... appropriations to Associated Charities."<sup>14</sup> The fact that Governor Buck had served as the Highways Department's chief engineer from 1920 to 1929 prior to his election may have had some influence on this decision.

It is also worth noting that the establishment of the RCI was

welcomed by Irénée du Pont who, reflecting the opinion of many other Delaware citizens, wrote to the governor: "It seems to me that private charity is the proper way to handle such a situation". He also suggested that he call "together some of those who may be depended on to carry a large part of the burden," concluding: "you can count on my subscription for a considerable amount."<sup>15</sup> Governor Buck agreed: "It will certainly be a much healthier condition if we can get the general public interested in the care of the unemployed ...", but he doubted "whether we can get enough citizens who could afford to be interested in your suggestion to carry the whole load in New Castle County." The governor asked Irénée: "Would you have any objection if I stated that it was your idea that those who could ought to be asked to contribute ... to the cause?"<sup>16</sup>

The legislature and the continued disagreement on relief As the RCI was being established, the General Assembly continued its efforts to resolve the *impasse* over the enactment of relief legislation. On 2 May, a joint conference committee met to consider a tentative agreement that had been reached by Governor Buck and John Biggs Jr., chairman of the Democratic State Committee, on the points of dispute between the Senate and the House on the Kelly bill (House Bill 189). This proposed an appropriation of \$1.5 million for direct and work-relief, and was the only one of the many relief bills to have been acted on by both Houses. The points remaining at issue were the amendments offered by the Senate which, it was claimed, were designed to take the politics out of the bill and to make it acceptable to the federal government. At the meeting of the committee, which consisted of four Republican Senators and four Democratic Representatives, it was discovered that the versions of the tentative agreement which had been received by the two political groups differed significantly; consequently nothing was accomplished and it adjourned without any suggestion of a further conference.<sup>17</sup>

Governor Buck's frustration with the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives, and the fact that some Democrats had earlier reminded him that he was a "public servant", resulted in him sending a rancorous message to the House arraigning the Democratic members for playing politics with

relief and telling them "it would not seem amiss for him to recall to them the thought that the persons chosen by the electorate of the several representative districts are also public servants". He accused the Democratic members of the House of having "engaged in the game of politics from the very beginning" and voiced his opinion that "the present effort to supply much needed aid to the needy has been hampered by your repeated attempts to set up an organisation purely political in its character, to administer relief throughout the State." Referring to the Landreth Layton episode, the governor reminded them: "Your insistence on naming your first relief commissioners brought about a situation that has remained to taunt you with your failure."

This rebuke was not taken lightly by the House Democratic members who adopted a resolution, offered by Representative Wheatley, accusing the governor of not showing a "spirit of cooperation" and condemning his "lack of statesmanship ... in his relation to the whole people of the State...." This was adopted by a vote of 19 to nine, one Democrat, Representative Minner, abstaining and all Republican Representatives voting against it. The lengthy resolution had apparently been prepared in advance as there was not sufficient time for it to have been composed following receipt of the governor's letter. The du Pont owned Wilmington evening newspaper speculated: "It was rumored that the resolution had been incourse [sic] of preparation for a week and it was simply made to fit in as a reply to the Governor's message." The resolution reviewed all the relief legislation which had been considered from the fall of 1932 to the present, "so as to give the people of the State a true and accurate summary of the work of its members ... so that [they] may consider wherein lies the responsibility of ... why relief was denied to the people of the State." It charged that an "invisible force lies behind the Executive Department and dominates our State government.... The State ... [is] governed solely to service their selfish whim and fancy and political aspirations." This accusation may have been directed at the du Ponts. The resolution also charged that the reason that the House had been unsuccessful in its efforts to aid the distressed had been entirely due to the governor and secretary of state.

It ended with an appeal to the people of Delaware to

awaken to the dangers that confront them in the spirit of the invisible force that dominates Delaware ... that this danger can only be defeated by the will of the people in their proper exercise their suffrage and by their choosing at the general election to be held next November, men who will be conscientious and responsive to their duty to the people of Delaware....<sup>18</sup>

Another reaction to the governor's message was an attempt to adjourn the House. On 3 May, a motion to this effect was made by Democratic Representative Rees of rural New Castle county after yet another day of "wrangling without anything having being accomplished". In making it he said: "I guess this is the last straw for the people of this State.... I regret to leave ... without a relief bill having been passed but I can see no chance of it...." The motion failed by a tied vote of 14 to 14. All Democratic members from Sussex county, with the exception of Representative McCabe who abstained, supported it and they were joined by four Democrats from Kent county and one from Wilmington. All Republicans voted against the motion and they were supported by four Democrats, three from rural New Castle county and one from Kent county. The majority floor leader, Representative Scott, was one of the Democrats voting against the motion stating that "he would never vote for adjournment until a relief measure was passed unless the motion came from the other side of the House."<sup>19</sup>

On 4 May, further attempts were made by the House to produce a relief measure that would be acceptable to both Houses of the legislature. The first of these was a resolution, introduced by Republican Van Sriver of Wilmington, to compel the Committee on Private Corporations to report out the Senate bill which would authorise the New Castle County Levy Court to borrow \$750,000 for relief purposes. This was defeated by 16 votes to 12, all Democrats opposing it, with the exception of Speaker Robinson and Representative Hopkins who voted with the ten Republicans present. Following the defeat of the Van Sriver resolution, Rees introduced a new relief bill based on the Kelly bill. The only material change it contained was that five members of the proposed relief commission would constitute a working majority, instead of six; this was one of the changes that had earlier been proposed by the Republican members of the joint conference committee. Nevertheless, the bill was defeated, receiving only nine votes

in its favour.<sup>20</sup> One anonymous correspondent, writing to the "People's Column" in the Wilmington evening newspaper, asked the question that must have been puzzling a large number of people: "why any Kent or Sussex County member [of the legislature] should object to the bill to enable New Castle County to care for its own needy and distressed" as there appeared to be no valid reason for their objection.<sup>21</sup> The answer to this appears to have been simply that the political/sectional division in the state was so great that it obscured even this logical solution to the problem of providing relief where it was most needed, and caused those opposed to its provision in the northern part of the state to overlook the fact that the creation of the RCI had achieved exactly the same result - of New Castle county catering for its own relief needs - albeit by a different means.

#### The legislature adjourns

The legislature finally adjourned after 78 days during which it failed to enact any relief measure, except for the appropriation of the \$108,000 in late March which had enabled the TERC to continue to provide limited relief. It did, however, vote to pay the attachés of each House, and to pay its members' mileage claims for the 12 legislative days from 20 April to 7 May; these payments totalled \$10,481. The reason for this vote was that, until shortly before the adjournment, both Houses were working on the legislative day of 20 April. A concurrent adjournment resolution had been passed on that day, adjourning the General Assembly at 4 pm. However, the clocks had been stopped at 3.55 pm with the result that the legislative day extended to 7 May. Consequently, pay and allowances could not be claimed for the subsequent 12 legislative days as these, in effect, had not occurred. A new concurrent adjournment resolution was introduced by Democratic Representative McCabe rescinding the earlier one and fixing the time for adjournment at 9 pm on 7 May. It is interesting to note that, prior to the votes in the House on the resolution to adjourn, the payment of the attachés, and mileage claims of the members, all Republicans with the exception of Representatives Abrahams and Eaton had departed from Dover. The Democrats claimed that this exodus was instigated by the secretary of state so that no blame would be attached to the GOP for the

legislature's failure to enact relief legislation. Abrahams abstained from voting on either resolution and Eaton voted for the payment of the attachés on the grounds that they were not responsible for the House's failure, but he also abstained from voting on the resolution for payment of members' mileage claims.<sup>22</sup>

The decision to adjourn without making any provision for the continuation of relief was criticised by Bishop Phillip Cook. On 8 May, in his address to the 140th Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Delaware held in Milford, he observed: "Real statesmanship has been abandoned by Delaware's law makers in the interest of small political advantage and sectionalism ... all of which indicates how unsafe it is to entrust men with the power and authority for making laws who have no background of social responsibility...." He went on to say that he believed "the relief of the needy will come from private sources given by citizens who have a better understanding of their duty."<sup>23</sup>

The 104th General Assembly established a number of records. It was in session longer and cost more than any previous sitting in the history of the state. It met for a total of 177 days: the first time for 12 days in special session, shortly after it was elected in 1932; again in regular session for 87 days in January 1933; and in the fall of 1933 for two special sessions lasting a total of 78 days. The full cost of these was in excess of \$300,000 - more than equalling the amount which had been appropriated by the Levy Court for relief in New Castle county for six months! It was also the first General Assembly to have held its sittings in two state houses; in November 1932 the first special session was held in the old colonial State House, and in 1933 the first regular session was held in the newly constructed Legislative Hall. Finally, in December 1933, it was the first legislature to be dissolved by proclamation of the governor.<sup>24</sup>

#### Appointment of the new RCI Board

On 8 May, Mandel requested Governor Buck to furnish as much information as he could in respect of the legal propriety of the RCI, and two days later the governor sent Hopkins a copy of the attorney general's opinion given on



1 May. He also informed him of his intention to appoint a new Board of Directors of the RCI which would consist of "men and women who are as far removed from politics as any who can be found", and that he hoped to appoint "representatives of the different races and religious denominations which should help to advert some of the criticism that is directed at the administrators of this kind of welfare work."<sup>25</sup> William Linden, a federal counsel, agreed with Warren Green's opinion, and advised Hopkins it was "well founded", confirming that "the Levy Court of New Castle County is a political sub-division of the State ... and has authority to make appropriations ... to Associated Charities." He also reassured Hopkins that the Relief Act of 1934 "does not preclude the Federal Administrator from making grants for relief within a State directly to such public agency as he may designate."<sup>26</sup>

The governor, who was anxious that the new directors would be acceptable to Hopkins, submitted their names to him through Mandel. Prior to doing this he had consulted both the mayor of Wilmington and Jasper Crane on the suitability of his candidates, and had been advised by Crane that "if you do not have a strong representation of the TERC on the new Board ... the public will interpret such omission as lack of approval on your part of the policies and work of the Relief Commission." He recommended that consideration be given to Frank Collins, Helen Gawthrop, Senator Monaghan and Walter Dent Smith for inclusion on the new board and he also endorsed Pierre du Pont who had consented to serve on it.<sup>27</sup>

On 29 May, the RCI was officially formed when, at a meeting of the governing body of Associated Charities, a certificate of amendment to the original charter was approved. A bi-partisan Board of Directors of eight members was elected, four from Wilmington and four from rural New Castle county. The new board's Democratic members were: Pierre du Pont; Herbert Renshaw, president of the state Federation of Labor; Frank Collins, and James Skelly. Its four Republican members were: Helen Gawthrop, Irénée du Pont, Richard Sellers and the Bishop, Phillip Cook. All were to serve until May 1935 and had been approved by both the mayor of Wilmington and Hopkins.<sup>28</sup> The appointment of Pierre du Pont (who could have been expected

to be a staunch Republican) as one of the Democratic members of the bi-partisan board was not as surprising as it first appears. For not only had he backed Democratic Presidential nominee, Al Smith, in 1928 but also voted for Franklin Roosevelt in 1932. Moreover, he had re-confirmed his political leanings in a letter to a Peter O. Knight in March 1934, in which he wrote: "while I am a Democrat I shall support the Senator [Delaware's Republican US Senator Townsend was facing re-election in 1934] and hope that many other Democrats will do likewise." He added: "I have very little patience with those who adhere to party regardless of the merit of the individual."<sup>29</sup>

In addition to the new board, the governor, secretary of state, attorney general, former relief commissioners, Crane and Dent Smith, Ethelda Mullen, and the original members of Associated Charities were all elected members of the new corporation and indeed constituted its entire membership.<sup>30</sup> The appointment of the new board was in accordance with the advice given by Crane, but with the exception of Bishop Cook its composition appears to have fallen far short of the governor's earlier aspiration for a body which had "representatives of the different races and religious denominations". On 4 June, Irénée du Pont resigned stating he was "not at all suitable for the position ... [being] away a great deal and ... this kind of work does not suit my ability or taste". He was replaced by Marie T. Lockwood of Middletown whose appointment was quickly approved by the federal relief administrator.<sup>31</sup>

On 2 June, at the first meeting of the new board James Skelly was elected chairman, Richard Sellers treasurer, Helen Gawthrop secretary, and Ethelda Mullen was appointed executive director in charge of relief activities.<sup>32</sup> This latter appointment was particularly pleasing to Governor Buck who wrote to the president of the Family Society expressing "the greatest admiration for Miss Mullen's executive ability and knowledge of the way to manage ... welfare work", and thanking him for the "great favor on the part of the Family Society to agree that she should help us in the present emergency", adding "I am very appreciative of it."<sup>33</sup>

The TERC's personnel were retained in their former capacities: William Hickman as business manager; David Snellenburg in charge of the

clothing unit; Hamilton Morton as purchasing agent; Charles M. Ralston responsible for the single men's units; J. Hay Barnholt in charge of the rent and special investigating divisions; and S.A. Hellen as comptroller. On 15 June, Bertha Borton, who had continued as director of the family relief unit, resigned to become a field representative of the Pennsylvania State Relief Board. All major policies of the former TERC were retained but the business, administrative, accounting and purchasing departments were transferred from the Delaware Trust building to the Family Relief Unit at Sixth and Shipley streets, which premises had been donated by the Diamond State Telephone Company.

#### Relief in May

In May, the number of families in the county receiving relief decreased by 1,300 to 3,974, and 15,372 individuals were on the active relief rolls compared to 20,834 in April. This reduction was not entirely due to the normal seasonal trend caused by increased agricultural activity, but was in part the result of the limited funds at the RCI's disposal. This caused those persons with some income, although insufficient for all their needs but adequate to meet the restricted food budget adopted by the commission, to be dropped from the relief rolls. This alone was responsible for most of the decrease.<sup>34</sup> The fall coincided with an increase in employment in Wilmington, reported in the Chamber of Commerce's Quarterly Report of Employment. This information, taken from the payrolls of 306 companies, showed that in mid-May 30,465 persons were employed, compared with 24,015 in May 1933, and appeared to be a clear sign that a recovery had begun.<sup>35</sup>

On 25 May, the FERA provided \$50,000 to match the funds appropriated by the Levy Court for the month, and together these sums enabled the commission to increase its expenditure on relief. During the month, the commission spent \$57,362 providing food orders - \$47,728 in Wilmington, and \$9,634 in rural New Castle county - and in the latter part of May extremely urgent cases were given fuel and medicine orders. Rent relief was also given to individuals, but only when eviction from their homes or levies on their belongings were imminent.

### The RCI and federal relief programmes

The RCI took over the running of the two shelters for single men in Wilmington and also the administration of the federal relief programmes operating in the state. These were the transients relief bureau, CCC, federal surplus commodities, and the funds allocated to the National Re-employment Service and student aid. However, it was not until June that the federal government confirmed that the RCI was the recognised agency responsible for the administration of these federal programmes. This assumption of responsibility was seen as representing "one of the most progressive steps taken by the Commission in its brief history" and "it showed the confidence of the FERA in the Commission ... entrusting it with control of relief programs ... state-wide in scope." However, this recognition was not without hidden penalty, for up to this time the transients relief bureau had been financed by federal funds earmarked specifically for the purpose. From the beginning of June, though, the commission had to finance the bureau from its own federal grant, with the result that \$9,000 from the monthly FERA matching funds had to be allocated for its running costs. The transients relief bureau, under the direction of Roberta Williams, continued to provide relief to transient families and unattached individuals throughout the state, and \$9,496 was expended on the provision of this relief during May.<sup>36</sup> A further indication of the RCI's acceptability was the appointment of Hamilton Morton as the director of federal surplus commodities in Delaware.<sup>37</sup>

Administering the CCC presented special problems because the commission's jurisdiction was limited to New Castle county. Yet as it was considered it would be unfair to deprive youths residing in the remainder of the state of the opportunity to enroll in the CCC, the aid of former relief officials in Kent and Sussex counties was enlisted to recruit applicants from these areas and these were registered together with those from New Castle county.

Governor Buck, in an attempt to address the potential relief needs of Kent and Sussex counties, conferred with Charles Candee, chairman of the state welfare commission, and produced a plan. This required cooperation between the Levy Courts of the two southern counties and the welfare

commission, and proposed that the latter would provide work-relief funded by the courts. Arch Mandel, with whom the governor had earlier discussed his proposal, was advised that Candee approved of this. Governor Buck then suggested that they met "to discuss the relief situation in the lower counties with the idea that through the Old Age Welfare Commission those in need there might be helped".<sup>38</sup>

### Planning for relief

During June, preliminary plans were made for what were considered several very urgently needed relief activities. The most radical of these was an experiment for giving cash relief to about 25 per cent of the RCI's clients. At first, the FERA opposed cash relief except as wages for approved work projects; but there was growing pressure to give cash rather than grocery orders or, most unsatisfactory of all, orders on commissaries or central warehouses. No aspect of local relief practice aroused more anger among relief clients than the continued distribution of these orders rather than cash, making the recipients feel like charity cases. Even Aubrey Williams believed that this form of relief was "bad and undesirable", and many relief administrators regarded resistance to cash relief as a survival from the times when it was assumed that a poor person was incapable of managing his own domestic affairs. The FERA eventually came to accept cash relief when local relief administrators favoured it, and then to give positive endorsement.<sup>39</sup> As this practice had already been tried in other states, the RCI's cash relief experiment was approved by Mandel at a meeting of the board and a survey, undertaken by Ethelda Mullen, identified those considered suitable to be the recipients of cash relief to test the plan's merits. Plans for the distribution of federal surplus commodities such as lard, pork and butter to needy families as a supplement to food orders, and arrangements to accept cattle from drought stricken areas were also made. These animals were being moved by the federal government to New Castle county, where they were to be put out to pasture until the fall; thereafter they would be slaughtered and the beef given to families on relief.

On 16 June, planning for the start of work-relief began when the commission sent letters to the mayors of all incorporated towns in New Castle county asking them to "cooperate with the Commission by instituting work projects or allocating funds for the use of the Relief Commission insofar as means will permit." The letter continued: "Obviously work projects such as street improvements, water and sewer extensions, maintenance and beautification of parks, etc., would be of direct public benefit, would serve to lighten caseloads of direct relief, and would do much towards solving the unemployment problem throughout this county." On 30 June, in response to this request, the mayor of Wilmington met the RCI board to formulate a programme to complete unfinished CWA projects throughout the county. It was expected that these would provide employment for 1,000 men for approximately 18 weeks at a cost of some \$300,000 and Mayor Speer undertook to provide a contribution of 15 per cent of the cost of projects. The programme was then submitted to the federal government for its consideration.<sup>40</sup> The subject of unfinished CWA projects was also raised by Mrs Hughes, the ex-relief director of Kent county, who informed Hopkins of three projects "that have been left in a very serious uncompleted condition". These included sewerage projects in Dover and Smyrna, where a trench in the main street was left "in a very dangerous and dirty condition". Her letter was discussed by members of the FERA's Washington staff who commented:

Kent County and Sussex County, which dominate the Delaware state legislature, refused to make any appropriation for relief funds to be met by Federal relief funds, for the reason that they do not want Federal relief in Delaware, and this because under a locally operated board they can maintain the practice of paying 10c an hour for labor.

Indeed, their speculation went further: "Maybe if these sewers stay open long enough in Dover, the good citizens there may change their minds about [the] wage scale." This reaction gives an interesting insight into at least some of the FERA staff's perception of the problems that had faced those who were endeavouring to provide relief in the state. On 15 June, Mrs Hughes was advised that the FERA were "regretful about this unfinished work" and that they were writing to Dent Smith "to get his reaction on this subject". It would have been interesting to know what this was, but

unfortunately there is no record of "his reaction".<sup>41</sup>

### Relief in June

During the second month of its existence, although apparently still operating under the handicap of insufficient funding, notwithstanding the \$50,000 it had received from the FERA at the end of May, the RCI was able to expand its programme and the amount of relief per family was augmented by an average of \$2.81 per week. Food and milk allowances were also increased, though they remained below FERA standards, and \$61,368 was spent on food orders, \$49,326 in Wilmington and \$12,042 in rural New Castle county. Rent-relief totalling \$3,478 was paid to 430 families,<sup>42</sup> and expenditure on medical supplies increased to \$484. There was a slight fall in the number of individuals receiving relief during the month and the total of 15,148 was the lowest since October 1932, although this was mainly due to the limited funds available rather than to a reduction in need. A total of \$83,509 was spent on direct relief, including administrative costs of \$6,828. The Levy Court provided \$50,000 and this was matched by the FERA. Only \$110.53 was received from private contributors despite Irénée du Pont's earlier commitment to subscribe "a considerable amount", and this may have been indicative of the reluctance of those who had previously made generous contributions for relief purposes to continue to do so whilst the federal government was seemingly ready to finance the bulk of such humanitarian work.<sup>43</sup>

On 20 June, the federal government made outright and conditional grants of \$2,223,395 for road work in Delaware. The outright grant, of \$923,395, was available at once and conditional grants, of \$650,000 per year for two years, were available subject to the state appropriating equal amounts. This work was expected to employ 2,000 men and thus reduce relief disbursements.<sup>44</sup> The unconditional grant enabled an extensive road building programme to be carried out in the southern counties. The employment this provided removed the need for any relief in Kent county, and significantly reduced the demand for it in Sussex county, making the governor's relief proposal redundant.<sup>45</sup>

### Occupational Characteristics Survey

During the last week of the month, work began on an Occupational Characteristics Survey of persons and families in Wilmington registered with the RCI. It was one of the 76 cities in the United States chosen by the FERA to take part in this survey. It lasted a month and provided work for 32 of the "white collar" unemployed. The survey's objectives were to show what kind of work the unemployed were trained to do; whether they were willing and able to work, when work was available; how many young people had had the opportunity to acquire a regular occupation; how many had serious handicaps preventing their employment; and the age, sex, educational and marital relationship of each individual with regard to his occupational history. Harvey E. Becknell, an FERA research supervisor, was in charge of the survey; and to assure the individuals taking part that there was nothing sinister involved, the commission "emphasised that ... this information ... [sent] to Washington, to become part of the national study ... [will] not be used in any way to affect the relief treatment of individuals."<sup>46</sup>

### CCC enrolment

Also during June, the commission was inundated with requests from youths desirous of enrolling in the CCC and serving in the two camps at Slaughter Beach and at Lewes in Sussex county. This surely was an indication of the growing popularity of the corps in Delaware. It was indeed fortunate that the RCI had been authorized to act as the recruiting agency for the state earlier in the month, and that more than 200 applicants from all three counties were already registered. These were chosen from families on relief or "border-line" households, and the individual's contribution of \$25 per month to their families helped to lightened the commission's relief burden. However, a large number had to be rejected because the state's quota was quickly exhausted. On 3 July, 115 recruits were sent to the camps, 101 of whom were from Wilmington; 54 from families on relief; and 47 from those who, if it had not been for the contribution from their sons, would have been forced to apply for relief. The remainder were from needy families in Kent and Sussex counties. On 6 July, an additional 75



enrollees were sent to Fort Du Pont before being dispatched to camps in New Jersey.<sup>47</sup> In August and September, the commission "was swamped by a veritable deluge of applicants", according to the monthly report, but when notification was received that the next enlistment period in Delaware would not begin until 1 October, and that the quota would only be 159, the pressure was removed.<sup>48</sup> When recruitment was recommenced, 90 juniors and nine local woodsmen were selected from more than 300 applicants as replacements for the companies at Slaughter Beach and Lewes, and 60 for service at Camp Dix in New Jersey.<sup>49</sup>

#### Wilmington City Council's difficulties

As the RCI began to cope with the problems of relief in New Castle county, the Wilmington City Council was experiencing difficulties of its own which stemmed from the breaking up of the Brown-Democrat coalition which had given the Democrats control of the council for ten months. The Democratic members contended that the Republicans who, with the return of Councilman Fred Brown, now controlled the council by a majority of one should assume control of its business, particularly the budget ordinance. The Republicans, on the other hand, maintained that as the Democrats still controlled all committees they were responsible for bringing the budget ordinance before the the council for final action as well as reporting all other committee matters, including bills and payrolls. Members from both parties on the various committees declined to sign either bills or payrolls, with the result that these were not reported out of committee and did not come before the council. As a consequence, no action was taken either on the budget or bills and payrolls, although the city's charter provided that "the budget ordinance shall be passed by the last council meeting in May". Failure to take action on the latter meant that as the Board of Health's weekly payroll for services of garbage chuckers and truck drivers was not approved, they faced a payless payday in the first week of June. The effect that this dispute had on the unemployed was to delay the decision by the council on Mayor Speer's request for it to match the Levy Court's monthly appropriation to the RCI. On 7 June, the problem was finally resolved when the committees were reorganised to take into account

the Republican majority, and the new budget for Fiscal 1935 (beginning 1 July) was fixed at \$3,018,166. A motion, proposed by Councilman McManus, that all unpaid bills and vouchers which had been accumulated be paid was also approved. This included the payroll of the garbage chuckers and drivers who, in the interim, had been paid with money borrowed by the mayor and other city officials on behalf of the Board of Health.<sup>50</sup>

Other problems resulting from the legislature's disagreement. Yet another consequence of the disagreement between the factions in the 104th General Assembly became apparent as the end of Fiscal 1934 drew near. In order to meet the budget appropriations for the remainder of the year, it was necessary for the state to borrow \$200,000 from the Farmers Bank in Dover to cover the deficit in the general fund. This situation arose because the House of Representatives failed to approve bills transferring money from the sinking fund to the general fund, despite the warning given by Governor Buck in his message to the special session, in which he told members: "it becomes necessary at this time to augment the revenue, if the State departments, institutions and agencies, which depend upon the General Fund for their general expenses and maintenance funds, are to continue to operate during the remainder of the fiscal year". The irony of this was that there were cash surpluses of more than \$7 million in all the state funds combined. The school fund had in excess of \$3.5 million of this; the highway fund \$500,000; the special accounts of the several school funds approximately \$2.5 million; and the sinking fund had a surplus of more than \$200,000. Thus a state official was rather stating the obvious when he said: "With a grand total of more than seven million dollars in cash surpluses on 1 July 1934, there would appear to be no cause for worry on the part of the people of Delaware as to the State's fiscal affairs."<sup>51</sup>

This state of Delaware's finances makes the failure of the General Assembly to enact a relief measure even more tragic, particularly in view of the financial difficulties experienced by the RCI which initially resulted in a reduction in the level of relief given to the needy unemployed in New Castle county. Moreover, it affords ample evidence that,

if there had been the political will, the state had more than sufficient funds with which to pay for its comparatively modest relief needs, even without assistance from the federal government.

### Relief in July

The demand for relief increased during July and the additional drain on the commission's resources resulted in expenditure of \$10,000 more than in the preceding month, all of which was spent to provide direct relief for families. Food orders totalling \$65,876 were issued, \$54,183 in Wilmington and \$11,693 in rural New Castle county; the amount provided per family in Wilmington was increased by \$2.09 to \$21.87, and in rural New Castle county by \$2.61 to \$20.82. In its July Report, the RCI noted that "more relief was provided per family than in June -- convincing proof that the Commission has striven to do its utmost to alleviate distress in New Castle County with the funds at its disposal." Nevertheless, the number of families receiving relief during the month was 30 per cent less than in the corresponding month of 1933.<sup>52</sup>

Preparations were made for the movement of cattle from the western drought stricken areas into the county, and farmers were contacted to ascertain the extent and type of available pasture. Cannerys and slaughter houses were also consulted on the storing and slaughtering of the cattle. The University of Delaware provided the services of A. E. Tomhave, of the Department of Animal Husbandry, and Edward Willin to assist the commission in making these preparations; it was expected that between 1,500 and 2,500 head of cattle would be moved into the county in August.

On 17 July, Governor Buck accompanied by James Skelly, Helen Gawthrop and Ethelda Mullen met Aubrey Williams in Washington to discuss plans for a work-relief programme. Williams told them that, although the FERA could not promise to cooperate on a programme to complete unfinished CWA projects in the county, he was "very receptive to the project". He proposed a further conference in August to be attended by representatives of the RCI, FERA, Levy Court and city council to discuss the details of such a programme.<sup>53</sup>

A further indication that Delaware was beginning to emerge from the depression came when federal taxes from all sources collected in the state during the month showed an increase of more than half a million dollars compared with the collection during the same month of 1933; \$778,357 as against \$249,960 in July 1933. Willard F. Deputy, collector of internal revenue for the District of Delaware, commented: "these figures would tend to dispel the pessimistic feeling that we are not well on the road to business recovery. In this little State it would appear that prosperity has stepped out from behind the corner and is coming down a broad avenue in full view of everyone."<sup>54</sup> In sharp contrast with Deputy's optimism, there were indications that the effects of the depression were still being felt in Wilmington. City Treasurer William V. Lynch reported that "as of 30 June the total of municipal taxes outstanding in Wilmington were \$806,593."<sup>55</sup>

#### Relief and work-relief in August

The relief load in August was relatively unchanged from that of July, in spite of which the cost of direct relief rose to \$94,528, an increase of \$8,971 over the expenditure in the previous month. The greater part of this was in food orders, which cost \$73,910, and this did not include the \$1,545 allocated for the cash-relief experiment - the giving of cash in lieu of food orders. The first month of this experiment proved to be most successful and the executive director reported: "The debut of cash relief in Delaware has met with a success that exceeds the most optimistic expectations". The 100 families selected were required to keep an itemized statement of how they spent their allowance and all testified to the uplifting effect cash relief had on their morale. The plan was extended in September, to include another 100 families "who can be trusted to handle cash instead of food orders."<sup>56</sup>

One area in which the relief burden did increase was aid for transients; 2,106 men, women and children, the heaviest case load in the history of the transients relief bureau, were helped throughout the state with the result that on 25 August the strain placed on the limited funds available caused the withdrawal of transient relief from Kent and Sussex

counties, stranding 22 families and seven unattached men. Other factors quoted as being responsible for this "regrettable step" were the lack of the RCI's jurisdiction beyond New Castle county and the size of the case load, which did not warrant keeping a worker in Sussex county and a part-time worker in Kent county.<sup>57</sup>

On 7 August, as a follow-up to the July meeting with Aubrey Williams, James Skelly wrote to members of the Wilmington City Council inviting them to confer with representatives of the RCI and the FERA to formulate a work-relief programme. The response from the city council was to inform the commission that its invitation had been referred to the council's Law and Finance Committee; it took no further action. This failure to cooperate in the setting up of a work-relief programme was perceived as seriously handicapping the RCI in its efforts to get one started in September because the FERA had assured the commission of its assistance only on the understanding that the council would participate in setting up the programme. Nevertheless, the RCI did have some success in establishing a work-relief programme in Elsmere, on the outskirts of Wilmington, where the town commissioners approved the construction of a sewer and appropriated \$7,000 towards the cost of materials. On 14 August, this project was approved by the Levy Court which promised to defray all additional costs for materials, and at the end of the month details of the project were forwarded to the FERA for approval with a request for the administration to defray the labour costs.<sup>58</sup>

On 15 August, in compliance with President Roosevelt's orders, the RCI unequivocally declared itself against political activities on the part of its personnel and informed them:

Due notice is hereby given that employees of this relief organisation are prohibited from taking any active part in political campaigns. Political activity by employees of this organisation, either in city, county, or national elections, whether primary or regular, or in behalf of any party candidate, or any measure to be voted upon, is generally prohibited.<sup>59</sup>

Less than a week later, the first consignment of 32 head of cattle from the drought stricken mid-West arrived. These were slaughtered at the Wilmington Provision Company, the beef packed into five pound allotments and distributed to needy families to supplement their food orders "with

wholesome meat which previously, because of limited food allowances, were [sic] seldom present in the relief clients bill of fare."<sup>60</sup>

#### Work-relief problems continue in September

On 10 September, in an endeavour to encourage the city council to cooperate in the establishment of a work-relief programme, and because of the lack of action by the council on his initial request for a meeting, Skelly conferred with Democratic councilmen Louis A. Meli and Louis A. Haywood, who agreed to present another letter from him to the council, and three days later they did so. Skelly explained that the requested conference was to discuss, and perhaps arrive at, an arrangement which would bring about work-relief including the completion of some 25 unfinished CWA projects in the city. A motion was introduced that Skelly or other members of the commission should be invited to speak before the council to outline what the two bodies jointly might do with the FERA's cooperation to organise such a programme. It was defeated twice by tied votes. The voting was on partisan lines, six Democrats voting for and six Republicans against; Republican Councilman John O. Hopkins abstained on both votes.<sup>61</sup> It is difficult to understand the reluctance of the city council to take action to alleviate the problem of unemployment which was almost exclusively that of the county and, in particular, of Wilmington.

Ethelda Mullen had identified New Castle county as:

The unemployment relief laboratory of Delaware. The only political sub-division of the State in which the social worker confronts problems typical of urban and rural areas, and containing within its borders the State's only large city and over half of its population, it has provided relief authorities with their biggest problem in Delaware.<sup>62</sup>

The apparent reluctance on the part of the council is even more perplexing when the fact that work-relief was generally favoured over direct relief is taken into consideration. The political division in the council, was as one would have expected in an urban area, the Democratic councilmen in favour of the relief and the Republicans against; but it was, of course, a reversal of the roles of the two parties in the General Assembly. A factor which may have influenced this was the nomination at the Democratic State Convention held at Dover on 12 September of John Hazzard, president of the

council, as the Democratic candidate for the US Congress.<sup>63</sup>

On 21 September, the situation was finally resolved at a meeting held in the mayor's office between the council and members of the commission, at the request of the chairman of the council's finance committee. The council was represented by its president and eight councilmen McManus, Miller, Palese, Flynn, Brown, Meli, Winchester and Haywood; the RCI by the chairman, Ethelda Mullen, Pierre du Pont, Sellers, Renshaw, Hickman and McClafferty. The commission was informed that the council would cooperate financially in a work-relief programme during November and December, although how much it would provide was not indicated. It was also agreed that a date would shortly be set for a conference with the FERA, and this was subsequently arranged for 2 October. The city had \$18,000 worth of CWA materials in store and enough tools for 1,000 men that could be utilized for the proposed work-relief programme.<sup>64</sup> On 27 September, an appropriation of funds for the programme was unanimously approved, although a decision on the amount was deferred, to be determined at a later date.<sup>65</sup>

It is possible that the change in favour of a work-relief programme by the council's Republican members and the proposed start date were influenced by the national and state general elections scheduled to take place on 7 November. This may have been intended to off-set the political capital which the Democrats could have been expected to make from the Republican blocking of a work-relief programme and, on the Democrat's part, to counteract, at least in Wilmington, the advantage that the GOP had gained from their support of relief measures killed by the Democrats in the lower House of the state legislature.

The Delaware Democrats were also ostensibly aware of the need to be seen to support the President's relief policies if they were to win popular support in the elections. On 12 September, this was stressed at the Democrat State Convention by their nominee for the US Senate, Congressman Adams, who told the convention: "We have the opportunity now to show the nation Delaware is back of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and I am confident it will show it in no uncertain terms."<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, the Democratic platform, as if to confirm this, stated its support "without reservation of the ... policies and the New Deal for the benefit of all the

people ... rich and poor, labor and capital, ... and the unemployed."<sup>67</sup>

### September relief

The RCI's expenditure in September was estimated at \$149,867 and was made up of \$125,000 for general relief; \$10,000 for transient relief; \$4,367 for the cattle programme; and \$10,500 to put 150 individuals to work on a professional work project. A grant of \$93,833 was requested from the FERA to supplement the \$50,000 appropriated by the Levy Court and the balance of \$6,000 that the commission had available at the beginning of the month.

The reason for the required increase in relief funds was an anticipated seasonal upsurge in relief load which included the supply of clothing to school children of families on relief to enable them to attend school. The Wilmington schools opened in the second week of September and a "most conservative estimate" of \$7,000 was required to provide clothing for an estimated 2,000 children, a large number of whom would be unable to attend classes unless this clothing was provided. The executive director recommended that the public be solicited for contributions unless funds were appropriated.<sup>68</sup> The FERA made a grant of \$54,167 for general relief, the cattle, and educational programmes, although in the case of the latter it was considered that Delaware did not have a "dire need for such a programme", and this had been indicated in a letter to the FERA's educational division from the state superintendent of public instruction in June.<sup>69</sup>

The anticipated seasonal increase, however, failed to materialize and only 450 additional individuals were given relief; but the clothing demand, caused by the opening of the Wilmington schools did occur and although the commission had resorted to a public appeal, which raised \$3,840, several hundred children were absent from school because of the lack of clothing, and hundreds more attended classes poorly clad. The response to the public appeal was yet another example of the philanthropy of the citizens of the county. The less than 1 per cent increase in case load was seen as "a most favorable trend" but, had it not been for the precautions taken to determine that every applicant for relief was a deserving one, which caused 433 applications to be rejected, the September case load would have been



much heavier. As a result of the drop in demand, the cost of providing food orders fell by \$14,565, to \$59,346, from the previous month's total, but the amount of cash relief given to 300 families was more than doubled, to \$3,572. For the first time the monthly relief expenditure per family was reduced, to \$20.47 in Wilmington and to \$18.98 in rural New Castle county. Another encouraging trend was the decline in the number of re-applications for relief and a drop in the number of new applications.<sup>70</sup> Coinciding with this fall, there was a small increase in job vacancies in private employment notified to the Re-employment Service. Howard Young, commented:

This is one of the very few times since the establishment of the office, over a year ago, that the demand for workers from private employers have [sic] been preponderant.... Although the balance of applicants, numbering 8,683, continues about the same as it has for the past two months there are shortages in some occupations....<sup>71</sup>

These were small but encouraging indications that Delaware's emergence from the depression was continuing.

On 4 September, Marie Lockwood, who had replaced Irénée du Pont on the RCI's board, was elected vice-chairman and Hay Barnholt, who since the inception of the RCI had been in charge of the rent division, the special investigation division, and safety inspections, was replaced by Frank D. Wilson. At the end of September, the commission was informed that the FERA had decided not to ship any more cattle from the drought areas into the eastern states. Delaware by this time had received 2,275 head of cattle; 1,153 were slaughtered producing 241,000 pounds of beef, of which 100,000 pounds was distributed, and 141,000 pounds put into storage for future distribution. The 1,122 cattle at pasture gained an average of 110 pounds giving the state a total gain of over 123,000 pounds in weight.<sup>72</sup>

#### The work-relief conference

On 2 October, almost two months after it had first been requested, the conference between city officials, representatives of the FERA, and the commission finally took place. The FERA was represented by Colonel George D. Babcock, its chief engineer; his assistant, Gerald M. Coxe, and Arch Mandel. The city council representatives were James McManus, Louis

Haywood, Maurice Flynn, Paul Palese, William Winchester, Otto Miller and Fred Brown. The RCI members attending were James Skelly, Pierre du Pont, Marie Lockwood, Frank Collins, Helen Gawthrop, Herbert Renshaw, William Hickman and Ethelda Mullen. After the conference, McManus speaking for the council declared: "The City Council is in thorough accord with the Relief Commission and promises to the best of its financial ability to cooperate." Notwithstanding this statement, Gerald Coxe announced that the FERA would continue its policy of waiting to see what appropriations were made by the council before authorizing federal grants. Both declined to amplify these brief statements or to disclose the matters discussed at the conference.<sup>73</sup> On 4 October, the city council met and, in response to a request from its finance committee, unanimously appropriated \$200,000 for general relief in the city in November and December. David Hollett, clerk of the council, advised the commission:

We wish to advise that there will be available for your use Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000), on Nov. 2d. and a like sum on December 1st. In addition to the above sums there will be Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$80,000) at your disposal to defray the expenses of draining South Wilmington. This work to be done by the Street and Sewer Department of the city.<sup>74</sup>

This appropriation not only assured the provision of relief to the end of 1934 but also made a work-relief programme possible. One of the first projects to be undertaken was a Housing Administration programme in the county. This was an FERA "preferred project", and Ethelda Mullen informed the federal director of professional projects that it had been started "even though ... funds are very limited".<sup>75</sup>

#### October relief - Levy Court funding ends

The RCI, having received the final installment of \$50,000 from the Levy Court, requested the FERA to grant \$110,711 to make up the \$161,250 that it estimated would be required for relief during October. The only resources, other than the court's grant, that the commission had to meet this anticipated expenditure consisted of the net balance of all relief funds in the county, amounting to \$539, and although it also had federal funds, totalling \$6,835, these had been granted for specific purposes.<sup>76</sup> The FERA responded to the request by granting \$50,000 for general relief and \$6,133

for the cattle programme. The federal funds already held were included in this grant.<sup>77</sup> The short-fall was partially made up by an additional emergency appropriation of \$20,000 made by the court, increasing the funds available for relief to \$134,722. This sum also included \$4,050 from private sources and \$4,000 which had previously been granted by the FERA for professional projects. Thus it was considered possible to provide a "more nearly adequate relief program which would have been impossible otherwise" but which exhausted the RCI's funds completely by 31 October.

The relief load remained constant in October and \$69,094 was expended on food, almost 90 per cent of which was in food orders; the remainder was in cash relief and this was double the amount given in September, an indication of the success of this experiment. Expenditure per family was once again increased in Wilmington by \$3.12, to \$23.59, but was reduced by 13 cents, to \$18.85, in rural New Castle county. The on-set of winter caused a sharp increase in expenditure on fuel, which amounted to \$5,413 compared to a mere \$522 in the previous month, providing an indication of the seasonal changes in relief costs.<sup>78</sup>

#### Relief studies

On 4 October, the governor made announcements which were to have a significant influence on the future decisions made by the General Assembly and also a direct effect on the unemployed men and women of the state. The first was the appointment of three commissions to make a study, in each of the counties, of relief needs for the winter and to determine what funds were necessary to meet these requirements. The New Castle county commission comprised James Skelly, Ethelda Mullen, Max Matthes of Wilmington and J. D. Niles of Middletown. The Kent county commission members were the lieutenant governor, F. Roy Corley of Smyrna, Mayor Wallace Woodford of Dover and former state Senator Wilbur E. Jacobs of Harrington. The Sussex county commission consisted of Lena Messick of Bridgeville, John R. Hitchen of Georgetown and Dr U. W. Hocker of Lewes. The governor, who considered the question of unemployment insurance of the greatest importance, also announced the appointment of a special commission of eight members to make a study of unemployment insurance and determine whether it

was desirable in Delaware. The members of the commission were Gerald B. Street and John B. Benson (the latter representing labour interests), both of Wilmington; Caleb Wright of Sussex county (an attorney whose specific task was to help the commission with its studies of unemployment insurance laws adopted or proposed in other states); Leon H Ryan of New Castle county; E.A. Simon of Seaford; E.H. Worth of Claymont; William P. Richardson of Dover; and Richard C. McMullen (who was to replace Douglass Buck as governor in 1937) of Wilmington.<sup>79</sup>

By the creation of an organisation specifically targetted at providing for the needs of the unemployed in New Castle county and funded by the Levy Court, Governor Buck not only ensured that these were cared for, in spite of the prevarication over relief by the legislature, but also that federal aid continued, and this set a precedent for the funding of future relief organizations in the county. The plight of the jobless in the southern counties was ameliorated by federal grants for road improvements, and this left only a minor unemployment problem in Sussex county.

Furthermore the findings of the commissions set up by the governor and the outcome of both the national and state general elections, as we shall see later, were to have significant effects on the continued provision of relief at county and state level.

## CHAPTER 6: The Republicans take control

On 7 November 1934, the general and state elections were held and the results of the latter were to have a profound effect on the unemployed. In the national elections, Delaware was one of only four states which elected a Republican to the Senate, incumbent Senator John G. Townsend Jr. of Selbyville, Sussex county, who defeated the Democratic nominee, Wilbur L. Adams of Wilmington. In his senatorial campaign Adams, who had supported the Roosevelt administration during his term as Delaware's Representative in the Congress, chose to run solely on the issues. The New Deal was a major issue, and it was his strong support of it which was attacked by Republican Senator Wallace A. White of Maine in a speech in support of Senator Townsend's campaign made in Dover shortly before the election. In this he told his audience that during the first half of 1934, Delawareans paid \$5.20 in taxes to the federal government for every federal dollar they received. White contrasted this to Arkansas, home of the Senate majority leader Joseph Robinson, which had received \$24 in federal aid for every dollar it paid in taxes. Delaware, he said, had in fact paid six times more in federal taxes than Arkansas, so that it could hardly be argued that the New Deal was materially benefitting the average citizen in the state. This speech, made in the capital of Kent County, may have influenced voters and reduced the margin of Senator Townsend's defeat in the county, although it was undoubtedly his popularity throughout the rest of the state that ensured his re-election.<sup>1</sup> Here was evidence of the apparent inequality of the federal aid system, and this must have given confirmation to those in the state who already had doubts concerning the cost-benefit ratio resulting from federal involvement in relief.

In the election for Representative-at-large, the Republican candidate, J. George Stewart of Wilmington, defeated his Democratic opponent John Hazzard who was also from the city. Stewart had served as a member of the state TERC from January 1934, when he replaced Everett Ackart, until the agency ceased operations in April 1934. During this period he was appointed as a committee of one to work with the CWA Chief Engineer, a task that he performed with some success.<sup>2</sup> Senator Townsend

and Representative-elect Stewart both had majorities in Wilmington, rural New Castle county and Sussex county, but were defeated in Kent county by 702 and 1,451 votes respectively. The Socialist senatorial candidate polled 494 and the Communist candidate 69 votes.

### The state elections

The state election results also went against the national trend, the Republicans gaining control of both Houses of the legislature. Their majority in the Senate was 11 seats to six and in the lower House 23 to 12.<sup>3</sup> GOP control in the Senate was of some importance to Governor Buck, because the majority of the appointments made by him were subject to its confirmation. Had the Democrats gained control, this task would have been made even more difficult, particularly in respect of those appointments concerned with the provision of relief to the unemployed. A major advantage gained by the Republicans resulting from their successes in the elections was that, even if they failed to elect a single member of the Senate in 1936, they would still retain control because nine GOP Senators would be "hold-over" members and this constituted a working majority.<sup>4</sup> All four Republican candidates for state senator in New Castle county were elected, including Senator William Simonton who became the first man in the state to be re-elected for a fourth, four-year term. The Republicans won two of the three senate seats in Kent county and all three in Sussex county. The GOP's retention of control in the Senate was one of the biggest up-sets of the election. It had generally been conceded by political observers that the Democrats would achieve a majority in the upper House because five Democratic senators were hold-over members and elections were being held in strong Democratic districts, such as the 1st and 5th districts of Kent county; the 3rd district of Sussex county; and the 7th senatorial district of Blackbird and Appoquinmink in New Castle county. The Republican success in the latter district must have confounded the experts; their candidate, Levi L. Malony, won by a large majority and became the first Republican Senator to be elected from this district since the Constitution of 1897 was passed. A clear indication of the swing to the Republicans was seen in the 5th district of New Castle county where

Republican Norris N. Wright was elected by a majority of 1,127, the largest ever given a candidate in that district; this was apparently achieved with the support of hundreds of Democrats who voted for him.

In New Castle county, 12 of the 15 representatives elected were Republicans; the Democrats elected only two lower House members from Wilmington and one from rural New Castle county. The GOP also won eight of the ten seats in the House that were being contested in Sussex county; here the Democrats lost seven seats, one of which was in the third "banner Democrat" district where Republican Leroy B. Hurley over-turned a Democratic majority of more than 700. However, as might have been expected in Kent county, seven of the ten seats in the House were won by Democrats.

The election gave New Castle county Republicans a majority of the caucuses of both the Senate and House. Six of the 11 senators and 12 of the 23 representatives were from the county; and so it seemed that Governor Buck could expect to have little difficulty in getting his proposed relief measures passed by the General Assembly when it convened on 1 January 1935.

#### Local election results

The Republicans elected their county tickets in both New Castle and Sussex counties, reversing the Democratic victories of 1932 with majorities ranging from 6,977 to 2,904 in the former and with comfortable majorities in Sussex county. Predictably, the Democrats elected their county ticket in Kent county, with the exception of Clerk of the Peace, which post was won by Republican Harry T. Greenwell with a majority of 155. The GOP elected all three Levy Court commissioners in New Castle county, and also the single Levy Court commissioner to be chosen in Sussex county. However, the Democrats-Fusionist elected all three commissioners to the Kent county Levy Court.

Colonel Edmund Mitchell, chairman of the state Republican committee, commenting on the results observed:

To say I am gratified with the results of this election is putting it mildly. It proves that the Republican administration of State affairs for the past thirty years has met with the approval of the people. Delaware has not been led astray by New Deal propaganda but has chosen the safe and sane policies of the Republican party.

John Biggs Jr., chairman of the state Democratic committee, attempted to put a brave face on the situation: "I am disappointed at the results, but I think indications for the New Deal outside of Delaware are most encouraging."<sup>5</sup>

#### Relief in November

During November, the RCI continued to provide relief to the unemployed of both Wilmington and rural New Castle county, and a work-relief programme was inaugurated in Wilmington. The costs of providing both of these was estimated at \$190,420 (\$136,200 for the general relief programme and \$54,220 for work-relief) and the governor applied for an FERA grant of \$110,420 to supplement the funds provided by the city. Copies of the clerk of the council's letter and the appropriation ordinance were sent as evidence of the council's own funding commitments. This apparently satisfied the FERA, and the RCI's executive director subsequently reported that "No change has occurred in the Federal Emergency Relief Administration's policy insofar as this Commission is concerned. The FERA policy of dollar for dollar matching of local funds ... remained through November."<sup>6</sup> A federal grant of \$83,750 was received and, although this was \$46,670 less than the amount requested, it proved to be adequate to meet the cost of relief for the month, which amounted to \$140,798. Nevertheless, this expenditure exceeded that of any previous month since the inception of the RCI. The use of cash relief was raised to 18 per cent of food costs, compared to a little over 10 per cent in October. The onset of winter increased demand, and 17,165 individuals were given relief, which was an increase of over 5 per cent on the previous month's total. This would have been even greater but for the continuous investigation of relief applicants, which resulted in "ineligibles and 'chislers' being weeded from the Commission's files." The severe weather created a massive increase in the demand for fuel provided to families on relief (of 147 per cent). Each was given slightly less than one quarter of a ton of coal for the month. As a result, the expenditure per family rose by \$3.05 to \$28.25 in Wilmington, and by \$4.86 to \$25.25 in rural New Castle county. The unusually cold weather also caused an increase in demand for clothing.



Some 2,000 children of school age were provided with sufficient clothing to allow them to continue their attendance at school; 1,166 men and 1,134 women were provided with winter clothing; and 41 new born babies were dressed.

The number of transients also increased, filling the Harlan Arms Transient Shelter to capacity, and so urgent was the need for additional facilities that an office was converted into a room with six beds. A total of 1,589 transients were aided, some being employed at the Marine Terminal and others repairing the grounds of the Wilmington General Hospital. An educational programme was also provided. This included a book-keeping and accounting class taught by a transient who was a former field auditor for a nationally known company, and a radio class which was granted a licence by the Federal Communications Commission to operate a radio transmitter they had built.<sup>7</sup>

#### Work-relief begins

By mid-November, the first work-relief project began. This was a community "Renovize Campaign", carried out in conjunction with the Delaware Division of the Federal Housing Administration, and a special grant was made by the FERA specifically for the purpose. This project employed 76 men at a cost of \$1,737. In anticipation of an expansion of work-relief, tools left from the CWA programme were moved from the state road garage to the city's paving plant, and the RCI's executive director advised the governor that "Relief Commission Inc. is now in a position to undertake a few works projects in the city and county ... using CWA tools."<sup>8</sup> Ethelda Mullen, visited Washington to present the proposed work programme to Aubrey Williams who, after reviewing these proposals, promised that the FERA would again match local funds. He also "expressed gratification that there had been no criticism of political influence in the activities of the RCI in Delaware" during the recent elections.<sup>9</sup>

On 16 November, Governor Buck concerned by the unusually cold weather and reports that many families in the two southern counties were destitute and without relief, because their various welfare organisations had ceased to function after the state took over this responsibility in 1932, issued a

proclamation in which he appealed to "all our citizens and especially such private welfare organisations ... to renew their activities to aid the destitute families of Kent and Sussex Counties", who had no welfare board to which they could appeal. This, he reminded his target audience, was because "the State is no longer permitted to assume responsibility for those citizens who are now beseeching the Governor for relief in the way of necessities of life."<sup>10</sup> The proclamation supported President Roosevelt's own appeal, made in a radio broadcast on 22 October on behalf of the 1934 Mobilization for Human Needs, a campaign headed by Newton D. Baker. In this the President stressed two points: the first, that federal, state and local governments were bearing the high costs of relief which "every good citizen should seek to lighten"; the second, that the personal factor was important in the pursuit of humanitarian objectives. "None of us wants to eliminate the personal factor in taking care of human needs" FDR told his listeners; "none of you wants to centralize the care of relief either in Washington or in your State capital or in your city hall."<sup>11</sup> This was an early indication of the impending change in federal relief policy that President Roosevelt was later to announce in his State of the Union Message, delivered in January 1935, in which he stated that "the federal government ... must and shall quit this business of relief."<sup>12</sup>

Undeniably, one consequence of both the federal and state governments taking responsibility for the provision of relief to the unemployed was the discouragement of philanthropy, and this resulted, at least in the two southern counties, in private welfare organizations being unable to continue in their traditional role of providing for those in need because of the lack of funds.

#### December relief

On 8 December, Hopkins received an optimistic report from a FERA investigator which began: "There is a decisive note of industrial improvement in Wilmington, the Dupont bailiwick. So much so that the relief load which decreased considerably during the last year, may be cut further by as much as one-fourth in the next six months."<sup>13</sup>

Notwithstanding this, in anticipation of a sharp increase in the costs of

providing relief in December, Ethelda Mullen wrote to the governor requesting him to ask for a federal grant of \$87,443 and detailing the RCI's financial situation. She told him that although the commission expected to receive more than \$90,000 (made up of: \$60,000 for direct relief and \$12,000 for work-relief from the city council; \$10,000 from the Levy Court, to care for the relief needs in rural New Castle county; and a remaining balance of relief funds amounting to \$8,072), she estimated the costs of relief and other miscellaneous programmes, such as the federal surplus commodities and student aid, would be \$177,515. However, the FERA granted only \$76,470: \$72,000 for general relief, \$3,000 for the cattle programme and \$1,470 for student aid.<sup>14</sup> The anticipated increase occurred and rapidly diminished the funds available, in some instances exhausting budgets set up for specific items. As a result, the issuing of fuel orders was discontinued in mid-December and later rent relief and food orders were curtailed. During the month, the number of individuals receiving relief increased by 6 per cent to 18,278, and it was necessary to expend \$60,008 on food for them; 26 per cent of this was given as cash relief. In addition, 1,441 transients and 469 single men were also aided. Federal surplus commodities were distributed to needy families, comprising more than 9,000 lbs of butter, 14,000 lbs of cheese, 13,000 lbs of rice, 130,000 lbs of cabbage, 64,000 lbs of potatoes, 2,500 lbs of sugar and 117,869 lbs of fresh beef. Insufficient funding accompanied by an increased demand also resulted in a reduction in the relief expenditure per family; this was cut by \$3.68 in Wilmington, and was \$3.95 less in rural New Castle county than in the previous month.<sup>15</sup>

On 3 December, additional work-relief projects began which included the grading of streets, work on water mains and later work on the South Wilmington sewage and drainage project. However, with the exception of the latter, all projects were discontinued at the end of the month due to lack of money. To off-set this, a boost to employment in the building trades was given by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Wilmington Better Housing Committee, which had received 4,311 pledges for building modernization in Wilmington, at a cost of \$2,118,000; these had to be

activated in the following six months. City banks under the FHA plan loaned \$91,000 towards the cost of this programme, which it was estimated would provide employment for up to 1,000 men.<sup>16</sup>

#### Future funding of relief

In early December, the question of the provision of relief beyond the end of the year was raised at a meeting of the board of directors of the RCI. The board was reminded that the appropriation made by the city council was only to cover the costs of relief during November and December and, as no alternative source of funding was likely to be available, the commission could expect no further federal grants.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, on 19 December, the RCI appealed to the city council to appropriate extra funds to enable it to continue its relief activities beyond the end of the year. In response to this appeal, James McManus, chairman of the council's finance committee, told the commission that he did not know what the city could do about providing any more funds because, he said: "If we can't collect more taxes the city will be on relief itself." The governor requested the Levy Court to continue its relief funding, but the chairman of the court's finance committee, Claude Lester, informed him that the court had reached the limit of the appropriations it could make out of current revenues. He explained that the county's finances were "not in as good a shape as a year ago due to business conditions and unexpected heavy expenditures", and went on to add: "The county must depend upon real estate taxes for its funds and at this time we could not consider increasing taxes". Lester also stated that the court did not consider it "would be fair or wise to make any further appropriation ... as three new members of the Court will take their seats [on] January 1 [although] the Court is entirely sympathetic with the problems confronting the relief organization and will endeavour to help sometime after 1 January".<sup>18</sup>

The One Hundred and Fifth General Assembly, which it was hoped would enact some form of relief legislation, was not scheduled to meet until the New Year itself and, in spite of the Republican control of the legislature, the governor was pessimistic about the prospects of it agreeing on either relief legislation or making an appropriation for relief. Buck expressed

his misgivings in reponse to a question on the future funding of relief:

From what I have experienced in the past two years and a half on relief matters in the Legislature and from what I am able to gather from members elect of the coming session of the General Assembly I am convinced that the Legislature will not make any appropriations for relief because there still is strong down-State opposition to it. If the State cannot take care of the needy therefore, it becomes necessary for them to receive aid locally.

To achieve this, the governor suggested the counties would have to finance their own relief needs through bond issues and that he would ask the legislature to authorize the counties to issue such bonds. It was the first time that this form of relief financing had been suggested, and Mayor Collins, commenting on this proposal, stated his belief that the federal government had been unwilling to provide more than matching funds because Delaware had issued neither bonds nor levied taxes specifically for relief purposes. He pointed out that Vermont, with a population not much larger than Delaware's, had already resorted to this means of financing its relief needs and was getting three times more in federal grants. He also drew attention to the fact that Delaware was getting less federal aid than any other state on the basis of population.<sup>19</sup>

On 18 December, Ethelda Mullen, following the failure of a delegation of commission members to obtain an immediate appropriation from the Levy court, declared that the relief situation was grave and that action must be taken immediately to prevent collapse of the programme, "with the subsequent suffering of thousands of men, women and children". Governor Buck, however, expressed confidence that the Wilmington City Council and the Levy Court of New Castle County could both be relied upon to continue to provide funding for relief. "I feel that Miss Mullen's fears are unfounded" he observed "because the City Council and the Levy Court are controlled by the Republicans who never yet have failed in emergencies to provide for the needs of the less fortunate citizens."<sup>20</sup> This provoked an angry response from Democrat John Hazzard, president of the city council:

We feel that the Governor's statement is misleading because City Council cannot appropriate any money for relief purposes without a two-thirds vote and the Republican members of that body are not in control of Council when it comes to a two-thirds vote on any question. We do not want to take issue with the Governor, but the six Democratic members do not think they should bear the onus of being unwilling to appropriate money to aid the needy.<sup>21</sup>

Mullen's concern for the future funding of relief was reflected in a

Summary of State and Local Relief Funds, produced by an FERA research statistician, which also raised the question of why relief funding in Delaware presented a problem:

Delaware has no relief funds available for the period beginning in January 1935. The Legislature will convene in regular session in that month and will be called upon to make an appropriation. The State has the largest per capita wealth of any in the Union and is well able to take care of its relief needs. A relief appropriation might take the form either of a bond issue, a sales tax, or a tax on general property.<sup>22</sup>

This report provides revealing insight of the FERA's opinion of Delaware's ability to fund its own relief needs, and the administration's attitude towards the provision of future funding for relief in the state was certainly coloured by this perception.

On 20 December, the RCI's chairman James Skelly, made yet another appeal to the city council. In this he informed them that "Unless such funds are known to be available before January 1 the Commission of necessity will be unable to function." His letter was read before the council, which did not discuss it, but instead accepted a motion from the chairman of the finance committee that the letter be referred to his committee.<sup>23</sup> The apparent unwillingness of both the city council and the court to provide the necessary funding for relief beyond the end of the year caused Governor Buck to write to Harry Hopkins, informing him that the RCI's funds would be exhausted at the end of December and asking "for whatever aid you can allow us for the coming month ... to tide us over until the State Legislature, which convenes on January 1st, has had time to deal with the relief problem."<sup>24</sup> Fortunately, on 28 December, the impending collapse of relief in Wilmington was averted, when the city council agreed to appropriate \$25,000 to allow the commission to continue to provide aid until the General Assembly had had time to formulate a relief measure. The appropriation, however, carried the proviso that the money was to be used only within the corporate limits of the city and placed the responsibility for the funding of relief in rural New Castle county on the Levy Court. In the absence of funds for use outside Wilmington, the RCI informed rural districts in the county that no relief orders would be given until a decision was made by the court on a further appropriation.<sup>25</sup> The problem that the Levy Court faced in providing relief

funds was summarized by Bishop Cook:

The Levy Court of New Castle County ... has a budget of about two million dollars which comes from taxes on real estate in the county ... and all but a relatively small part of it is required for the expenses of the county. To increase the fund it would require an increase in the tax rate on real estate which would fall hardest on the people least able to bear it.<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless, on 9 January, the court made an appropriation of \$25,000. The resolution authorizing this stated that it was made "with the hope and expectation" that the RCI would "undertake to use their best efforts to secure appropriate legislation ... under which such relief [as was considered] ... necessary can be provided ... either by the State of Delaware or by New Castle County from a source other than taxation upon real estate."<sup>27</sup> On 7 January, the FERA made grants of \$48,970 and thus ensured the continuation of relief during the month.<sup>28</sup> This unfortunate situation was summed up by Arch Mandel in a memorandum to Harry Hopkins: "For January Delaware has been scrapping [sic] together funds from City Council and the Levy Court...."<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, the appropriations made with some reluctance by both the council and the court confirmed Governor Buck's belief that the Republican control of these would result in provision for "the needs of the less fortunate citizens".

The effect of more than six years of unemployment on many of Wilmington's citizen was shown in a Report Summary made by Lorena Hickok, Harry Hopkins' chief investigator, whose task it was to prepare for him confidential reports on conditions in the United States during the period of the Great Depression. On 1 January 1935, following a visit to Delaware in late 1934 at his request, she reported that "Welfare workers in Wilmington estimate that twenty-five per cent of their relief clients will never be worth much in a competitive world again."<sup>30</sup>

#### The 105th General Assembly

On 1 January, the 105th General Assembly convened; Senator Levi L. Maloney of rural New Castle county was elected president pro tem of the Senate and Representative Harry V. Lyons of Sussex county was chosen as Speaker of the House. The Democrats named Senator Charles Neugebauer of Kent county minority floor leader and Representative Randolph Hughes, also of Kent

county and the youngest member of the legislature, minority floor leader in the House.<sup>31</sup> Later in the day, the governor in his biennial message told the members they were "for the first time to be beset on the one hand by the insistant demand of well-meaning groups to extend governmental activities and increase appropriations and besieged on the other hand by [the] no less insistent demand of far sighted citizens that taxes shall not be increased." Needless to say, these two demands were incompatible. He informed them that the state's present commitments were such that the cost of maintaining the various institutions, departments and agencies, together with contributions to private charities, was in excess of revenue received. "It would seem the time has arrived," he said, "to call a halt to added demands upon the treasury" and went on to give this warning: "If these demands are not stopped, and the State is to play the part of a fairy godmother to the whims and fancies of devoted but super-enthusiastic citizens, an increase in taxes is inevitable." He further informed the legislature that, despite falling revenue and the emergency expenditure for unemployment relief, the state's available cash surplus amounted to more than \$6 million. Yet, "Notwithstanding the cash surplus ... the General Assembly ... is faced [with] a number of difficult fiscal problems created by declining revenues and the existing statutory allocation of income." The governor went on to make a number of suggestions and recommendations to resolve these problems. For example, he suggested that in order to meet the anticipated deficit in the general fund the Highway Department might be asked to assume the burden of redeeming the outstanding highway bonds from the sinking fund. This would make \$500,000 available to be diverted from this fund to the general fund for its immediate use and future needs up to the end of the fiscal year. He considered the first requisite of a stable government to be a balanced budget, and to this end it was important that the members had an intimate knowledge of the source and trend of income allocated to the general fund. To enable them to obtain this, a comparison of the fund's receipts over the previous five years, prepared by the Taxpayers' Research League of Delaware, was appended to his message.. This showed that there had been a decrease in net income of more than \$2 million since Fiscal 1930. He pointed out that the budget as presented showed



anticipated shortfalls of \$860,000 in 1935-36 and \$945,000 in 1936-37, and offered further suggestions as to how, within certain limits, these could be balanced over the biennium. Among his ideas were the collection of the arrears of inheritance and estate taxes (estimated at \$263,943); the re-enactment of the statute which provided for the diversion of franchise-tax receipts to the general fund, with a definite statement of the purpose for which these receipts were to be used; the transfer of control of the motor vehicle department from the secretary of state to the Highway Department, which would be required to accept responsibility for all its operating expenses from its current income; the authorization of the Highway Department to issue certificates of indebtedness in an amount not to exceed \$150,000, beginning on 1 July 1935 and at six-month intervals thereafter, limiting the total amount to \$600,000, with interest to be paid by the state and the proceeds deposited in the general fund; and similar authorization for the custodian of the state school fund to issue certificates of indebtedness at the same intervals but only to a maximum of \$100,000, limiting the total amount to \$400,000. He stated that if these suggestions were followed the general fund would be supplemented by some \$1.2 million annually, an amount which he believed to be sufficient to put the budget in balance.

The governor also told the legislature that over the two-year period since 1933, the state's bonded indebtedness had been reduced by \$225,000 and that the outstanding bonds now totalled \$3,150,000, against which the sinking fund held \$634,952 in cash and securities. He asked members to give their serious consideration to the recommendations of the commission appointed to examine the question of unemployment insurance as the problem related to Delaware, adding: "It is important that there should be a constructive solution of this question as soon as possible, with the assurance that the proposed solution will relieve rather than aggravate the problem."

He then came to the subject of unemployment relief:

As a State in which agriculture is the chief industry, a State with but a single industrial city within its borders, Delaware's experience in furnishing relief to the unemployed with public funds from the State treasury has been such as to lead me to believe that the State will not again be allowed to enter this field of welfare work. The fact remains,

however, that there is some distress in the lower counties and a great deal in the City of Wilmington and its suburbs.... In the case of Wilmington provision must be made to further assistance to those families now on the relief rolls ... and in Kent and Sussex counties there are no doubt some cases where help is needed. Two and a half years of close association with this problem ... leads me to say to you that in my opinion relief of the destitute is properly the function of local government where more accurate knowledge of conditions and needs can be obtained. The successful manner in which it is now being locally supervised in New Castle County aptly illustrates the merit of localizing the administration of relief to destitute families.

The governor told members that, although he had not yet received the reports from the commissions investigating the relief needs of the counties, he wanted to offer two recommendations for the future provision of relief. The first of these was the Levy Court in each county should be authorized to fund direct and work-relief either from current revenue or to borrow on the credit of the county. The second recommendation was a non-partisan commission of four or more persons from each county should be appointed by him to serve as relief commissioners for that county. "With such a law on the statute books," he added, "the responsibility for unemployment relief in each of the counties and the amount to be provided remains solely with the governing authorities of the county."<sup>32</sup> In making these recommendations, which underlined his stated opinion that relief was properly the function of local government, the governor showed that, despite Republican control of both Houses of the legislature and the fact that Republicans elected from New Castle county had a majority of the caucuses of both the Senate and the House, he was not prepared to risk a repeat of the *impasse* on relief legislation which had occurred in 1934. His recommendations also concurred with the policy of the Roosevelt administration - i.e. the returning of responsibility for relief back to local government, particularly for those who were unable to maintain themselves and who, prior to the depression, were cared for by local authorities. On 4 January, the President had stated this change in policy in his annual message to the Congress. He was speaking of the large proportion of the five million unemployed on relief rolls who, he said,

belonged to the group which in the past was dependent upon local welfare efforts. Most of them ... [unable] for one reason or another to maintain themselves independently - for the most part through no fault of their own. Such people, in the days before the great depression, were cared for by local efforts - by States, by counties, by towns, by cities, by churches

and by private welfare agencies. It is my thought that in the future they must be cared for as they were before.<sup>33</sup>

On 8 January, the General Assembly responded to the governor's suggestions for relief with a bill introduced by Republican Representative Burton Heal of rural New Castle county. This gave the county's Levy Court authority to appropriate money for relief and to raise the money for this by issuing bonds, notes or certificates of indebtedness. No limit was set on the amount that the court could expend for this purpose, and the bill created a Temporary Emergency Relief Commission of four members to be named by the governor. It also stipulated that, if in the joint opinion of the governor and the court it was mutually considered advisable, "the administrative authority of the emergency relief provided by the act shall be administered by Relief Commission Inc...." in place of the four commissioners.<sup>34</sup> However, the General Assembly was not so quick to implement the governor's recommendations to resolve the problem of the general-fund deficit. His suggestions for resolving this were ignored and a bill authorizing the state to borrow \$700,000 from the Farmer's Bank to meet the deficit for the remainder of Fiscal 1935 was introduced by Republican Representative Morris Simon of Kent county. By 18 January, caucuses and conferences on the Simon bill had failed to reach agreement; the two parties were deadlocked over the question of interest to be paid on the loan. The Republicans favoured payment of 2.5 per cent interest, but the Democrats objected to the state paying any interest at all on the loan in view of the fact that the Farmer's Bank was the state's depository and held millions of dollars of its money in other funds, such as the school, highway and sinking funds. As a consequence, Delaware had no funds to pay bills or even to buy stamps to conduct the usual daily business of the state. The disagreement was eventually resolved and an interest free loan was obtained from the Farmer's Bank.<sup>35</sup>

#### Reports of the special commissions

On 8 January, Governor Buck sent copies of the special commissions' reports on the need for relief in New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties to the legislature. The Report of the commission which carried out the study of

relief needs in New Castle county was comprehensive and made recommendations based upon an "analization [sic] of past years' experience", using the records of the TERC and the RCI. The records of the mayor's committees, Family Society and Block-Aid campaign were also examined, but as these reflected the rise and fall of limited funds, secured from private donations, rather than the trend of need they were considered of little or no value in determining the 1935 relief requirements. It also contained estimates of the cost of providing three general relief programmes: a direct relief programme (at an estimated cost of \$1,920,650); a programme providing for 50 per cent work-relief and 50 per cent direct relief (costing \$2,156,450); and a work-relief programme (estimated to cost \$2,458,706). Recommendations made by the commission included the propositions that fund raising for relief should not be undertaken by the solicitation of private funds except as a last resort; that financial support should not depend on aid from the FERA, because it was to cease functioning in June 1935; and that provision should be made for New Castle county to care for its own needs by borrowing, increasing taxes or initiating new forms of taxes, with the state being asked to match funds appropriated by the county. The final recommendation was that the governor approach the FERA to find out "what might be expected of them in participation in such a program."<sup>36</sup>

The commission which examined the need for relief in Kent county submitted a two-page report which stated that, in their unanimous opinion, although there had been a decided improvement in conditions, there was still a real need for relief in the county. However, because of the small numbers involved, this presented "no difficult problem" as the needs of these could be taken care of by the various communities and the Levy Court without the imposition of any serious financial burden. This opinion was nevertheless qualified: "... there is a unanimity of opinion among citizens in general in Kent County that direct relief should be kept to a minimum and extended only to those who through physical infirmity are unable to work." The report contained recommendations "based on personal knowledge and observations and contacts ... made with the Kent County Levy Court and the authorities of the several cities and towns." These were that the

burden of direct relief be assumed by the cities, towns and the Kent County Levy Court; and that legislation should be enacted to enable these political units to borrow money for this purpose when necessary.<sup>37</sup>

The Sussex county commission's report was also brief, and stated that although there had been

much less need for relief ... than in the previous two years ... necessary legislation [would have to] be passed as soon as possible to authorize the Levy Court of Sussex County to appropriate or raise money for relief in an amount not to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars per year for the next two years.

The report also recommended that the Levy Court act as the relief commission for the county, and that money "be spent through the present and future local welfare organizations ...", which should be required to deposit 25 per cent of the money requested with the court, before it made an appropriation which was "not to exceed two hundred dollars to any one district, section or town in any one calendar month." It concluded with the statement: "It is the unanimous opinion of the people of Sussex County that each County should take care of its own."<sup>38</sup>

#### A relief act is passed

On 15 January, legislation was enacted authorizing the creation of emergency unemployment relief commissions on a county basis. An enabling act was also passed to provide the means of raising funds for the commissions by creating a county income tax in those counties where one was organized.<sup>39</sup>

On 21 January, the Heal bill (House Bill Number 5), entitled

An Act to relieve the people of New Castle County from the hardship and suffering caused by unemployment, creating and organizing for such purpose a Temporary Emergency Relief Commission, prescribing its powers and duties, providing the necessary funds therefore, and authorizing the Levy Court of New Castle County to perform work as an independent contractor for the purpose of providing relief hereby contemplated

was approved by the governor who, the next day, sent a copy to Hopkins.<sup>40</sup>

The Act created a commission of four members named the Temporary Emergency Relief Commission for New Castle County (TERC for NCC), and provided a method for the Levy Court to raise funds for relief purposes by borrowing money and issuing bonds. However, on the same day a bill, said to have

been drafted by the attorney of the New Castle County Levy Court, authorizing the court to levy an extra income tax on practically all adults in the county, was introduced by Republican Representative Dugan of Wilmington.

It was estimated that the proposed income tax (of 1 per cent on incomes below \$3,000; 2 per cent on incomes between \$3,000 and \$10,000; and 3 per cent on incomes in excess of \$10,000 to be collected for two years beginning 1 July 1935) would raise between \$600,000 and \$700,00 each year. It was to be collected by the state tax department and given to the court "for the support of the poor residents." Pierre du Pont, in his role as state tax commissioner, estimated that the cost of administering income tax in the county was \$21,125 per annum.<sup>41</sup>

On 28 January, the Dugan bill was passed by unanimous vote and the threat of increased real estate taxes, which would have been required to repay either borrowed money or bonds, was avoided. The bill's passage was far from smooth, confirming Governor Buck's pessimistic forecast of strong down-state opposition to relief; and although it was enacted in the Senate by 11 votes to five, three Democrats from Kent county and one from Sussex county voted against it, and they were supported by a Republican from rural New Castle county. Moreover, the bill was only adopted by the House following a conference of the Republican members, who were told by Governor Buck that the Levy Court had insisted that action be taken by the legislature before the court met on the next day, and that unless a bill was passed the court would not promise to continue to provide money for relief. Prior to the conference only two Republicans were in favour of the bill, which was also opposed by the Wilmington City Council whose members had written to the legislature protesting against it. Even after the final reading, Democratic Representatives Joseph Brogan of Wilmington and Randolph Hughes of Kent county both attempted to delay the vote by asking for more time to consider the bill. The majority floor leader, Representative Morris Simon of Kent county, opposed the deferring action explaining that "we are trying to make the best of a bad bargain" and telling the House that it could not afford to delay the matter as the unemployed in New Castle county had to be taken care of. The motion to

defer action on the bill was defeated by 20 votes to seven and on 4 February it was signed by the governor.<sup>42</sup>

The new tax was not welcomed by the residents of New Castle county, and the governor received a number of letters of complaint. Replying to one of these, he wrote: "I don't think there is any taxpayer in New Castle County, and I can include myself in that, who isn't displeased to have to pay another tax on his income." But he went on to give a "brief history of how this assessment came about" explaining that

representatives of the lower two counties are not in favor of public monies [sic] being spend [sic] for relief in either Kent or Sussex, and it has been found in the past, the representatives of the lower counties are not willing to appropriate State funds for New Castle County relief needs.

As a result, the county found itself compelled to fund relief itself and because real estate taxes could not meet this additional demand, some other source of revenue had to be found. It had, therefore, been decided that a county income tax was the fairest means because "no more than perhaps 45% of the revenue received from the ... tax will be paid by the citizens within the city limits, as those who have the largest taxes to pay live in rural districts."<sup>43</sup> This was another clear indication of the intra-state divisions which continued to plague the efforts to provide relief in the region where it was most necessary.

#### Relief continues

While the General Assembly was taking action to provide for future relief needs in New Castle county, the RCI continued its relief activities, despite being seriously limited by a shortage of funds. Because of this it became necessary to refuse to take on new relief clients and to remove a number of families from the relief rolls who, under normal conditions, would have received supplementary relief. This reduced the number of families receiving relief from 4,896 to 4,595, these comprised of 17,968 individuals. The funds available were just sufficient to cover the issue of food for these unfortunates; \$70,780 was in fact expended, 29 per cent in cash and the remainder in food orders. In addition, small amounts of coal were given to emergency cases where sickness "had invaded the homes of

distressed clients." Work-relief was also curtailed due to the shortage of funds. However, in the last three days of the month, due to a severe snow storm and in response to urgent demands from city and county officials, 492 men were placed on a snow-clearance programme to relieve the congested and dangerous traffic conditions in Wilmington and New Castle county. As the RCI's executive director reported, "An outstanding feature of this program is ... that with two or three exceptions every client requested to report for work was on hand ... demonstrating a real desire to accept any form of employment." The snow-clearance project was funded by the FERA because both city and county were without funds.

On 29 January, the limited relief funds were exhausted,<sup>44</sup> and the continuation of relief was only made possible once again through the intervention of Governor Buck who, in response to an appeal by Ethelda Mullen, assumed full responsibility for the continuation of relief by the RCI. Replying to her appeal, he wrote:

This action I am confident is in accord with the wishes of the New Castle County Levy Court, some members of which informally authorized me to request of you that the Relief Commission Inc. continue to function until the new relief law for the County ... could be made effective.<sup>45</sup>

During January, in compliance with instructions from the FERA, an occupational classification record survey was commenced, which listed every employable client and classified his occupation. The objective of the survey was to facilitate the quick start of a future work-relief programme, and the data collected was later used by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), created by the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act of March 1935. In conjunction with the occupational survey, a study of all "ineligible" cases was made to determine how many families receiving aid had no employable members. As a result of this, it was determined that of the 4,595 families being aided 314 were classifiable as "ineligibles". These were then categorised according to cause or reason for unemployability, as follows: old age; physical disability; mental disability; domestic responsibilities; alcoholism; desertion of wage earner; or imprisonment of wage earner. Almost half of the total number of ineligible cases were found to be due to old age, and 40 per cent to physical disability.<sup>46</sup> Wentworth Deverall of the RCI, informed Secretary of State Dent Smith that



the survey showed: "Ineligible cases constituted approximately six point nine per cent of our entire caseload of 4,595 active cases in January, 2,972 were white and 1.623 colored. A total of 17,968 individuals were contained in the caseload for January of which 12,553 were white and 5,415 colored."<sup>47</sup>

#### The Temporary Emergency Relief Commission for New Castle County

On 19 January, although the provision of relief beyond the end of the month was uncertain because the terms of the commission's members expired on 29 January, Ethelda Mullen requested the governor to ask the FERA for a grant of \$161,143 to fund relief during February. This request was made even though it was not known what funds would be made available by the Levy Court.<sup>48</sup> However, the court's attorney questioned the right of this public body to appropriate public funds to a private corporation. The matter was then referred to the state attorney general who advised the governor that it would be unwise to appoint a private corporation to administer public funds. On 21 January, Governor Buck acting on this advice implemented the legislation enacted by the General Assembly and appointed a new Temporary Emergency Relief Commission to administer relief in New Castle County. He named four commissioners (two Democrats, Pierre du Pont and Frank Collins and two Republicans, the Right Reverend Bishop Phillip Cook and Richard Sellers) all of whom were members of the RCI. The governor announcing the appointments, stated that the work of the commission had been satisfactory and the Washington authorities were pleased with its efforts. He pointed out, however, that on advice of the attorney general it had been considered unwise to appoint a private corporation to administer public funds.

Informing him of the creation of the TERC for NCC and the appointment of its board, Arch Mandel told Hopkins that the nomination of "four men from the old Board as members of the T.E.R.C ... [would] insure continuity of the program". Commenting on the performance of the RCI, he observed that "it had been doing, in my opinion, a creditable piece of work."<sup>49</sup>

On 6 February, the initial meeting of the TERC for NCC was held in joint session with the RCI, where it was decided that the latter should be authorized to request the necessary funds for relief from the Levy Court

and continue to administer it until the end of the month. The meeting then approved an estimated budget of \$152,000. The court made an appropriation of \$75,000 but, because the revenue from the new income tax would not be available until after 15 March 1935, it had to borrow from the county's general fund, which was to be reimbursed when the new tax was collected. This appropriation was matched by a grant from the FERA, which also granted an additional \$673 for the cattle programme; the Wilmington City Council made a grant of \$861; and more than \$2,000 was received in private donations, with the result that the funds available for relief in February exceeded the estimated budget by some \$1,600. Despite this, they proved to be insufficient to meet the demand caused by a sharp increase in the number of seasonal workers in rural areas of the county. These were forced to apply for relief because they had exhausted their savings and food resources, which they had depended upon since early autumn. This in turn caused the RCI to adopt highly selective casework methods in filling the available quota, with the result that only those families whose plight was most desperate were given help. Those with a little income, or with some resources, who normally would have been considered for supplementary relief had to be refused and were shown instead how to realize their untapped resources such as insurances, mortgages and seemingly unproductive investments. A total of 4,541 families (comprising 17,832 individuals) were given relief during the month and \$86,449 was expended on food for them, 60 per cent of which was distributed in food orders and the remainder in cash relief. This represented an increase of 11 per cent in the latter form of relief over the previous month. In addition to the families receiving relief, 502 single men were aided by the single men's unit and a total of 1,182 transients were assisted by the Transient Bureau.

Because of the snow clearance programme which continued until 11 February, a greater number were employed on work-relief than at any time since the ending of the CWA programme, and the volume of funds used for work-relief was greater than in any of the previous three months. Some 550 men were employed at a cost of \$12,300.<sup>50</sup>

On 20 February, Frank Collins was elected chairman of the TERC for NCC, Bishop Cook, vice chairman, and Richard Sellers secretary/treasurer.

Ethelda Mullen was retained as executive director, all RCI personnel were transferred to the new commission, and all property, money, bank balances and leases were also handed over. Mullen announced that, when the new agency took over the responsibility for administering relief at the beginning of March, a policy would be implemented of providing relief only for those who could work when employment was found for them. She also announced that those persons who were unable to work through physical disability, age or any other cause were to be gradually eliminated from the relief rolls because, she said, the problem of caring for unemployables and their families was purely a state problem, and unemployment relief funds should be used "exclusively for the aid of those who are ready and able to work but can find no employment".<sup>51</sup> This brought the provision of relief in Delaware into line with the policy lately expounded by the President, which clearly stated that the responsibility for unemployables was solely that of the states and charitable organizations which had cared for them in the past.

On 27 February, the final meeting of the RCI was held and a resolution adopted expressing the commission's "sincere thanks and deep appreciation of the whole-hearted cooperation and generous support of the Honorable Governor ... the Levy Court and Council ... of Wilmington."<sup>52</sup>

Despite Republican control of the legislature, the difficulties encountered in getting the necessary legislation for relief had continued. There was no apparent resolution of the intra-state political divisions, which had continued to result in seemingly unnecessary delays in enacting the relief measure which was so urgently needed to obviate the hardships of the unemployed in New Castle county, even though this legislation had no financial implications for the southern counties.

The role played by Governor Douglass Buck in ensuring that the needs of the unemployed of New Castle county were met was of the utmost importance. There is no question that, without his support and commitment, the continuation of relief in the section of the state worst affected by the Great Depression would not have been possible after the state TERC ceased its operations in April 1934.

The manner in which the TERC for NCC continued to deal with the problems of unemployment, the difficulties it encountered in doing so and the introduction of additional New Deal agencies (which proved to be of great benefit to the state) will be described in detail in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 7: Relief in New Castle County - 1935

The Temporary Emergency Relief Commission for New Castle County (TERC for NCC) assumed the responsibility for unemployment relief in the county at the beginning of March. It was the eighth unemployment relief administration to operate in Wilmington and New Castle county since the commencement of organised relief in January 1931, and was the third administration to be inaugurated under public auspices, funded by both federal and state governments, since November 1932.

On 1 March, the RCI transferred the balance of its relief funds (\$18,487) together with its outstanding commitments (\$3,852) to the TERC for NCC, and the commission thereafter assumed responsibility for all federal programmes. These included the transient bureau, student aid, federal surplus commodities distribution and the Delaware selection agency for the CCC; it also took over all local relief programmes.<sup>1</sup> Frank Collins informed the Levy Court of New Castle County that the new relief organisation would require an appropriation of \$76,000 - half the estimated \$152,000 needed to fund relief in March - upon which it was expected that the federal government would match this sum dollar for dollar.<sup>2</sup> The court, however, appropriated only \$50,000 in spite of Collins' warning that relief requirements in March were likely to be the heaviest of any month of the year, and a reminder to the court that the federal government would only match the amount it granted.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, a grant of \$75,000 from the FERA made it possible for limited relief to be provided during the month. The additional \$25,000 was given on the understanding that a similar sum would be secured locally, and the court was requested to make this available in April. On 20 March, the TERC's executive director Ethelda Mullen, wrote to the governor requesting him to forward an application to the FERA for a grant of \$75,000. She advised him that the "April relief program will cost a minimum of \$120,000, exclusive of Transient and Student Aid costs", and warned that "if the Levy Court appropriated only \$50,000 ... we will again find the position of either having to dangerously reduce relief throughout the month or close it for the latter portion of the month."<sup>4</sup> In response to the governor's request, the FERA granted \$64,221

(for general relief, student aid and transient relief)<sup>5</sup> but the court, fearing that the revenue produced by the county income tax would prove to be insufficient to provide more than \$50,000 per month, only appropriated that amount for April. Its fears were unfounded, for on 21 March the state tax department announced it expected \$850,000 to be collected in county income tax for the year.<sup>6</sup>

The new tax was unpopular, and at a meeting held on 7 March organized by the New Castle County Citizens' Association a resolution was adopted supporting a taxpayer's suit to test the constitutionality of the income-tax law. The dole was characterized by John Saylor, chairman of the association, as a morale destroyer. He noted pointedly that in recent years the state had been able to retire \$9 million in highway bonds "some of which were not due until 1936" yet was unwilling to provide the \$2 million for state-wide work-relief which, in his opinion, was a "thousand times more important than the retirement of bonds". His view was supported by one of Hopkins' reporters who, informing him of the conditions he found in Wilmington, wrote: "All the town wants to see the last of the dole. They are strongly in favor of work programs. There is every indication that people still prefer work to handout in this city...."<sup>7</sup> Saylor's comment on the evidently misplaced priorities of the legislature is indeed apposite, and provides convincing evidence that, if the intra-state political divisions had not prevented agreement on relief funding, Delaware could have financed its own programme to care for the victims of the depression with little difficulty.

#### Adjournment of the 105th General Assembly

On 4 April, the one hundred and fifth General Assembly adjourned, having been in session for 60 days during which 242 bills were passed. It had not only enacted legislation to provide for the continuation of relief of the unemployed in New Castle county, but had also successfully dealt with the fiscal problems detailed by the governor in his message to the legislature on 1 January.

On 8 May, in a circular entitled Greater Delaware, the Taxpayers'

Research League of Delaware praised the governor and applauded the legislature's action:

The Governor of Delaware, for the formulation of his fiscal program, and those members of the General Assembly who enacted this program into law, are deserving of the deepest gratitude of the taxpayers of the State for the sound and wise manner in which they set about the solution of Delaware's financial problem.

To achieve this, the legislature authorized the transfer of a \$600,000 surplus in the sinking fund to the general fund to cover the deficit for the remainder of the fiscal year (to 30 June 1935); it also facilitated the borrowing of further amounts from the highway fund (\$600,000) and from the school fund (\$400,000) to finance the estimated expenditure in the next two fiscal years, beginning 1 July 1935. Action was taken to reduce expenditure from the general fund by diverting \$469,000 annually from franchise taxes for the following two years to meet the costs of the maintenance of the University of Delaware, the state College for Coloured Students, the state Board of Vocational Education and the state tax department. In compliance with the governor's recommendations, the state treasurer was authorized to pay the operating expenses of the motor vehicle department from the highway fund, thus removing another annual charge of \$800,000 from the general fund. Legislation was enacted that transferred responsibility for the collection of estate taxes from the county Registers of Wills to the state tax department, which was "better equipped technically for proper appraisal and efficient collection of inheritance and estate taxes"; this change was expected to "increase the receipts from these sources in a very substantial amount." The General Assembly also passed an act to authorize refunding of \$2,705,000 in outstanding highway bonds, and the reissuing of these at a lower rate of interest, resulting in an estimated net saving of \$1,887,400 during the life of the bonds. This at once released the resources held in the sinking fund and created a surplus which was transferred to the general fund.

However, in the opinion of the Taxpayers' Research League, the outstanding achievement of the 105th General Assembly, was an act authorizing the state highway department to take over all county roads and bridges with the concurrent elimination of all county road taxes. It was

estimated that this would save property owners in excess of \$800,000 annually. This act also limited the total county tax rates to 50 cents on each \$100 of property assessment valuation in New Castle and Sussex counties, and to 40 cents in Kent county. The legislature also made provision to change the New Castle County Levy Court from a seven to a three member body, to improve the efficiency of the administration of county government and thereby reduce costs, though this was not to take effect until 1937. The collection of taxes in New Castle county was revised to bring it in to line with the other counties by abolishing the ten district tax collectors and making the receiver of taxes and county treasurer responsible for this task. Governor Buck thanked the legislature for its "most helpful cooperation during this session" and stated "the Delaware electorate is deserving of especial commendation in their selection of the men chosen ... to represent them...."<sup>8</sup>

On 8 July, Delaware's US Senator, John Townsend Jr., also praised the legislature for achieving a balanced budget, informing the Senate that "... when it is the usual thing for ... States to become bankrupt, when high debts are being piled up for future generations to pay, it is with no little pride that I point to the financial status of my own State." He requested that the editorial from Wilmington's evening newspaper, entitled "Delaware's Enviably Record", be inserted in the Congressional Record. As the editorial boasted, "Delaware is one of the few States ... that not only start the new fiscal year with a balanced budget ... but that also have weathered the depression storm successfully up to this time."<sup>9</sup> Such an indication of the state's healthy financial situation gives further support to Saylor's earlier statement, made at the New Castle County Citizens' Association meeting, and provides confirmation of Delaware's indubitable ability to fund its own relief efforts, if there had been the political will to do so.

#### The Levy Court and relief funding

In April, the TERC for NCC, in an attempt to convince the Levy Court of the justifiability of the sums requested for relief, submitted its monthly budget which itemized the needs of each of its departments, and also gave a



comparison with the actual expenditure made in the previous two months. This showed that \$129,404 had been required to provide relief for 435 single persons and 4,400 families. Notwithstanding this, the court again appropriated only \$50,000. However, the FERA which had simply been expected to match the court's contribution granted a further \$75,000, which Ethelda Mullen believed would enable the commission "to do more than it was first thought possible"<sup>11</sup>

In May, the onerous task of providing adequate relief to those in need with the limited funds available was made even more difficult by a reduction in the sum allocated by the court. It had been estimated that \$129,955 would be required to provide relief in the month. This was based on the limited expenditure in April, which had been restricted to keep within budget, and had only been achieved by "dropping several hundred cases which normally should have [received] supplementary aid"; closing the clothing unit; and restricting gas and electricity relief. On 20 April, the TERC'S executive director, unaware of the impending reduction in the court appropriation, informed the governor that "If it is possible to secure [FERA] May funds, it is felt that the restriction ... in April, which caused much deprivation in our caseload, can be eliminated." On the same day, the governor applied for a federal grant of \$69,716<sup>12</sup> and the court made \$35,000 available. The Levy Court stated that the purpose of the reduced appropriation was to purge the relief rolls of those who, it believed, were not in need and had refused employment when it was offered. Numerous complaints to this effect had been received from farmers and other employers of labour in rural New Castle county. One member of the court declared that "until the relief commission decides to remove such people from their lists it cannot expect the Levy Court to do otherwise than cut down on its relief appropriations."<sup>13</sup> As a result of this action, there was a threat of FERA matching funds being withheld altogether, and Bishop Cook, warning of this possibility, emphasized that "the Washington authorities believe that with the allowance of but \$35,000 there is no serious relief problem in New Castle County, pointing out this is a rich State. They further contend that if no relief is needed here no work relief is necessary." His fears were confirmed when Aubrey Williams told

chairman Collins and Congressman Stewart that "not only is direct relief in Delaware endangered but work prospects also."<sup>14</sup> However, shortly after giving this warning, Williams sent a telegram to Governor Buck informing him that the FERA was prepared to make an allotment of \$35,000 to match the court's appropriation and would be ready to increase this sum provided that the court increased its own contribution.<sup>15</sup> On 6 May, a federal grant of \$36,470 (which included \$1,470 for student aid) was received in Delaware<sup>16</sup> and, although the funds available fell far short of the estimated requirement, more than 4,000 families were given relief either in the form of food orders or cash relief.<sup>17</sup>

The Levy Court's initial reluctance to grant adequate funds could be explained by the delay before the new county income tax could be collected in mid-March. Funding in February and March, for which the court had appropriated a total of \$125,000, required it to borrow this money from its general fund. However, as already explained, the amount expected to be raised under the new county income tax in the first year had been assessed at \$850,000, and by the end of May \$322,311 had been collected. Of this, \$298,540 was available to the court for the county relief programme of which only \$210,000 had been appropriated for use by the TERC for the period February to May.<sup>18</sup> It is therefore difficult to understand why it failed to meet in full the requests for relief funding for April and May, particularly when it had a balance of \$88,540 from tax receipts, and even more so when one recalls that it was Republican controlled. One explanation offered for its actions is that the court suspected that many of the recipients of relief were not entitled to it; consequently its members distrusted the way in which relief administration was being administered by the TERC. The basis for this mistrust may have been a genuine belief that some preferred to remain on relief rather than accept low paid farm and other jobs. Certainly, there had been reports of "numerous complaints" from farmers and other employers in the rural section of the county to support this conviction. However, the court's actions were later to be seen by a member of Aubrey Williams' staff to have a more sinister motive. She informed him that "... [it] has exercised its own prerogative in diminishing grants to New Castle County ... to show contempt

for the F.E.R.A."<sup>19</sup> Whatever the reason for the court's actions, the inevitable result was more hardship for the unfortunate unemployed.

On 18 May, the governor applied for a federal grant of \$73,000 towards the estimated \$126,000 required by the TERC for relief in June. Mullen informed him that this amount was "necessary to meet the need over and above the ... appropriation of \$50,000" expected to be made by the Levy Court, and argued that "If this federal grant is received it will enable us to somewhat adequately meet the relief needs in this county...."<sup>20</sup> The court was asked to contribute \$57,492 towards the estimated cost of direct relief for the 3,700 families, 425 single men and 1,370 transients expected to require aid during the month. In addition to direct relief, the commission had also set a budget of \$2,900 for work-relief and \$7,500 for the operation of the single-men's shelter. On 21 May, the court appropriated just \$30,000,<sup>21</sup> once again raising doubts as to whether or not the FERA would grant any funds for relief. Mullen telephoned Washington to obtain clarification, but was unable to get any definite confirmation of the possibility of a further FERA grant, although she was promised that the matter would be raised with the federal relief administrator. The Wilmington evening newspaper speculated that even if the FERA matched the court's appropriation the funds available would only be sufficient for a two-week relief programme.<sup>22</sup> On 3 June, however, the FERA granted \$35,737, which included \$753 for student aid, thereby once again providing a grant which was greater than the court's appropriation.<sup>23</sup>

#### The Wilmington City Council elections

At the very beginning of June, while the TERC was endeavouring to cope with yet another shortfall in funding, the city council elections were held in Wilmington. These resulted in a resounding victory for the Republicans, who elected all but three of their candidates and regained control of the council with a majority of six; the Democrats retained seats only in their strongholds. Even Republican Councilman Fred Brown, who had been instrumental in forming the Brown-Democratic coalition which had given the Democrats control of the council from August 1933 to May 1934, was re-elected by a majority of 630 votes in the First Ward. The GOP likewise

succeeded in electing the mayor (Walter Bacon defeated the incumbent Democrat William Speer by a majority of 6,522 votes), the president of the council (Albert James defeated his Democratic opponent Canby Mammele by 6,279 votes), the city treasurer (Harry Lawson defeated the incumbent Democrat William Lynch by 6,785) and also captured the positions of northern and southern district tax collectors. Their victory in the latter post was one of the real surprises of the election, with John Dillman defeating the incumbent Democrat Adolf Dangel by 260 votes.<sup>24</sup>

The results of the city council elections brought two very different reactions from the Democrats and the Republicans. On 5 June, ex-mayor William Speer wrote to Pierre du Pont asking for a further contribution to help offset his campaign deficit:

The city election is over and the results show to my mind two things, first, that this is a strong Republican city which when flooded with money as it was on Saturday by the Republican Party, a Democrat has no chance; secondly, the people do not care whether they have a competent man as head of the city and take no interest, with the exception of a few, in the intricate management of their affairs.<sup>25</sup>

Mayor Speers' assumptions did not take account of the probable anti-Democratic feeling which could have been expected to be present amongst the unemployed recipients of relief who had suffered not only by the Democratic opposition to relief measures in the city council, but also as a result of the party's opposition to relief in the state legislature. The size of the majorities of the winning Republican candidates must surely have indicated a dissatisfaction with the Democrats, especially as this was a reflection of the vote elsewhere in Delaware in the national mid-term elections held the previous November.

An equally predictable reaction came from Delaware's Republican Congressman, J. George Stewart, who told the House on 3 June:

I appear before you as a courier of good news, with a message from the small, but most important, State of Delaware. Last Saturday in Wilmington, the first city of the first State, there was held an election.... It seems to me of ... importance to announce to Congress and the Nation the results of this election. In one of the most crushing defeats ever administered to a party in the history of Delaware politics; the Democratic Party in the city of Wilmington was shorn of practically all of its power.<sup>26</sup>

However, the election of a Republican-controlled city council proved to be of little or no benefit to the unemployed of Wilmington. In the

three months from March to May inclusive, the council had made grants for work-relief of \$3,237; but in the subsequent six months, from June to December inclusive, it only gave \$2,603 for this purpose. This was the balance of the \$80,000, provided as part of the city's appropriation for relief in October 1934 for the construction of the storm sewerage system in South Wilmington, and not additional money.<sup>27</sup> When the city made its grant of \$200,000 to the RCI it was expecting to raise in excess of \$1.25 million in taxes. However, it had failed to collect some \$700,000 unpaid taxes from the previous fiscal year and had \$565,000 outstanding in the current year. A former chairman of the finance committee, Democrat John P. Grant, had warned at that time: "If the money is taken out of the current account the Council undoubtedly will have to borrow ... later in the fiscal year to pay the operating expenses of the city if collections of current and delinquent taxes is not made in sufficiently large amounts." Consequently, if these collections had been unsuccessful it could be one reason that the newly elected GOP-controlled council was unable to provide further support for unemployment relief. Nevertheless, in 1934 the city council had retired bonds to the value of \$500,000 and had not floated new ones.<sup>28</sup> The subsequent failure to issue new bonds could be taken as an indication of the council's unwillingness to support unemployment relief.

#### Relief funding problems continue

On 24 May, as previously predicted in the Wilmington Journal - Every Evening, the relief funds allocated for June proved only to be sufficient for the first half of the month, and the TERC announced that the provision of relief would cease on the 16th of the month. However, on the 14th this action was averted when the Levy Court appropriated an additional \$71,500, bringing the total of its grants to \$101,500; consequently, the FERA granted an extra \$21,500. This sudden influx of additional funding not only enabled relief to be continued beyond the forecast closing date, but also allowed the commission to carry the additional federal grant over to July. This was indeed fortunate for the recipients of relief in the county, because the court appropriated only \$25,000 as its contribution for that month.<sup>29</sup> The amount carried forward, together with an additional

\$50,000 from the FERA (which was nevertheless \$28,000 less than the amount requested for July), enabled relief to be maintained at its previous level.<sup>30</sup>

As the TERC continued to struggle to provide relief with the limited funds provided, a campaign was being waged to raise money for a new art centre. This was to be constructed at an estimated cost of \$150,000 at the junction of Woodlawn Avenue and Park Drive in Wilmington. By early June, the fund-raising campaign had received more than 3,000 subscriptions excluding special gifts, and the campaign committee expected to have raised \$400,000 by 16 June. Once construction costs had been met, the balance of this sum was to provide a permanent endowment for the art centre. The total expected to be raised for this project was more than 28 per cent greater than the appropriations made by the Levy Court for the relief of some 4,000 families between February and June 1935 - an indication that, in spite of the new county income tax, there appeared to be no shortage of money in Wilmington and indeed that philanthropy, at least for such a cultural project, could still be forthcoming.<sup>31</sup>

Although the need for relief continued to be greatest in New Castle county, both Kent and Sussex counties also had needy unemployed. Evidence of this was to be found in a letter written to Congressman Stewart by a resident of Wyoming, Delaware:

There is a desparate [sic] need for help here in Kent County. Farmers who can afford to hire help pay only fifteen dollars a month.... They are the ones who do not want any relief in the form of created work. Also the boot-leggers who live in good homes, have plenty [sic] of good food and fine cars, they do not need help -- it's the poor small farmer who cannot raise a decent crop on the low swampy land, whose children can't go to school because they have no shoes, who lives [sic] in poverty, misery and rags, who needs help and must have it.

The letter ended with the appeal: "We do need relief"<sup>32</sup>. Another indication of the need was given by Bankson Holcomb, the federal Works Progress Administrator for Delaware, who when discussing the state's WPA allotment could state: "It is also hoped to obtain funds for the needy in Kent and Sussex Counties which while having no organized relief commissions or program admittedly has many in need."<sup>33</sup>

### The Works Progress Administration

A solution to the TERC's problem of endeavouring to provide relief with inadequate resources was the creation of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the inauguration of a WPA work-relief programme in Delaware at the beginning of July.<sup>34</sup>

On 6 May, the WPA was created by executive order under the authority of the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act which had been passed by the Congress in March 1935. This authorized the greatest single appropriation (five billion dollars) in the history of the United States up to that date. Harry Hopkins was appointed as the joint WPA Administrator with Harold Ickes. When the WPA was created it was expected that its primary role would be that of coordinating the work of other federal agencies such as the PWA, which it was thought would provide the bulk of the employment to be given under the federal works programme. A secondary function of the WPA was to give work to the residue of unemployed on small useful projects. However, when the Roosevelt administration realized that the money available was insufficient to employ the bulk of the needy unemployed on vast self-liquidating public works projects under the PWA, it was the WPA that emerged as the agency which had to supply the majority of the jobs.

The WPA operated on a regional basis, with each region having a director whose appointment had to be confirmed by the US Senate, and an office which directed and coordinated the various state administrations. Within the states, the WPA was organised on a district basis, normally encompassing several counties, and these were regarded by the federal government as the backbone of the programme. The Congress defined permissible WPA projects only in broad categories, contrasting sharply with older "pork barrel" legislation which normally listed individual projects in specified locations and fairly bristled with local interests. Prior to 1939, the Congress prescribed not only the types of projects that might be undertaken but also specified the maximum amounts that could be expended for each of them. Within these limits work done by the WPA resulted in work of material and social values being directed to every state and to almost every community in the United States.

Every project had to have a sponsor who was expected not only to suggest jobs that might be done by the new agency but also to work out plans and procedures, guarantee to meet part of the cost, and be prepared to furnish some part of the supervision. At local level sponsoring units included city councils, commissioners, boards of aldermen, boards of education, school boards, parks departments and street departments. At state level, projects were frequently sponsored by highway departments, industrial commissioners, hospitals, universities and colleges, and departments of health. Sponsors' contributions were made in either cash or kind such as labour, materials, office and warehouse space, or the use of equipment and tools. WPA projects gave most employment to unemployed construction and engineering workers, with over 75 per cent of all employment being on such projects; other schemes gave employment in sewing units, research, recreation, public records, housekeeping, school lunches, education, library and other activities of a similar type.

The WPA was not permitted to undertake projects that involved the production of war materials; promotion of prison industries; production of goods in competition with private industry; or the construction of buildings costing the federal government more than a specified amount. It established the federal theatre project (FTP), which employed actors, producers, directors and other craftsmen who presented plays to people who had never seen a theatrical production. It also set up the Federal Writers' Project (FWP), which among other things produced guide books for both states and cities; the Federal Arts Project (FAP), which employed artists to paint murals in post offices and public buildings; and the National Youth Administration (NYA) to help the young unemployed.<sup>35</sup>

The WPA as a federal agency operating within Delaware, controlling a large expenditure and the many appointments necessary for the operation of its programme, began its work in a climate of considerable hostility and suspicion created by conservatives who opposed federal expenditure "on principle", by partisan and factional political elements, and by numbers of the well-fed middle class and the people who worked for them, who resented the use of tax dollars to support the unemployed with jobs instead of charity. Under these circumstances, public relations outside the



cooperating state and local agencies presented many problems during the first year of the programme. However, apart from occasional sniping by the press, petty rather than constructive complaints from individuals, and an occasional political attack on members of its staff, there was no public controversy or interference with the Delaware WPA programme. A report commenting on this stated that: "From the beginning of its operation what was unpleasant in public relations was balanced by the unsolicited appreciation of individuals and agencies and by the acceptance, by a substantial part of the public, of the projects that appealed to them."<sup>36</sup>

On May 16, Bankson Holcomb was appointed as the first WPA administrator in Delaware. The WPA organisation in the state consisted of a division of finance and statistics; a division of operations; a division of women's and professional projects (Jeannette Eckman was appointed director of this); and a division of employment. In November, so as to give the public and potential sponsors a picture of the work, policies and services of the WPA in Delaware, the administrative staff produced an illustrated magazine entitled Progress, which was published on a monthly basis thereafter until 1937. The first issue declared that the purpose of the magazine was to present to the general public "a true informative picture of the status of the WPA program in Delaware"; it also explained what was required in order to become a WPA worker.<sup>37</sup> Holcomb appointed James B. Rice as director of projects. He had served as an engineer in charge of all previous work-relief projects in New Castle county and was, in the judgement of WPA Field Representative R. G. Branion, well able "to discharge satisfactorily the duties of the Director of Projects Division." This appointment facilitated the writing of many project proposals which enabled the WPA to begin operations in Delaware in July 1935.

Despite some initial slowness in obtaining approval from Washington, a wide range of schemes in Wilmington and the rural counties were commenced in the first six months of the agency's operation in Delaware. Among these were several uncompleted CWA projects, which had been sponsored by the municipal departments of Wilmington. Materials had been ordered and delivered for some of these and only the necessary labour was required to complete them. By the end of October, some 29 WPA projects were being

undertaken throughout the state which included the making of parks and recreation grounds; work on roads, sewers and drainage, and in sewing units; also a number of literary, art, music, and other cultural projects. Initially, however, it was not possible to employ all the certified workers throughout the state on suitable projects. In the summer of 1935, more than 1,300 men were assigned to the US engineers of the War Department for the deepening of the Delaware and Chesapeake Canal. These subsequently formed a reservoir of skills from which were drawn accountants, artists, writers, musicians, actors and many others, to be replaced by less talented labourers as the assignment to WPA projects proceeded.<sup>38</sup>

A major problem in planning for WPA operations in Delaware was the lack of comprehensive, reliable data upon which such a programme could be based in relation to need throughout the state. The TERC for NCC had excellent records on its own cases, and the commission's occupational classification record survey of the unemployed on relief in the county, had been handed over to the WPA in early August; but because neither Kent nor Sussex counties had had an organized relief agency since the demise of the state TERC, and because the amount and kinds of relief given in these counties had always been limited by the resources of the agencies in charge rather than being based upon a competent survey of conditions and needs, it was inevitable that the inauguration of WPA projects in these counties would be delayed. The absence of an official relief agency also meant that it was necessary to investigate and certify the case-history of every person applying for a WPA job in both Kent and Sussex counties.<sup>39</sup>

WPA employees were taken from relief rolls and certified by the TERC for NCC for employment in that county. In both Kent and Sussex counties, certification of applicants for WPA employment was undertaken by a member of the Washington FERA staff appointed for the purpose. Assignments to WPA projects were made as far as possible in accordance with a person's experience and ability. Occupational classification was a new field in the late 1930s, and apart from the survey in New Castle county had yet to come fully into its own in Delaware, where for the most part a man was classified according to his last job, the job he was doing or the work he had performed on other WPA projects. Professional classification was

confined chiefly to the arts, writers and theatre activities, and by February 1936 a number of professional projects had been started in the state. These were funded by an additional federal appropriation, separate from the allotment for other projects. They included a concert orchestra, which broadcast every Tuesday evening on station WDEL and gave public concerts in various parts of Wilmington and the state, and a theatre group, sponsored by the state Board of Adult Education and the Wilmington Board of Education. The first production of the theatre group was "Historic Delaware", which was performed at the University of Delaware and in schools in Wilmington and New Castle county. In the summer of 1936, it toured CCC camps in the state with a programme of short one-act plays. The group's aims were not limited to its own productions, and it promoted CCC presentations of minstrel shows using amateur camp talent. In mid-July 1937, the theatre group, which consisted of about 20 personnel, closed because it could not operate with the number of staff remaining after Delaware's WPA quota was reduced as a federal government economy measure. A federal art group was also started, and the first work it undertook was the production of posters, scenery and costumes for the FTP. Later it produced a pictorial record of the work of Delaware's craftsmen, from the early days of colonial life up to 1880 and selections of these drawings were subsequently reproduced in Fortune and House and Garden magazines. The art project also undertook the painting of murals, the preparation of maps for a visual representation of Delaware's history, and the illustration of a Delaware State Guide under the auspices of the FWP, as part of the nation-wide American Guide series. The first publication produced by the Delaware FWP was New Castle on the Delaware, which was sponsored by the New Castle Historical Society and published in December 1936. A second guide, Delaware: A Guide to the First State, was published in June 1938. The FWP also undertook several other projects, which included work for the Delaware volume of the American Encyclopedia series and a pamphlet in the national recreation series, The Ocean Highway, although not all of these projects were completed.<sup>40</sup>

The WPA programme in Delaware was always handicapped by the fact that in the vicinity of Wilmington, where there were plenty of certified workers available, there were never enough approved projects to employ them all. In the southern counties, on the other hand, and particularly in Sussex county, there were always more than enough projects. This was partially explained by the impersonal bureaucratic attitude of many of the officials in Wilmington and surrounding towns in New Castle county, caused by the length of time they had been in office. By way of contrast, the newly appointed WPA officials in Kent and Sussex counties were close to the people, and therefore less indifferent to their needs.

In 1936 the WPA spent a total of \$1,947,463 on projects in Delaware, employing some 5,000 persons, which made it the largest and most widespread employer in the state. Projects ranged from a "gigantic" work programme at the Marine Terminal in Wilmington to a state-wide sanitation project to improve outside toilets. The WPA had an excellent safety record, and Delaware was the first state to receive an award from the WPA central office in recognition of this fact.<sup>41</sup>

The smallness of Delaware both in area and population eliminated many of the problems and some of the activities of larger states. Its WPA administrative staff was the smallest of all of the states and its administrative expenditure the lowest, although it did not have the smallest quota. A measure of the WPA's success in the state was to be found in a 1943 report which stated that

... the WPA programs in Delaware ... had outstanding merit among the nationwide achievements of the WPA as a whole.... Recreation projects and nursery schools, housekeeping and sewing units contributed ideas upon which present day standards in many community activities are founded, and the cultural and research projects, of which Delaware had its full compliment, helped to advance the whole development of the arts in Delaware.<sup>42</sup>

#### National Youth Administration

The National Youth Administration (NYA), which was launched as an affiliate of the WPA, was created as an emergency measure to assist young men and women between the ages of 16 and 25. An important part of its programme was aid to needy students to enable them to attend college, and it now assumed responsibility for students attending the University of Delaware

and the state College for Colored Students at Dover, who had formerly received help under the federal student aid programme until this was discontinued in June 1935. These students did not necessarily have to be on relief, but they had to convince their college that the amount of money they were set to earn was essential to enable them to attend. No student was allowed to earn more than \$20 per month, and the average payment was just \$15 per month.<sup>43</sup> Students at public and parochial high schools who were selected for aid could earn up to \$6 per month by doing socially useful work selected by their schools. In the school year 1935-36, the University of Delaware was permitted to spend \$12,150 on NYA employment. A major part of the NYA programme was to find work for the many young people who were no longer at school, a difficult task because of the number of older people who were unemployed. Some of these young people were given work on WPA projects but at one third of the normal monthly wage. NYA projects included assistance in recreational and youth centers; work as assistant leaders in crafts, homemaking and library activities; and classifying information under the direction of the Department of Adult Education.<sup>44</sup>

#### The Resettlement Administration

Another federal agency which became involved in Delaware in the fall of 1935 was the Resettlement Administration. In April and May 1935, the President by a series of executive orders created an independent agency which took responsibility for the FERA's land and related activities and for the subsistence-homestead work of the Interior Department. Its purpose was to administer the retirement of submarginal land as part of the agricultural adjustment programme, and to resettle the displaced farmers in other areas. It was also given responsibility for the efforts being made to enable tenant farmers to become home-owners. The Resettlement Administration carried out these functions until the end of December 1936, when it was transferred to the Department of Agriculture and was redesignated the Farm Security Administration.

On 25 September 1935, President Roosevelt approved the new agency's first involvement in the state: namely the setting up of the Delaware

Forest Project. This project was the result of detailed investigations and technical studies carried out during the previous summer, which had been undertaken with a view to relieving distress among the impoverished farmers in the southern counties. It involved appraisals of over 60,000 acres and resulted in the purchase by the administration of some 43,982 acres in Kent and Sussex counties. Development plans for the project were approved and funds allotted; these provided for forest-stand improvements; fire-hazard reduction; seeding and planting of game foods and cover; landscaping; the construction of roads, truck-trails, forest paths, fire-breaks, recreational cabins, dam sites and public bathing beaches; and the restoration of a large lake. Up to the end of June 1936, the programme provided approximately 386,592 man-hours of work for needy people in the southern counties. Furthermore, by early September, 4,968 acres of submarginal land in the two lower counties had been retired from farm usage at a cost of \$112,521, and it was estimated that a further \$235,700 was needed for its improvement. In Fiscal 1936 (to 30 June), under its rural rehabilitation programme, the administration loaned \$22,443 to 50 clients and committed a further \$25,381 in loans and grants to 54 more. Kent county received the largest amount (\$10,841 made to 23 persons), Sussex county the next largest (\$7,099 being loaned to 17 individuals) and New Castle county the least (with 10 people being loaned just \$4,503).<sup>45</sup>

#### CCC recruitment

The selection of candidates for the CCC continued to be the responsibility of the TERC for NCC and, between 1 March 1935 and 31 March 1936 a total of 463 young men were selected, certified as being eligible and presented to the army authorities for enrolment in the corps. But not all of this was achieved without problems; for during one of the recruitment periods (1 April to 3 May 1935), when 133 of these selectees were enrolled (121 from Wilmington and New Castle county, four from Kent county, and eight from Sussex county), all of whom were white, Ethelda Mullen informed the Secretary of Labor that "As no enrolment of colored applicants was authorized in our quota for April, we consequently accumulated a great number of colored applicants." On 15 May, this information was passed on

to the War Department by W. Frank Persons of the Federal Labor Department, and Colonel Duncan K. Major Jr. the department's representative on the Advisory Council, Emergency Conservation Work, subsequently told Persons that "the failure to accept colored junior applicants was due to a misunderstanding that all juniors from the State of Delaware were intended for the two companies located within the State", which were all white companies. He also informed him that "instructions have been issued to prevent a recurrence in future enrolment". As a result of this ruling 97 coloured selectees, from the 195 applicants enrolled from New Castle county during the next recruitment period (15 June to 31 August), were assigned to camps in New York State.

Another problem that arose, in this same period, was in the selection of candidates from Kent and Sussex counties because neither had public unemployment relief programmes. In June, the federal director of emergency conservation work had ruled that every CCC applicant had to have relief status; that is to say, they had to represent a family which was receiving relief or which was eligible for relief, thus eliminating all applicants from the southern counties. This problem was overcome by the WPA who, in conjunction with the FERA, certified candidates from these counties for CCC enrolment, with the result that when recruitment was recommenced (1 October to 15 November) six applicants were accepted from Kent and eight from Sussex. No fewer than 107 selectees were enrolled from New Castle county during the same period. The federal eligibility ruling was later broadened to include within its meaning members of families who had another member employed on a WPA project and members of families who were receiving public relief without regard to category. Under this broadened scope the TERC for NCC was able to consider applications from members of families who were receiving aid from the Mothers' Pension Bureau, the Old Age Welfare Commission, the New Castle County Special Relief Unit, the WPA, PWA and the Resettlement Administration. <sup>46</sup>

#### Finances at the end of Fiscal 1935

Delaware ended Fiscal 1935 (30 June) not only with a balanced budget but with a surplus of some \$100,000, despite repaying the temporary loan of

\$700,000 to the Farmer's Bank and restoring the 10 per cent pay cut to state employees. A further indication of the state's healthy financial position was given in the report of the state auditor, J. Henry Hazel, which showed that the cash balances in all funds at the close of the fiscal year amounted to \$5,173,074, and that the total receipts of the state tax department were \$4,807,695, an increase of 16 per cent over 1934. Income tax accounted for \$814,736 of this (60 per cent of which was paid by 101 individuals amongst whom were the wealthy philanthropists who had so generously supported the charitable organizations which had borne the burden of relief up to the middle of 1933). Taxpayers in Wilmington paid \$366,573, in rural New Castle residents paid \$416,225, while those in Kent and Sussex counties paid only \$15,495 and \$16,443 respectively. The report also disclosed that Delaware had paid \$27,946,267 in federal taxes, which represented a per capita sum of \$115, the highest rate in the United States, while receiving back \$3,202,676 from the federal government in relief and public works emergency grants. This again demonstrated that the state was a net loser in the federal tax/federal funding equation. It also revealed that the New Castle County Levy Court had a surplus of \$355,976 at the end of Fiscal 1935, consisting of a cash surplus of \$155,976 and a contingent fund of \$200,000. This further brings into question the justification of the court's parsimonious attitude to relief funding. However, Wilmington's financial position was shown to be not so favourable, the city ending the fiscal year with a net deficit of \$72,741. The reason for this was the appropriation of \$185,573 made for work-relief and the south Wilmington drainage project.<sup>47</sup>

#### The Levy Court and the continuation of relief funding

At the end of July, it once again became apparent that the court was not satisfied with the way in which the TERC was administering relief, when it decided that "a full and complete investigation should be made of the needs of persons now receiving relief." The commission was asked to provide a list of the names and addresses of those on the relief rolls. This decision was taken at a meeting of the court and was based on an earlier investigation which had revealed that of "45 persons ... listed under one



post-office in New Castle County ... 24 were found not to be entitled to relief."<sup>48</sup> On 8 August, Frank Collins wrote to the court confirming that a list of relief clients would be provided, and asking that it "be held in confidence". He also offered to carry out the investigation himself. The court's response to his letter, quoted section 18 of the act appointing the TERC, which required the court "to appropriate and set aside monthly ... such sums of money as it shall deem advisable." And it continued:

In determining the amount of the respective sums to be appropriated, it is not only the right, but it is also the duty of the Levy Court to use all available means of fully informing itself of the needs of those receiving relief ... even to the extent of making a full and complete investigation of the needs of such persons.

The court re-stated its belief that the lists submitted to it contained "the names of numerous persons not entitled to relief" and decided that unless it could be convinced that this was incorrect, "in determining in the future the amounts ... deemed advisable to appropriate ... [it] will consider that it is not justified in acting upon any request [based] upon lists made up from information furnished by ... relief workers."<sup>49</sup>

The advent of the WPA did not have an immediate effect on the relief situation in New Castle county, and it was not until late August when the first clients of the TERC were assigned to work under the new programme that it benefitted the county's unemployed. Consequently, it was necessary for the executive director to ask the governor to apply for a federal grant of \$60,453 to cover relief needs in the county. In response to the governor's request, the FERA granted \$53,000 for general relief, and the court appropriated \$25,000 for the use of the commission, whose caseload in August was 3,934 families. The major cause of the increase in the numbers applying for relief was the requirement for the unemployed to be listed on the relief rolls before they could be considered for work on WPA projects. Moreover, according to Ethelda Mullen, these were "... men who had persistently refused to accept relief for themselves or their families, looking on it as a dole. They were of the type who didn't want to get something for nothing."<sup>50</sup> The increase was almost entirely in the urban part of the county, and only 30 cases in rural New Castle county south of the Chesapeake and Delaware canal were being cared for.<sup>49</sup>

As the benefits of WPA employment began to be felt, the number of families receiving relief fell by almost 200, and this reduction was reflected in the executive director's request for grants from the FERA and Levy Court for September. On 16 August, she asked Governor Buck to apply for \$58,650 and the FERA granted \$49,791. In her letter to the court, she offered to "conduct further investigations on any ... cases where a question arises as to eligibility." This upset the court, which passed a resolution stating that in making this offer the TERC had failed to take note of "the views of the Levy Court as expressed ... in its communication of August 13th."<sup>52</sup> On 24 September, the court's apparent mistrust of the TERC resulted in it ordering an audit of the commission's "books and accounts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1935". Nevertheless, on the same day it appropriated \$50,000 for relief in October and \$50,145 was granted by the FERA, although \$57,181 had been requested.<sup>53</sup>

The results of the audit showed that the commission had received \$506,320 for direct relief in the six month period to the end of August, "of which at least \$225,554 was paid to persons deemed eligible for relief ... in cash." In the court's opinion, this was a contravention of the definition of "direct relief" in the act creating the TERC, and it resolved that "the Levy Court in making monthly appropriations ... in the future, will be influenced by the manner in which the moneys appropriated ... for the preceding month were expended".<sup>54</sup> By 26 September, the dispute over the investigation of relief rolls seemed to have been resolved. Attorney General Green announced that the TERC, the Levy Court and his office had agreed on a plan to "purge the relief rolls of chiselers" and for "prosecuting those found on relief rolls who are not in need of relief." By the following day, warrants had been issued charging that eight persons "unlawfully did receive [relief] from the Temporary Emergency Relief Commission of New Castle County while not entitled to the same."<sup>55</sup>

#### Federal relief funding ends

In October, a proposal for the liquidation of relief in Delaware was presented to Aubrey Williams. The reasons given for this proposal were that the state had "made no progress in relation to assuming responsibility

for its own dependent people" and that the Levy Court had "exercised its own prerogative in diminishing grants to New Castle County during recent months and making funds thus reserved available to private and other public agencies ... [which] have not asked for funds and in most cases have never collected them." The author of the proposed plan concluded that

The motive of the Levy Court has been to show contempt for the F.E.R.A. and they have been impervious to the efforts of the T.E.R.C. to show them that they are only working hardships on the people of the State .... The Levy Court has been disturbing in its attacks upon the procedures and standards of the T.E.R.C. The Director of Public Welfare and Executives of T.E.R.C. have stated frankly that they feel they can accomplish more in the State without Federal Funds than with them but have asked for continued consultation.

It recommended "that a final grant of \$75,000 be given the State" after which Federal Funds should be withdrawn.<sup>56</sup> The proposal was accepted and a final grant of \$50,000 was made on 22 November. Williams wrote to inform the governor of the new situation: "This is your final allotment and is intended to meet all obligations now out-standing or to be incurred in the future.... The intention of this office [is] to make the present allotment the last one to the State of Delaware under the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act of 1935," he continued, "We will be able to recognise no further claims for relief expenditures.... These are now the responsibility of the State."<sup>57</sup>

The governor's reaction to Williams' letter may appear to be somewhat surprising in view of the continuing demand for relief. However, it reflected the opinions of both the TERC and the Director of Public Welfare. Acknowledging it Buck wrote:

Instead of being disappointed, as perhaps some other States may be to receive this news, I feel it is well and in fact high time the the Federal Government ended the practice ... of pouring out millions of dollars for unemployment relief, which it always has been and still is the primary obligation of each of the sovereign states to see that no citizen ... shall suffer for want of the necessities of life. I can assure you ... that the State of Delaware can confidently be expected to care for the wants of her needy citizens and in her own way.<sup>58</sup>

The FERA's response to the governor's letter, coming from an administrative assistant, stated simply: "I am sure both Mr Williams and Mr Hopkins will be pleased to learn that Delaware is prepared to assume full responsibility for direct relief."<sup>59</sup>

Although WPA employment constituted the major reason for relief case-closing in October, some 600 workers being transferred from the relief rolls, it left almost 2,400 to be placed on work-relief before the beginning of November, which was the date set by the President for the discontinuation of direct relief and the transfer of all employables to WPA scheme. At the end of October, Ethelda Mullen, who had resigned as executive director of the TERC so that she could resume her work with the Family Society, and who was to be replaced by her assistant Alice D. Caskie,<sup>60</sup> wrote to Washington requesting the federal government to continue to provide grants in the likely event that the transfer was not achieved by the date set. She estimated the requirement for relief funding in November at \$77,063, of which the Levy Court had been requested to provide \$38,561. It actually granted \$38,000 and stipulated that none of this was to be given in cash. This, together with the FERA's final grant, gave the TERC a surplus of almost \$11,000.

The final grant brought the total of federal aid received by the state for relief since May 1933 to \$2,404,777. In addition, almost \$1.29 million had been contributed by the two mayor's committees and the Block-Aid scheme, and with the appropriations of \$2,108,000 made by the state legislature the total spent on relief from December 1930 to October 1935 amounted to more than \$5.8 million.<sup>61</sup>

#### WPA employment

On 31 October, Hopkins set a new deadline of 1 December for the transfer of employables to WPA jobs. This was fortunate because at the end of the month there were 3,327 employables still on the relief rolls and state WPA administrator Holcomb did not expect to have placed these men on projects until mid-November.<sup>62</sup> From 20 September, in accordance with instructions received from the FERA, the transient bureau had not accepted any new transients. This was to facilitate the liquidation of the transient relief programme by 1 November, and the bureau was indeed closed on the last day of the month. The few unattached transient men were given relief through the single men's unit and transient families received relief henceforth through the family relief unit. The costs of this were met from the

residue of a special appropriation for transient aid.<sup>63</sup>

On 12 November, at a conference between the Levy Court and the TERC attended by the governor, Frank Collins announced the commission's intention to cease relief work on 1 December, and in compliance with the agreement reached with the court notice was given to its work force. This action was taken on the assurance by the WPA administrator that all employables could be transferred to the WPA by 15 November and that unemployables would be taken care of in other ways to be arranged by the Levy Court. The two weeks allowed was considered a sufficient interval between acceptance of the responsibility for employables on the relief rolls by the WPA and the termination of relief by the TERC, which had sufficient funds to provide relief to the end of November. By 15 November, 2,733 employables had been taken on by the WPA. Commenting on this achievement Holcomb observed: "We had a case load of 3,958 workers to take care of ... [and] there are 223 persons still to be put to work.... They will be put on jobs by the middle of the week."<sup>64</sup> This also resulted in the TERC's limited work-relief programme ending on 17 November 1935. The one remaining project, the construction of a storm sewerage and drainage system in south Wilmington, funded in part by the city council, was also completed on that date.

#### Care of unemployables

It was now proposed that the Relief Commission Inc. should be made responsible for the care of unemployables, and that it should "receive funds from the Levy Court [so] that their cases might be cared for under the direction of the State Welfare Commission."<sup>65</sup> This was opposed by chairman James Skelly, who apparently misunderstood what was being proposed; he wrote to Frank Collins informing him that the RCI "is not in position to take over the duties which your Commission is charged by law to perform", and also advising him that he could take no action until a meeting had been called to give "formal consideration" to the proposal.<sup>66</sup> The meeting was held on 27 November and the RCI decided that it could not assume the responsibility for caring for employables on the relief rolls.<sup>67</sup> Pierre du Pont in his role as a commissioner of the TERC responded to a

copy of Skelly's letter, advising him of the decisions taken at the 12 November conference and reassuring him that if "relief is still necessary, after 1 December it may be necessary for Temporary Emergency Relief Commission to reassemble, provided the Governor is willing to continue his appointments."<sup>68</sup>

#### The Levy Court and more problems of relief funding

It was not possible for the TERC to achieve its planned objective of ceasing relief operations on 1 December, because of the RCI's refusal to resume responsibility for relief of unemployables and the fact that not all persons eligible for work could be transferred to the WPA due to the latter's refusal to take on those whose names were added to the relief roll after the beginning of November. As a result of this decision, 789 persons whose names had been added to the relief roll between 1 and 15 November were found to be unacceptable to the WPA and, together with others not transferred, constituted the greater part of a caseload of 1,004 in need of relief at the beginning of December. Consequently, the TERC requested the court to grant funds to supplement the \$41,284 it already had available, and with which it was estimated relief could be provided upto 15 December.<sup>69</sup> On 6 December, a request was made to the court for \$23,000 (\$5,000 for a reserve fund and \$18,000 for relief). Four days later, this was discussed in a private session, and in open court a resolution was adopted that the letter be "received, acknowledged and filed". This was sent to the TERC and chairman Collins, who considered the court's action a "discourtesy", wrote to the president of the court asking for clarification of the resolution which, he stated, "leaves us in the dark as to what your intention is regarding the granting of any more money to our Commission." Collins also repeated his request for \$18,000 to enable the TERC to provide relief until 1 January 1936. His letter concluded with a plea: "It is very urgent that we should know immediately as to what you really intend to do."<sup>70</sup> His concern for the plight of the unemployed was shared by Pierre du Pont who wrote to the governor urging him "to do everything possible in order to obtain additional funds for relief immediately [because] failure ... to meet this situation will cause deserving people to suddenly be shut

off from their food supply a week before Christmas."<sup>71</sup> On 13 December, the governor replied to Pierre's letter informing him that he had talked to the court's attorney about relief needs and had arranged a meeting between the court and the commission "at which ... the whole matter could be discussed." He told him that Speakman, the court's long-serving Attorney, had said that "he felt as soon as the members of the Court were shown what the needs were, they would be ready to make an appropriation."<sup>72</sup> The court, however, failed to make an allotment for relief in December and only \$418.77 was received in private contributions. This, together with the balance of \$20,000 remaining from the FERA's final grant, was the total funding available for relief in December for the 2,475 families in need. On 27 December, the shortage of funds caused the TERC to close the east-side branch of the family relief unit and the shelter for coloured men on 31 December "in the interests of economy."<sup>73</sup>

By its lack of cooperation with the TERC, the Levy Court made the task of providing for the needs of the unemployed more difficult, and it did so with no valid reason other than its misplaced distrust of the TERC's administration of relief. The difficulties arising from the court's reluctance to fund relief continued, and as we shall see in the following chapter these were still affecting the limited relief provided into 1936-37. The creation of the WPA, as it did in many other states, went a long way towards resolving the unemployment and consequent relief problems, and although it did not solve these entirely it did at least prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

## CHAPTER 8: Relief funding by the Levy Court of New Castle County 1935-38

In spite of the fact that the court had a surplus of more than \$300,000 at the end of 1935 (from the \$897,000 raised by the county income tax), it appropriated only \$36,074 of the \$55,745 requested for January 1936. This included \$10,000 for a contingency fund to meet the costs of "closing out the commission" when the provision of direct relief was discontinued. The reasons given for this action were the discrepancy between the case-load figures for January given by Frank Collins and the list submitted by the TERC to the court, and its belief that the county should not continue to supplement the costs of federal projects, such as the federal surplus commodities bureau, the transient bureau, the certification and investigation of workers for WPA jobs, and some CCC costs. It was estimated that these accounted for 43 per cent of the commission's monthly expenditure.<sup>1</sup> Alice Caskie, who had replaced Ethelda Mullen on 1 November, questioned the level of the alleged expenditure on federal projects and wrote to the court:

we do not know how you arrived at your percentages as what we claim was that one-third of the time of the administration force was given to certification of workers for federal projects and cooperation with other federal agencies ... and if you want to get the proportion of our expenses ... incurred on behalf of the Federal Government the percentage should be applied to salaries only ... not to our total expenditures.<sup>2</sup>

Because of this reduction in funding, the TERC would have run out of money before the end of January, but for a surplus of \$5,197 carried over from December and a contribution of \$9,920 from "a philanthropic citizen ... who volunteered to advance funds". This was Pierre du Pont, who informed the court that although he "was quite willing to assume the financial responsibility of the TERC when funds were exhausted" he would "not do so again."<sup>3</sup>

On 8 January, the Levy Court announced a 75 per cent reduction in the rate of county income tax. Even with this substantial reduction, it was anticipated \$225,000 would be raised and this, together with the surplus of \$314,000 from the previous year, would make in excess of half a million dollars available for relief in 1936.<sup>4</sup>



Despite the seemingly never-ending problems of relief, Delaware was continuing to emerge from the depression. On 9 January, evidence of this fact was given in a letter from the president of the News-Journal Company to Roosevelt's secretary, Stephen Early. "Wilmington and Delaware are growing extremely rapidly," Theodore Joslin wrote. "New plants are coming here; executive offices are being located here; many millions are being spent and more will be spent this year." The letter invited FDR to write a letter to be published in a special edition of the News-Journal papers later that month to be entitled 'Delaware Tomorrow', "commenting on the really noteworthy progress throughout the state", in which, it was suggested, the president "could say the business activity is what he likes to see; [and] that it denotes the return of better times...." His request was refused.<sup>5</sup>

The Levy Court, determined to enforce its requests for changes in the county's direct relief system, not only reduced the amount requested for relief in February (by \$16,234), but also withheld the \$36,000 it had already appropriated. Dissatisfaction with "the manner of the administration of relief funds" was expressed in the resolution to withhold the grant and on 22 January, president of the court Claud Lester commented: "They know the changes that the Levy Court wants and I think the TERC should cooperate with the court in bringing these changes about."<sup>6</sup> The following day, chairman Collins repounded: "The commission is weary of general charges. If [the] Levy Court is dissatisfied with the administration of the commission let them complain to the Governor and ask him to remove us."<sup>7</sup>

The New Castle County Unemployable Special Relief Unit

The problem of caring for unemployables was resolved by the creation of the New Castle County Unemployable Special Relief Unit, which was operated by the state Old Age Welfare Commission. During December 1935, the unit had cared for 569 individuals (347 adults and 222 children) at a cost of \$4,420 from the \$12,522 it had available, and the balance (of \$8,132) remaining proved to be more than sufficient to meet the needs of the unemployables in January 1936. The result was a surplus of some \$3,000 available at the

beginning of February.<sup>8</sup> In January, the RCI became involved in the running of this special relief unit when it was designated as the agency through which the court would channel its funds. On 15 January, Charles Candee, president of the Old Age Welfare Commission, wrote to RCI's chairman informing him that the special relief unit's forecast expenditure for the next two months was \$16,000, and a week later the court allocated the requested amount. The appropriation was made from the court's unappropriated funds, and not from those derived from the county's income tax.<sup>9</sup>

#### TERC/Levy Court dispute continues

On 28 January, the court released the TERC's appropriation for February, but with an ultimatum giving the commission until 18 February to comply with certain demands relating to the administration of relief and the selection of those individuals to whom it was provided. These demands included the appointment by the court of a man as the "Directing Head of Relief"; submission of detailed monthly reports to the court, showing the names and addresses of persons receiving relief and the amounts being paid to them, and with the details to be checked twice a month by case workers; the number of case workers be reduced and each to handle 100 cases; and a general reduction in overhead costs.<sup>10</sup> The chairman of the TERC interpreted this action as an attempt by the court to control the provision of relief, and told its members that "the members of the Commission have no hesitation in declaring their intention not to submit to your control." The commission's reply to the court's demands for changes in administration stated that these were "irreconcilable - on one hand that the investigation of cases be so thorough as to eliminate all cases not entitled to receive the relief - on the other to reduce very materially the cost ... by the dismissal of a number of case workers."<sup>11</sup> The paucity of the appropriation also caused Collins to write to the court: "It is very obvious that the \$36,000 you granted for our use in February is entirely inadequate. It is unfair to the needy unemployed and the taxpayers of this County, for you to withhold needed funds when you have a large balance in the treasury."<sup>12</sup>

Pierre du Pont supported Collins' viewpoint, and he too wrote to the court, directing its

attention to the fact that the sum of \$36,000 allotted ... for February in lieu of \$52,000 requested ... will prove insufficient for the month [because] ... due to re-applications and new applications for relief during the first week of February, the number of families receiving it has increased to 2,200,

which was approximately 500 more than the number that the budget was based on. The court was informed that, as a result, it was expected the appropriation would be exhausted by 15 February and that "consequently, "no further relief can be granted, even in the most urgent case...."

Pierre also told the court that he was recommending the TERC issue a public notice of their intention to cease relief work on 15 February. The increased caseload was mainly due to the bad weather which had caused the curtailment of WPA employment.<sup>13</sup> On 12 February, the TERC's acting director confirmed the unsatisfactory situation which had arisen, when she advised the president of the court that the commission's "actual commitments for the first eight days of February amounted to \$23,678 and the approximate commitments up to and including the 11th, are \$25,299." She requested an additional \$24,000 to enable relief to be provided to the end of the month, and pointed out that the budget had been completed on 17 January, when it had been anticipated that there would be more assignments to the WPA which would have lessened the load. "But this" she added "has not proven true."<sup>14</sup>

On 18 February, the court accepted that "the continued cold weather has materially increased the work of the commission" and appropriated \$66,000 for relief in March. Chairman Collins asked the court for written confirmation that the TERC was allowed to use \$20,000 of this to enable relief to be continued throughout February; this had been agreed verbally, but the court had failed to include the agreement in the resolution appropriating the funds.<sup>15</sup> The court gave an assurance that it would cover the costs of relief for the remainder of the month but only allowed \$10,000 of the March appropriation to be spent, which resulted in the commission incurring a deficit of \$18,000.

### Relief problems in Kent and Sussex counties

The winter weather was also creating problems in the southern counties, particularly in Sussex, by curtailing WPA employment, and the mayors of both Lewes and Rehoboth Beach were forced to ask the FERA for aid. On 31 January, David W. Burbage the mayor of Lewes, wrote explaining that "several hundred most urgent and worthy cases have applied ... for immediate relief ... to which our Levy Court has given one hundred dollars." He requested \$5,000 "to take care of these worthy and urgent cases for the remainder of this winter."<sup>16</sup> Likewise, on 3 February, Fred A. Ross, the mayor of Rehoboth Beach, wrote: "We do not have any relief organisation in Sussex County.... I am appealing to you in the interests of ... sixty-five persons who are in dire need of the necessities of life." He continued: "We have exhausted our resources and ... I am appealing direct to you for relief to meet the immediate need for fuel and food for these very worthy people for the balance of this winter."<sup>17</sup> Both received the same reply from Aubrey Williams: "No further funds are available from Federal sources for direct relief ... [and] the Governor ... informed us that the State of Delaware could confidently be expected to care for the wants of her needy citizens...."<sup>18</sup> Further confirmation of the need for relief in Sussex county came from the large number of requests for food and clothing which were made to the state director of surplus commodities, Jacob W. Brown; these came from 1,166 families in all parts of the county.

In March, the surplus commodities programme responded to these requests, and from 26 March to 15 September the unemployed needy of Kent county were given 19.5 tons of food and 8,028 pieces of clothing, while those in Sussex county received 11.25 tons of food and 8,722 pieces of clothing.<sup>19</sup> However, the distribution of the latter was not without problems; for unlike Kent, Sussex county did not have any "recognised agency" for certifying the needy, and this resulted in a delay in releasing the clothing and food. This caused the Reverend John Crosby to write:

During this winter we have had families and children on the brink of destitution, unable to attend school on account of sheer lack of clothing. At the present moment the WPA stores are overloaded with clothing, and have been for months and we have been unable to extract a single garment.

On 2 April, the situation was resolved by the formation of the Sussex County Welfare Association.<sup>20</sup>

#### Relief in March and the end of federal programmes

March proved to be the peak in the requirement for relief in New Castle county and a total of 2,383 families (comprising 4,900 individuals) were given aid. By the end of the month, only two residential relief programmes were being operated by the TERC: the family relief unit and the single men's unit. On 26 March, the federal surplus commodities programme was transferred to the WPA with the mutual consent of the FERA and the TERC, and all other federal programmes, with the exception of the selection agency for the CCC, were withdrawn or abandoned by the FERA.

On 31 March, a meeting of the TERC adopted a resolution to "arrange to cease its distribution of relief not later than May 1st 1936 and to close down its offices on or before June 1st 1936." This decision was made on the expectation that WPA employment would continue, and that the unexpended sum remaining in the county relief fund at the beginning of May would to be \$371,000. It was estimated that \$10,000 per month would be required for the care of the unemployables for the 12 months from 1 May 1936 to 30 April 1937, and that this would leave a balance of \$250,000 for relief during the coming winter, which, it was considered, would be just sufficient for this purpose. The Levy Court agreed that these funds would be made available to the TERC in "such instalments as they considered necessary", but it informed the commission that it would not provide any more funds for relief. Consequently, it was decided that there would be no distribution of food orders or other form of relief after 14 April to conserve the remaining funds.<sup>21</sup>

On 25 March, an appropriation of \$50,000 was made by the court for relief in April, although \$87,044 had been requested, and this included \$18,000 to cover the February deficit.<sup>22</sup> In a resolution proposing the cessation of the use of public funds for relief at the end of April, the court commented: "it appears that the administration of relief under the commission in rural New Castle County has in many instances resulted in a scarcity of labor for farming and other enterprises ... due to the fact

that many persons on relief ... refuse to work." The Levy Court also was of the opinion that "the influx of new industries and ... an increase in industrial and farming activities, all are contributing materially to the rapid disappearance of the emergency...." It also proposed that "a reserve ... be maintained for the purpose of again administering unemployment relief in the event such administration shall become necessary during ... November and December 1936, and January, February and March, 1937."<sup>23</sup> On 9 April, the court's optimism was confirmed by the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, which reported "Advances in industrial production, pay rolls, retail sales, the construction industry and building permits...." In fact during the previous month, applications for the latter had increased by 155 per cent over the previous year. It was also reported that "... bank clearings had reached a new high, increasing 86 per cent" over 1935, and that significant gains in other areas had been made".<sup>24</sup>

#### Relief is curtailed

On 15 April, as a further economy measure, the TERC closed the white single men's unit - an action which caused F.G. Tallman of the Salvation Army to express concern to Pierre du Pont. In reply to Tallman's letter, Pierre explained the financial difficulties that the TERC was experiencing at the hands of the Levy Court and told him: "It is manifestly impossible for the Relief Commission to operate with this limited fund, so that the Single Men's Unit has been closed and these men must seek assistance elsewhere, probably from the Salvation Army."<sup>25</sup> The Levy Court accepted that the relief case load had increased, mainly due to 900 men being laid off from the Chesapeake and Delaware canal project, and it appropriated \$50,000 to cover the additional costs of relief in the remainder of April and for May. It also gave the RCI \$9,500 for the relief of unemployables during the latter month.<sup>26</sup>

On 31 May, the TERC closed its offices and all unemployment relief ceased, even though there were 1,079 families still under its care at that date. In anticipation of the ending of relief, Pierre du Pont, in yet another magnanimous philanthropic gesture, undertook to give those unemployed rated as "laboring men" a week's work during May. The purpose

of this was to evaluate "their capacity and willingness to work" with the intention of providing work-relief for these men from the beginning of June, sponsored and financed by himself, in an effort to alleviate some of the distress caused by the discontinuation of direct relief. This privately funded work-relief was eventually continued until 9 April 1937. Projects were undertaken in conjunction with the city water department, the street and sewer department and the park commission. The work undertaken related to the normal and necessary functions of the departments which had been postponed due to the lack of funds. Labourers were paid the prevailing rate of 35 cents per hour, foremen 60 cents per hour and time keepers \$26 per week. More than \$58,000 was spent by Pierre on these work-relief projects during the ten-month period that they were carried out.<sup>27</sup>

Although work-relief provided assistance to a number of the unemployed, there were still a significant number in need and consequently, from 24 June limited relief was once again provided by the TERC. This was restricted to families and single women without any current income; no supplementary relief was provided. As Pierre du Pont told Frank Collins:

There is no doubt that those on relief are in sore need .... An incidental allowance of food is all that the Commission has been able to furnish. We have done nothing and can do nothing with respect to restoration of morale among the people who have been in destitute straits ... for several years.<sup>28</sup>

However, by the end of July, there were less than 200 families receiving the limited relief provided by the TERC,<sup>29</sup> and a minimum relief budget was continued during the summer months, resulting in inadequate standards for those who were helped. The funding for this came from the Levy Court which appropriated \$20,000 in July and a further \$10,000 in September.

#### Fiscal year 1936

On 30 June, the end of Fiscal 1936, it was announced that the collections of federal taxes in Delaware had amounted to \$38,622,868, an increase of almost 41 per cent over the previous fiscal year. The largest increase was in corporation tax, which totalled \$20,020,260 compared with \$12,027,847 in 1935. Individual income taxes also showed a substantial increase, rising to \$11,365,152 as compared to \$7,836,370 for the previous year. This brought the total paid by the state in direct internal revenue taxes for

the three fiscal years 1934-6, to over \$78.5 million.<sup>30</sup> The state, New Castle county and the city of Wilmington all ended Fiscal 1936 in healthy financial circumstances. The county's were such that the Levy Court was able once again to reduce the county tax rate, from 45 to 35 cents on each \$100 of assessed property value in Fiscal 1937. Even with this reduction tax receipts were expected to be in excess of \$800,000.<sup>31</sup>

#### Employment increases

In early August, 4,146 persons were employed on federal work-relief projects. The greatest number were employed by the WPA, which provided 2,292 jobs, and this number was expected to more than double when work on widening and deepening of the Chesapeake and Delaware canal reached its peak in 1937-8. This project had been started in August 1935, and it was anticipated that the existing work-force of 545 would be supplemented by an additional 2,500 men when this occurred. The next largest group were engaged by the Bureau of Public Roads on state highway improvements in all three counties. Others were working on PWA, Resettlement Administration, and Interior and Treasury Department projects. A total of \$4,522,800 of the federal allocation to Delaware made under the relief act of 1935 had been spent on these in the three months period to 30 June, and there was still an unexpended amount of \$2,908,254 remaining.<sup>32</sup> By the middle of the month, the Chamber of Commerce could report that employment in Wilmington had increased by 6,198 in the previous quarter, and that 36,569 persons were employed by 317 establishments; the largest increase occurred in the chemical industry, where Du Pont was the major employer.<sup>33</sup>

In late September, industrial operations were at their highest level for six years, and the favourable business and industrial trends were seen by Gerrish Gassaway, manager of the Chamber of Commerce, as indicating a "natural and substantial" recovery in the city.<sup>34</sup> A further indication of the extent of the recovery was an announcement by the state bank commissioner, Ernest Muney, that the assets of banks in Delaware had increased by \$9,374,335 in the three months period from 30 June to 30 September. The largest increase was in investments, which rose by almost \$82 million.<sup>35</sup>



## 1936 General Election

On 30 June, a correspondent informed James A. Farley, chairman of the Democratic National Committee that "The vote in Delaware ... will be close in spite of the fact that Wilmington is the seat of the Liberty League and financial activities for Landon and Knox." But, he continued:

I am looking for a much larger Democratic vote in Kent and Sussex counties than usual, principally in the farming districts where the farmers once more are prospering and reaping incalculable benefits from great drainage projects sponsored by the Federal Government to give employment to the heads of needy families.<sup>36</sup>

A split in the Republican party improved the prospects for a Democratic victory in the state, and the chairman of the Delaware Democratic State Committee told Farley that they were the best he had seen throughout his political life because

the Republican party has gotten into terrible factional difficulties which are already tearing it apart. The question ... will depend upon how strong a ticket the Democrats can put into the field and secondly on whether or not we can keep down the usual slush funds used by our opponents for buying votes.<sup>37</sup>

On 14 September, the Democrats of Sussex county and the Independent Republicans agreed to form a coalition. Under the terms of their agreement, each was allowed to field one candidate for the state Senate, five each for the House and one each for the Levy Court. The Independent Republicans were to contest the posts of sheriff, county comptroller, clerk of the Orphans Court and register in chancery; the Democrats those of the coroner, receiver of taxes, county treasurer and protonotary. It was also agreed that the names of the candidates of the coalition would appear on both party's tickets. However, a similar proposal in New Castle county was received "with an unfavorable reaction" by the Democrats.

By the end of October, Elizabeth R. Stevenson, vice-chairman of the Sussex county Democratic committee could foresee "nothing but a landslide for President Roosevelt" and her perception proved to be correct.<sup>38</sup>

In the 1936 General Election, the Democrats achieved their greatest success in the twentieth century; they not only carried Delaware for Roosevelt, who won in New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties, but the President was re-elected by a landslide nationally with a 523 to 8 margin in the electoral college, polling 11 million more votes than his opponent, Kansas Governor

Alf Landon. The Delaware Democrats elected James H. Hughes to the Senate by a majority of 7,779 over the combined votes for the incumbent Republican Daniel O. Hastings and Independent Republican candidate Robert G. Houston. Democrat William F. Allen was elected Representative-at-large, defeating the incumbent John George Stewart, and the Independent Republican candidate James Austin Ellison, by a majority of 4,483 over the combined vote for his opponents.

### State elections

The Democrats also won the governorship, and Richard C. McMullen became the first Democrat to be elected to this post since 1897. He received 4,155 more votes than the combined vote for his opponents, Republican Harry L. Cannon and Independent Republican I. Dolphus Short. The Democrat and Independent Republican coalition won control of the lower house of the General Assembly by a majority of seven, but the Republicans retained control of the Senate by 11 votes to 6 with the result that the governor-elect was faced with a divided legislature when he took office on 19 January 1937 -- a situation similar to that which his predecessor had faced in 1932.

In New Castle and Kent counties, the Democrats, Republicans, and Independent Republicans contested all offices; but in Sussex county a coalition of Democrats and Independent Republicans was allied against the Republican candidates, and won all the county offices there. The scope of the Democratic victory was partially attributed to a schism among their opponents; a group of Republicans, protesting what they referred to as du Pont domination of the party, put up candidates of their own. However, the main reason for their victory was quite simply the President's popularity in the state.<sup>39</sup>

### Relief recommenced

In November, the Levy Court recommenced appropriations for relief and \$10,000 was granted to the TERC, which also had a surplus from previous months of \$10,116. This permitted a more adequate relief budget than previously provided for the 1,697 individuals in need, and included

provision for food, milk, rent, gas, electricity, fuel and clothing. In December, the number of persons requiring relief increased to 2,451, due to the normal seasonal trend. The court granted \$37,000, and with funds carried over from November the commission had \$46,874 available. However, it was only necessary to use \$15,695 of this. Consequently, more than \$31,000 was available for relief in the first month of 1937, and additional funds from the court were not required.<sup>40</sup>

### Unemployment insurance legislation

On 28 December, Governor Buck, informed the General Assembly, which had been convened in special session because of the urgent need to enact an unemployment compensation bill before the end of December, that failure to do this would mean "many thousands of dollars [being] lost to Delaware...." because, under the federal Social Security Act, "unless suitable legislation is passed and approved by the Federal Social Security Board before 31 December," employers and taxpayers in the state will not qualify for the 90 per cent credit of federal tax on payrolls. He told the members that, as only 29 states had passed the necessary conforming legislation, "it may be that Congress will extend the deadline.... However", he continued, "we cannot afford to gamble when \$600,000 in benefits ... is involved." This sum represented 90 per cent of the payroll taxes collected in the state in 1936.<sup>41</sup> The prospects of the bill being passed were not good; opposition came not only from Democrats, who took issue with a clause that would allow the governor to make various appointments, but also from organized labour which was opposed to the provision that employees should be taxed to help finance the scheme.<sup>42</sup>

An unemployment compensation bill was passed by the Senate on the same day but, on 29 December, the lower house defeated this by a party vote of 24 to 11. The Democrats in the House then drafted a revised bill which provided for a five member commission to administer the law, two to be appointed by Governor Buck and two by Governor-elect McMullen, who would be the fifth member. This was passed. The House bill was now rejected by the upper house, by a partisan vote of ten to eight, and the Republican majority in the Senate suggested a bi-partisan commission of one member

appointed by Governor Buck for two years and one for four years, and similar appointments by Governor McMullen. This was rejected in turn by the Democrats. Consequently, Delaware was one of only 13 states that failed to enact unemployment insurance legislation by the end of 1936.<sup>43</sup>

However, an encouraging sign that the depression was coming to an end, at least in Delaware, was to be found in Wilmington where at the end of that year, according to the Chamber of Commerce, a business recovery was being experienced and industrial production was at its highest level since 1929.<sup>44</sup>

#### Unemployment relief problems are resolved

In January 1937, although more than 4,000 individuals were still on the relief rolls, the TERC was able to adequately provide for these with the funds that it had available and, in fact, it ended the month with a surplus of \$5,283.<sup>45</sup> The legislation passed in 1935, reducing the size of the New Castle County Levy Court, came into effect at the beginning of the month and the four retiring members were not replaced. The Republicans retained control of the court, the three remaining members continuing to serve until 1938.<sup>46</sup> This change appears to have resolved the problem of relief funding, and the court's objections to the TERC's administration of relief were not raised again. It continued to appropriate money for the much-reduced need in New Castle county until the TERC ceased operations in April, then to the RCI and finally to the Unemployed Special Relief Unit which assumed the responsibility for this task in July 1937.

#### The 106th General Assembly

On 5 January, the regular session of the legislature was convened, and a budget bill was submitted by Governor Buck which called for an appropriation of \$12,757,428 to finance the various departments of the state for the next biennium, beginning 1 July. He recommended that this be obtained by taking \$5,443,428 from the general fund and \$7,314,000 from the school fund. However, the governor warned that there would be a deficit of \$1,925,414 in the general fund by the end of Fiscal 1939 if his proposal was approved. The main reason he gave for this was that revenue from

franchise taxes was falling due to corporations changing to shares of lower par value. On 26 February, in a report to Governor-elect McMullen, the state finance commission made recommendations to prevent a continuation of this loss of revenue. These were an amendment to the corporation franchise tax law, and a new schedule of initial fees paid by businesses incorporating in Delaware. The commission paid tribute to the administration of state finances

that ... brought the state through six years of depression with a treasury free of debt and an outlook to the future that might have been free of all doubts had not [the] loss of possibly \$7 million occurred through failure to correct a corporation tax situation that has been threatening the state for about four years.<sup>47</sup>

It was also recorded that during this period the Republican administration had reduced the state's bonded indebtedness by \$9,184,785. In July 1929, the total bonded debt of the state was \$12,351,785 (\$11,530,000 in highway bonds and \$821,785 in miscellaneous bonds) and this had been reduced to \$3,167,000 by October 1936, without any increase in taxation. The most impressive aspect of this achievement was that it had been accomplished despite the depression which had caused many other states to increase both their bonded debt and taxes.<sup>48</sup> Here was further evidence that Delaware would have had the ability to finance its own relief needs if the legislation to achieve this had not been frustrated by the political divisions that existed in the state.

On 15 January, Governor Buck presented his final message to the legislature. In this he stated that he had "no desire ... to advance any suggestions that might trespass upon the rights of the incoming Governor as to any policy that he may wish to carry out. However", he continued, "there are matters with which I am familiar that merit your attention, which I shall endeavour ... to present to you without ... infringing upon the prerogatives of my successor." He confirmed that his administration had achieved a balanced budget, and told the members of the General Assembly that "receipts and expenditures of the General Fund have been in balance during the last eighteen months"; and he forecast that for the remainder of the fiscal year the same satisfactory situation was expected to pertain unless the expenses connected with the current session of the

legislature should exceed the sum budgeted. He again drew the attention of the members to the federal social security law which became effective on 1 January 1937, and pointed out that from this date a federal tax was to be levied on employers' payrolls. Buck again reminded them that for Delaware to come under the provisions of this law, it was necessary for collateral legislation to be enacted that would supply supplementary payments. He also recommended that the legislature consider reducing gasoline tax by one cent; the repeal of the county capitation tax; an amendment of Section 16 of Article III of the State Constitution to provide that the work of an extraordinary session of the General Assembly should be definitely limited to the business set forth in the call issued by the governor and empowering him permanently to adjourn special sessions; repeal of the state property tax; and the provision of a suitable automobile with a full time chauffeur for the use of the governor. In conclusion, Governor Buck observed that

... the time has come to say goodbye to those who have so generously aided me in all my endeavours in behalf of the State. Whatever measure of success of success my administration may have had has been made possible through the cooperation of those friends and friends of good government in Delaware.<sup>49</sup>

#### The Delaware Unemployment Compensation Law

On 19 January, Richard Cann McMullen was inaugurated governor of Delaware and made his inaugural address to the 106th General Assembly:

There must be a balancing of public expenditures against public revenues.... I do not wish to be understood as advocating a policy of a parsimonious attitude toward public services which are essential to the welfare of a people.... I shall experience no personal exultation, however, in being the instrument whereby many who have been employed by the state in years past will now find themselves under the necessity of seeking employment in other fields.<sup>50</sup>

It appears from the governor's statement that, in seeking to reduce expenditure by proposing a reduction in the number of state employees, he was about to add to the number of unemployed. Fortunately, the legislature failed to agree on the programme of economy which he had outlined.

On 21 April, the legislature adjourned ending a 68-day session during which a general appropriations bill was passed, incorporating allotments to state agencies, departments and boards for the next two years and providing for an expenditure of \$5,556,385 for the biennium. This was the first

measure introduced when the legislature convened in January; other bills intended to amend the franchise tax and general incorporation laws had been previously withdrawn. More importantly, action was taken to make future provision for the unemployed when, in compliance with Governor Buck's recommendation, the Delaware Unemployment Compensation Law was enacted and, on 30 April, signed by Governor McMullen. Under this law, properly qualified workers could claim unemployment benefits from 1 January 1939. This delay was to allow two years accumulation of contributions so that there would be enough money in the fund to meet claims. Contributions were to be collected only from employers; employees were not required to contribute to the fund. The law applied to jobs in factories, shops, mills, offices and other places of business, but not to farm and domestic workers. A worker could receive benefits to a maximum of half pay, but not exceeding \$15 a week, for no more than 13 weeks in any given calendar year, and this was only to be paid after a two-week waiting period. To qualify for benefits, a worker had to have earned at least 13 times the weekly benefit amount due to him, over a period of nine of the previous 12 months, and to have registered for work with the state employment service. The Unemployment Compensation Law was to be administered by a four-man commission appointed by, and responsible to, the governor, and no more than two commissioners were to be members from the same political party. An executive director, to be selected by the commissioners for a term of six years, was to be the chief administrative officer and provision was also made for an advisory council of seven members, three representing labour, three the employers and one the general public, all appointed by the governor.<sup>51</sup> The Delaware law was approved by the Federal Social Security Board, and consequently all costs of administration were met by a federal grant to the state commission.

#### Relief legislation fails

In spite of a plea by the governor, the legislature once again failed to provide for a state-wide relief programme. On 16 March, Governor McMullen, aware that the term of the TERC expired at the end of the month, called a conference of the heads of the relief agencies, presidents of the county

Levy Courts and leaders of the legislature to discuss the relief situation in Wilmington and the state, and to consider a proposal for a state-wide programme. The meeting was also to make permanent arrangements for the distribution of federal surplus commodities, to replace the current temporary distribution by the state highway department. This arrangement had been introduced because of the refusal by the Levy Courts of New Castle and Kent counties to provide trucks to comply with a federal order that these must be supplied by the sponsoring agencies - the courts. The only decision reached at the conference was for the Levy Courts of each county to work out a plan for relief to be funded by the state.<sup>52</sup>

The governor's proposal for a state-wide scheme was not supported by Frank Collins who wrote: "I am convinced that it will be impossible to get a state-wide emergency relief appropriation even if desirable, which I question. It looks to me now as if each county would have to take care of its own in the matter of administering and financing relief."<sup>53</sup> On 16 April, a bill to levy a special income tax to finance relief in the state was introduced by Representative Holcomb, leader of the House, and was approved by a vote of 22 to 8, with all the Republicans voting against. However, the bill was considered unsatisfactory by the Senate which adjourned without taking any action.<sup>54</sup>

#### The TERC for NCC ceases operations

On 15 April the TERC ceased operations; it had been granted a two-week extension by the legislature during which it continued to provide relief to 4,864 individuals and received \$75,000 from the Levy Court for this purpose. Although WPA employment had reduced the demand for relief to a large extent and the increase in industrial activity, which had occurred in the latter part of 1936, had resulted in the re-employment of many who had been receiving aid, the demise of the commission left a case load of 798 families, comprising approximately 3,200 individuals. These families were left with no provision for their assistance and no agency with specific powers to take over this responsibility. Consequently, the burden of providing relief to the unemployed in New Castle county fell upon the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Refuge Mission, the Sunday Breakfast Mission



and the Family Society.<sup>55</sup>

On 30 April, Frank Collins noted in a letter to the governor that a change in relief needs had occurred due to the fact that men and women had returned to work in large numbers, but that work could not be provided for them with sufficient continuity to make them self-supporting. The result was that the relief case load had been turning over at a rate of three times a year, and in 1937 only 19 families out of an approximate total of 4,500 had received continuous relief for the preceding 12 months. He compared this situation to 1935, when many families unable to find work had been forced to accept relief for several years. Collins went on to tell the governor of one particular problem that had arisen from this change. This was the effect it had on work-relief resulting from the nature of the residual relief load which was, he said, too transitional to fit into a well-planned and conducted work-relief programme. He concluded: "It is our firm belief that relief is needed, and will continue to be needed for that smaller group which we find now dependent upon public aid."<sup>56</sup>

#### The RCI assumes responsibility for relief

In early May, the Levy Court authorized its president W. Harry Lewis, to request the RCI to "assume responsibility of administering unemployment relief in New Castle County", and recommended "that the work be done through the New Castle County Unemployable Special Relief Unit" of the state Old Age Welfare Commission. The court had \$30,305 remaining in its relief fund which could "be used for no other purpose other than the support of poor persons resident in New Castle County...." The resolution also contained implied criticism of both the TERC and the General Assembly. Concerning the former, it stated that the court "has done everything within its limited power and authority, looking toward the proper and efficient administration of relief ..."; and of the latter, although the House "[had] acted favorably ... the Senate wholly failed and neglected to take action...." on the various suggestions and proposals for "every possible solution of the relief problem in New Castle County known to the members...."<sup>57</sup>

The board of directors of the RCI met on 10 May and agreed to act as the agency for the transfer of the funds appropriated for relief by the court to the Old Age Welfare Commission. The following day, Ethelda Mullen, in her capacity as the secretary of the RCI, advised the Levy Court of this agreement and directed its attention to the fact that the \$30,305 remaining in the relief fund would be insufficient for "more than a short period"; she went on to urge that "some other means be found of financing the relief program after this fund is exhausted in order that there may not be another interruption in the care of those families who need public assistance."<sup>58</sup> Selection of the commission as the agency to administer relief was expected to meet federal requirements, thus enabling it to certify persons for the WPA, CCC and surplus commodities, and two weeks later this was confirmed when the commission was appointed as the state CCC selection agency. Likewise, at the beginning of July, it became the local agency for the distribution of surplus commodities and was also recognised as the sole authority for certifying persons seeking WPA jobs.<sup>59</sup> On 18 May, a special session of the legislature was convened to consider two bills: one for a school appropriation and the other to transfer money from the school fund to the general fund. However, although five measures were passed by both Houses, none of them benefitted those in need of relief.<sup>60</sup>

#### Municipal elections

In May, the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce reported that there were 41,770 persons employed in 327 businesses, a gain of 7,532 over the 1936 total.<sup>61</sup> This may have been a factor in the outcome of the municipal elections held in Wilmington on 5 June. In these, Republicans were elected to all but three city posts, and the Democrats only held on to the 10th, 11th and 12th Wards. Mayor Bacon was re-elected by a majority of 7,783, which surpassed the predictions of party leaders; the southern tax district, a Democratic stronghold which had been won by the Republicans in the previous election, was held with a majority of 303, an increase of 48 votes on the 1935 majority; and Fred Brown once again won in the First Ward with a majority of 572. The result was a blow to the Democrats, who had expected to emulate their party's General Election successes. The chairman of the

Republican State Committee, Senator Chandler, commenting on the results said:

The stress that the Democrats had made on the New Deal during the ... campaign in Wilmington indicates that the Republican victory ... was a clear repudiation of the New Deal.... I am certain the same trend exists throughout the state. It certainly proves that the Republican Party is still very much alive in Delaware.... This is only the beginning. We are on our way to victory in 1938 in Delaware.<sup>62</sup>

#### FDR and the du Ponts

On 30 June, the Roosevelt/du Pont relationship took a surprising new direction when Ethel du Pont, Pierre's niece, married the President's son, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. Ethel's father, Eugene du Pont, was a prominent backer of the Liberty League and consequently this union rather than improving relationships may have had the opposite effect, making even more strained the deteriorating political situation between the two families; it certainly did not affect FDR's view of either the du Pont family or the state. The President chose to reside on the presidential train in a siding on the Reading Railway line at Montchanin during his visit to Delaware for the wedding; Pierre did not attend at all!<sup>63</sup>

#### Changing relief requirements

On 1 July, the Unemployable Special Relief Unit took on the task of providing relief. The Levy Court appropriated \$19,024 for the four months July to October, and this was channelled through the RCI. The average monthly grant (of less than \$4,800) was indicative of the reduced level of need during this period.<sup>64</sup> The state was also experiencing difficulties in filling its CCC quota, a further indication that the number of relief applicants had decreased, and Robert Feckner, the CCC federal director, wrote to W.S Corkran, executive officer of the CCC in Delaware, expressing concern that the "six CCC companies in Delaware are composed ... of enrollees from other states". Of the 735 youths in these companies only 241 were from the state; the others were from New Jersey (376) and New York (118), and both states were "vigorously protesting against having their enrollees sent into Delaware."<sup>65</sup> Corkran, who had earlier visited

Washington to discuss this situation with Fechner, informed the governor that "He is most emphatic that we must either get more applicants ... or he will be faced with the necessity of ordering some of our camps closed." He then proposed a solution to the problem: this involved the "changing over of one of ... [the] white companies into a colored company", which, he said, would allow the "125 negro applicants from Wilmington" to be enrolled and enable "Delaware negroes now serving ... in other states to be returned ... to form a trained nucleus for this new ... company." A more important benefit of this would be their allotment home, which he believed "would virtually eliminate the need for relief in their families" thus relieving New Castle county of a "burden of approximately \$5,000 a month."<sup>66</sup> The company selected was based at the Redden camp north of Georgetown in Sussex county. However, because "quite some objection ... [was] expressed ... regarding a colored camp," the governor quickly offered an alternative solution in a telegram to Charles H. Taylor, assistant director of emergency conservation work in Washington. This was the removal of the "portable camp at Taylor's Bridge [rural New Castle county] to a suitable site at Bombay Hook [Kent county] where colored boys could be used in the wild fowl refuge...." Taylor took this as a retraction of the earlier proposal, and so informed Snyder: "the Governor has withdrawn his request ... therefore, the decision ... is that a colored unit will not be assigned."<sup>67</sup>

On 11 August, a further indication of the changing employment situation was given by Wentworth Deverall, supervisor of CCC selection in Delaware, who informed Frank Persons of the federal Department of Labor that during the July enrolment period "108 applicants were certified and selected ... for enrollment [sic] (excluding colored applicants). Between the time of application and dates of enrollment [sic] 36 ... obtained private employment, and the [remainder] ... did not report and did not give explanation for their failure to do so." He expressed his opinion that "The attitude of applicants ... has shown a material change.... Now, with far greater opportunities ... for private employment ... applicants consider the CCC as one of several possibilities for employment."<sup>68</sup>

By March 1938, the number of CCC camps in the state had been reduced to two and it was expected that these would be withdrawn at the beginning of April. On 14 March, Corkran wrote asking Pierre du Pont for his advice on "the practicability of setting up a State operated CCC to carry on useful works...." However, on 1 July, the last remaining CCC camp at Wyoming, Kent county, was finally withdrawn. <sup>69</sup>

#### Unemployment census

In November, a federal census showed that 9,017 persons were unemployed in Delaware, and that almost 65 per cent (5,585) of these were residents of Wilmington. The census was carried out by mail carriers delivering cards to all houses in which it was believed that unemployment might exist. These were to be completed by the unemployed and mailed to the federal authorities. To check the accuracy of the figures obtained by this census, Hopkins also requested all cities to prepare an estimate of their unemployed. In Wilmington this task was undertaken by WPA workers during the second week in November, and the results obtained differed significantly from those of the mail survey. The WPA survey found 12,953 unemployed in Wilmington, with the discrepancy between the figures being attributed to the reluctance of some who received federal cards by mail to respond, "as they looked with suspicion on this ... believing it to be made to secure their name for taxing purposes ... or to have their name on file for some reason which they did not understand." This was despite the assurances given in the President's radio broadcast and the publicity in newspapers, that this was not the purpose of the census.<sup>70</sup>

The census was coincident with what was subsequently to be known as the "Roosevelt recession". At the end of 1936, the President had been given a clear choice as far as fiscal policy was concerned. The chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Marriner Eccles, had argued that the federal government would have to continue spending in order to sustain the move towards recovery, because the private sector would be unable to compensate for a cutback in government spending. On the other hand, Henry Morgenthau Jr., Roosevelt's Secretary of the Treasury, argued that in order to revive the private investment necessary for full recovery, the federal budget must

be balanced so that business would have the confidence to invest. As tax revenues were up, the cost of relief and recovery programmes seemed to be falling and both Eccles and Hopkins had expressed concern about inflationary pressures. FDR opted for Morgenthau's argument and government spending was reduced from \$10.3 billion in 1936 to \$9.6 billion in 1937. This reduction, combined with the collection of regressive social security taxes and high interest rates imposed by the Federal Reserve Board, was catastrophic. The whole country fell into deep recession. The rise in GNP was reversed, production of steel fell by 70 per cent, automobiles by 50 percent, rubber by 40 per cent and electrical manufacturing by 75 per cent. Some five million workers lost their jobs as unemployment rose to almost 20 per cent. In April 1938, the "Roosevelt recession" was reversed when the President was persuaded by Hopkins, Aubrey Williams and Beardsley Rum1, a member of the New York Reserve Board, to agree to a \$3.75 billion spending package.<sup>71</sup>

Fortunately, in Delaware the consequent rise in unemployment was less significant. Nevertheless, as a result of the census' findings relief continued to be funded by the Levy Court, and \$11,500 was appropriated for this in November and December. On 29 November, Charles Candee anticipating that the recession would cause a further rise in unemployment informed Richard Sellers that "Every indication points to a greatly increased demand for Relief, especially during the months of January and February", and he submitted a budget of \$64,800, for the six months ending 30 June 1938.<sup>72</sup>

The court continued to finance relief until March, when it ran into difficulties in appropriating funds and as a result the relief situation became acute. Governor McMullen appointed a group of attorneys, headed by the Attorney General Green, to determine how future relief might be administered. The opinion reached confirmed that under existing law the Welfare Commission could administer direct relief to employables as well as unemployables, with the state being obligated to pay half of the costs; the counties were responsible for payment of the other half. The opinion

stated:

The State Old Age Welfare Commission has the authority under existing law to grant outside relief to such indigent persons as it shall deem proper to receive such assistance, and that the cost thereof, when properly certified to the Levy Courts of the county for such persons residing in the respective counties, shall be paid by the counties. The counties are entitled semi-annually to be reimbursed by the State of one-half of the cost thereof....

This ruling resolved the problem of relief funding. At the beginning of July, the Old Age Welfare Commission took over the distribution of federal surplus commodities from the state Board of Health and also became the sole authority for certifying persons seeking WPA jobs. Nevertheless, in September 1938, criticism of the provision of relief by the commission came from a joint committee of Labor's Non-Partisan League of Delaware and the Workers' Alliance, who complained that the state had no set standards of certification and that the requirements for this were "humiliating and unfair".<sup>73</sup> This opinion was endorsed by a professional welfare group which carried out a survey of the state's care for the needy. It concluded that Delaware, which ranked fourth in the nation in per capita income, was notably parsimonious in its welfare policies. The group's report stated:

In spite of its natural advantages - smallness of size of population, density of population, high income - Delaware has been slow to accept responsibility for public assistance and welfare services and the standards of assistance and service are in some programs on a par with the economically hard pressed states of the South.<sup>74</sup>

This less-than-satisfactory situation continued until January 1939, when Delaware's Unemployment Compensation Law came into effect and the unemployed were no longer forced to rely upon relief to survive.

CONCLUSION: The failure of voluntarism?

Could Delaware have survived without federal government assistance? Was the state unfairly treated by the federal authorities in Washington? Did the du Ponts' involvement in national politics affect the federal government's dealings with the state? These are all questions that have raised in this thesis in its attempt to detail how Delaware coped with the effects of the Great Depression.

Pierre du Pont certainly was of the opinion that the answer to the first two questions was "yes", and there appears to be some justification for his view. In 1936, he had begun to query the expenditure of federal government funds in Delaware and had asked a member of his staff to obtain the details. In October 1937, he was informed that during fiscal years 1933 to 1937 inclusive

the indicated total of federal 'relief' expenditure for the state of Delaware ... was \$28,400,000, as compared with federal tax receipts ... amounting to \$160,266,000. In other words, moneys put back into Delaware by the federal government amounted to only 17.7 per cent of the total receipts from taxes during the same period.<sup>1</sup>

This information, which certainly on the face of it lends support to his view with reference to the second query, was based on a "confidential tabulation giving the best estimates of federal direct 'relief' ... expenditures" for this period, supplied by the federal under-secretary of the treasury (see Table 1 below). The "Total Federal Internal Revenue Collections" listed in this table could also be taken as indicative of the healthy state of Delaware's finances during the worst period of the Great Depression, and would tend confirm his opinion of the state's ability to fund its own relief needs, if the political division between the northern and southern counties had not prevented it.



Table 1: Federal Non-Recoverable Expenditures Compared with Internal Revenue Collections, by States. July 1, 1933 to June 30, 1937.

| States         | Total Federal<br>Internal Revenue<br>Collections<br>1934-1937. <sup>1</sup><br>(\$1,000,000) | Non-Recoverable<br>Federal Relief<br>Expenditures<br>1934-1937. <sup>2</sup><br>(\$1,000,000) | Internal<br>Revenue<br>Per Capita <sup>3</sup><br>(Dollars) | Non-Recover-<br>able Relief<br>Per Capita <sup>3</sup><br>(Dollars) |
|----------------|--|---|---|---|
| Alabama        | 41.9   | 358.3   | 14.40   | 123.77  |
| Arizona        | 8.2  | 125.9   | 19.90   | 305.58  |
| Arkansas       | 18.7   | 259.9   | 7.76  | 126.90  |
| California     | 776.1  | 697.6   | 126.11  | 113.36  |
| Colorado       | 78.8   | 191.6   | 73.58   | 178.90  |
| Connecticut    | 189.2  | 106.4   | 108.67  | 61.11   |
| Delaware       | 147.7  | 26.3  | 565.90  | 100.77  |
| Florida        | 92.7   | 201.9   | 55.51   | 120.90  |
| Georgia        | 92.7   | 319.9   | 33.45   | 103.90  |
| Idaho          | 8.4  | 117.8   | 17.04   | 230.94  |
| Illinois       | 1,224.7  | 871.9   | 155.45  | 110.68  |
| Indiana        | 261.8  | 326.4   | 75.36   | 93.96   |
| Iowa           | 80.8   | 365.7   | 31.66   | 143.30  |
| Kansas         | 76.5   | 329.8   | 41.04   | 176.77  |
| Kentucky       | 364.7  | 205.6   | 124.90  | 70.41   |
| Louisiana      | 103.3  | 230.9   | 48.45   | 108.30  |
| Maine          | 33.5   | 65.6  | 39.14   | 76.64   |
| Maryland       | 245.4  | 133.7   | 146.16  | 79.63   |
| Massachusetts  | 481.8  | 418.9   | 108.86  | 94.65   |
| Michigan       | 709.5  | 432.4   | 146.89  | 89.52   |
| Minnesota      | 202.0  | 366.2   | 76.17   | 138.08  |
| Mississippi    | 12.0   | 245.9   | 5.93  | 121.55  |
| Missouri       | 347.0  | 393.0   | 86.99   | 98.52   |
| Montana        | 19.8   | 233.9   | 36.73   | 433.95  |
| Nebraska       | 46.5   | 279.9   | 34.09   | 205.21  |
| Nevada         | 10.0   | 64.4  | 99.01   | 637.62  |
| New Hampshire  | 21.7   | 42.7  | 42.55   | 83.73   |
| New Jersey     | 551.2  | 337.2   | 126.92  | 77.64   |
| New Mexico     | 4.9  | 117.2   | 11.61   | 277.72  |
| New York       | 3,011.8  | 1,519.5   | 232.41  | 117.25  |
| North Carolina | 1,138.0  | 236.2   | 325.89  | 75.37   |
| North Dakota   | 5.7  | 218.3   | 8.07  | 309.20  |
| Ohio           | 747.5  | 702.9   | 111.02  | 104.40  |
| Oklahoma       | 184.1  | 316.4   | 72.25   | 124.18  |
| Oregon         | 34.2   | 176.9   | 33.30   | 172.25  |
| Pennsylvania   | 1,140.7  | 902.5   | 112.10  | 88.59   |
| Rhode Island   | 76.1   | 43.3  | 111.75  | 63.58   |
| South Carolina | 55.3   | 206.8   | 29.49   | 110.29  |

|               | Total Federal<br>Internal Revenue<br>Collections<br>1934-1937. <sup>1</sup><br>(\$1,000,000) | Non-Recoverable<br>Federal Relief<br>Expenditures<br>1934-1937. <sup>2</sup><br>(\$1,000,000) | Internal<br>Revenue<br>Per Capita <sup>3</sup><br>(Dollars) | Non-Recover-<br>able Relief<br>Per Capita <sup>3</sup><br>(Dollars) |
|---------------|--|---|---|---|
| <u>States</u> |  |   |   |   |
| South Dakota  | 5.7  | 220.2   | 8.24  | 318.20  |
| Tennessee     | 79.8   | 321.3   | 27.58   | 111.06  |
| Texas         | 312.9  | 740.5   | 50.66   | 119.98  |
| Utah          | 18.7   | 101.8   | 36.03   | 196.14  |
| Vermont       | 9.2  | 47.1  | 24.02   | 122.98  |
| Virginia      | 590.7  | 183.7   | 218.29  | 67.89   |
| Washington    | 80.5   | 271.9   | 48.55   | 163.99  |
| West Virginia | 50.7   | 188.5   | 27.18   | 101.07  |
| Wisconsin     | 234.4  | 347.1   | 80.11   | 118.63  |
| Wyoming       | 6.8  | 77.7  | 28.94   | 330.64  |

1. Internal revenue collections include not only personal and corporate income taxes, but all other federal taxes of every description, as allocated by state by the Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

2. The original figures serving as the basis of these computations all come from published or unpublished records of the U.S. Treasury Department. Federal relief expenditures here analyzed include only so-called "non-recoverable" items, namely expenditure for which no repayment is expected or possible. The additional veterans' bonus ("adjusted compensation") amounting to approximately \$1,750,000,000 in the calendar year 1936 is not included. Loans made through such agencies as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Home Owners' Loan Corporation, Farm Credit Administration and many other federal loan agencies, are excluded, although they amount in aggregate to several billion dollars, a large proportion of which are a "contingent" liability, or debt, of the federal government - which "guaranteed" debt on June 30, 1937, amounted to \$4,695,000,000.

3. Based on Census Bureau population estimates as of July 1, 1937.<sup>2</sup>

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Another indication of Delaware's apparently unfavorable position in the federal-taxation/federal-aid equation, and one which further reinforces Pierre's belief that the state was unfairly treated, may be seen in Table 2 below. This ranks states in order of federal expenditures received and federal income taxes paid in fiscal years 1933-39.

Table 2:<sup>3</sup> New Deal Expenditures - Federal Income Tax Receipts 1933-1939.

New Deal Expenditures, Loans, and  
Insurance by States 1933 to 1939.  
Absolute Allocation 1933-1939.

Federal Income Tax Receipts  
by States 1933 to 1939.

| <u>State</u>   | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Amount</u><br>(\$1,000,000) | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Amount</u><br>(\$1,000,000) |
|----------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| New York       | 1           | 421.4                          | 1           | 3,088.8                        |
| California     | 2           | 305.5                          | 4           | 683.1                          |
| Illinois       | 3           | 278.4                          | 2           | 965.4                          |
| Ohio           | 4           | 254.8                          | 6           | 469.4                          |
| Pennsylvania   | 5           | 251.2                          | 3           | 872.5                          |
| Texas          | 6           | 210.7                          | 9           | 283.3                          |
| Michigan       | 7           | 188.3                          | 5           | 626.5                          |
| New Jersey     | 8           | 133.5                          | 7           | 464.1                          |
| Missouri       | 9           | 123.4                          | 10          | 267.7                          |
| Massachusetts  | 10          | 121.6                          | 8           | 448.2                          |
| Iowa           | 11          | 115.3                          | 28          | 58.8                           |
| Wisconsin      | 12          | 114.7                          | 15          | 138.2                          |
| Minnesota      | 13          | 109.1                          | 17          | 134.2                          |
| Indiana        | 14          | 107.9                          | 14          | 148.8                          |
| Tennessee      | 15          | 90.1                           | 25          | 71.9                           |
| Washington     | 16          | 82.5                           | 26          | 68.3                           |
| Oklahoma       | 17          | 82.1                           | 20          | 91.9                           |
| Alabama        | 18          | 82.0                           | 33          | 32.9                           |
| Kansas         | 19          | 81.7                           | 30          | 42.4                           |
| Georgia        | 20          | 79.3                           | 21          | 76.8                           |
| Lousiana       | 21          | 77.7                           | 27          | 66.9                           |
| Nebraska       | 22          | 74.0                           | 32          | 35.3                           |
| Arkansas       | 23          | 73.4                           | 41          | 10.1                           |
| North Carolina | 24          | 72.1                           | 16          | 134.7                          |
| Mississippi    | 25          | 72.0                           | 39          | 13.5                           |
| Kentucky       | 26          | 65.6                           | 22          | 75.7                           |
| Virgina        | 27          | 61.7                           | 18          | 118.0                          |
| Maryland       | 28          | 56.3                           | 12          | 252.8                          |
| Florida        | 29          | 55.4                           | 19          | 103.5                          |
| South Carolina | 30          | 53.3                           | 35          | 27.1                           |
| Montana        | 31          | 53.1                           | 40          | 12.4                           |
| Colorado       | 32          | 52.4                           | 23          | 72.9                           |
| Oregon         | 33          | 51.1                           | 34          | 29.3                           |
| South Dakota   | 34          | 48.6                           | 46          | 4.6                            |
| North Dakota   | 35          | 48.2                           | 47          | 4.1                            |
| West Virginia  | 36          | 45.8                           | 29          | 55.5                           |
| Connecticut    | 37          | 38.1                           | 13          | 237.8                          |

New Deal Expenditures, Loans, and  
Insurance by States 1933 to 1939.  
Absolute Allocation 1933-1939.

Federal Income Tax Receipts  
by States 1933 to 1939.

| <u>State</u>  | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Amount</u><br>(\$1,000,000) | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Amount</u><br>(\$1,000,000) |
|---------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| Arizona       | 38          | 34.5                           | 41          | 10.1                           |
| Idaho         | 39          | 33.1                           | 43          | 9.1                            |
| New Mexico    | 40          | 29.2                           | 45          | 6.0                            |
| Utah          | 41          | 28.9                           | 37          | 15.8                           |
| Maine         | 42          | 26.8                           | 31          | 39.9                           |
| Wyoming       | 43          | 20.3                           | 44          | 6.8                            |
| Rhode Island  | 44          | 16.9                           | 24          | 72.1                           |
| Vermont       | 45          | 14.0                           | 42          | 9.9                            |
| Nevada        | 46          | 13.6                           | 38          | 15.7                           |
| New Hampshire | 47          | 11.5                           | 36          | 20.5                           |
| Delaware      | 48          | 7.4                            | 11          | 258.5                          |

This confirmed that the trend, first reported in 1934, of Delaware paying the highest per capita federal income tax, while being amongst the lowest recipients of federal grants had continued.

On 20 October, in response to his request for more details of federal government emergency and relief expenditures in Delaware, Pierre was given the following listing of expenditure by federal agencies in the state:

Table 3: Federal Expenditure in Fiscal Years 1933-37 (in millions of \$).

|       | <u>AAA</u> | <u>FERA</u> | <u>CCC</u> | <u>WPA</u> | <u>Public</u><br><u>High-</u><br><u>ways</u> | <u>Rivers</u><br><u>&amp; Har-</u><br><u>bours</u> | <u>Public</u><br><u>Bldgs</u> | <u>PWA</u> | <u>RA</u> | <u>CWA</u> | <u>Other</u> |
|-------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|--|--|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| 1933  | -          | -           | -          | -          | 0.4  | 1.3  | 0.1                           | -          | -         | -          | 0.3          |
| 1934  | 0.1        | 1.4         | 0.9        | -          | 1.2  | 0.9  | -                             | -          | -         | 0.6        | 0.3          |
| 1935  | 0.1        | 0.8         | 1.0        | -          | 1.6  | 0.7  | -                             | 0.6        | -         | -          | 0.3          |
| 1936  | 0.2        | 0.3         | 1.7        | 1.5        | 0.3  | 2.0  | 0.5                           | 0.8        | -         | -          | 0.6          |
| 1937  | 0.1        | -           | 1.0        | 1.6        | 0.9  | 2.6  | 0.6                           | 0.3        | 0.1       | -          | 0.7          |
| Total | 0.5        | 2.5         | 4.6        | 3.1        | 4.4  | 7.5  | 1.2                           | 1.7        | 0.1       | 0.6        | 2.2          |

The total of federal grants received by the state was \$28.4 million, made up by annual totals of \$2.1 million in 1933, \$5.4m in 1934, \$5.1m in 1935, \$7.9m in 1936 and \$7.9m in 1937.

The amount allocated under the PWA must have been particularly disappointing to Pierre, for by the end of October 1938 Delaware had received less in PWA grants than any other state with the exception of Nevada and South Dakota. The state also ranked equal with Nevada as having the lowest number of PWA projects approved; these numbered only 12 and involved an estimated cost of \$2,562,459 of which the PWA gave outright grants totalling \$1,153,105. In addition to this, loans of some \$550,000 were also obtained from the agency. It was perhaps significant that the state did not apply for any more loans after this date.<sup>5</sup> WPA expenditures in fiscal years 1936-38 inclusive, were also the lowest in Delaware and Nevada, in the former these totalled \$4,520,202 and in the latter \$4,155,138.<sup>6</sup>

The foregoing would appear to support Pierre's misgivings, that Delaware was not receiving its apportionment of federal aid in proportion to the amount of taxes it paid. However, it could be argued that federal aid policy did not take income from states into consideration, and was provided commensurate to need, thus invalidating the conception seemingly held by Pierre and many others. The healthy state of Delaware's finances, throughout the whole of the depression coupled with the number of philanthropists in the state who were willing to support the charitable organizations in their efforts to alleviate the effects of the depression, at least during the period prior to the advent of federal aid to states, enabled the state initially to cope with the problems created by the slump. This was demonstrated in 1933 through the activities of private charities funded by the many philanthropists and the committees established by the mayors of the city of Wilmington; and subsequently by the state through the setting up of the Temporary Emergency Relief Commission, which dealt

adequately with the difficulties created by unemployment.

Nevertheless, the political divisions that existed between the northern and southern counties resulted in the state's inability to capitalize on these unique advantages. Prior to 1936, Delaware was a Republican stronghold, whose electoral votes had gone to Hoover in both 1928 and 1932. Its congressmen were all Republicans, and Republican Governor Buck was elected to two consecutive terms between 1929 and 1937. However, at state government level, the General Assembly was split between the two major parties, with the Democrats receiving the greatest amount of support in both Sussex and Kent counties, the latter being their stronghold, which enabled them to control the lower House at critical times in the decision-making process on the question of financing relief. Even when the GOP gained control of both Houses in the 1934 state elections, this made little or no difference, and ultimately resulted in no action being taken to care for the victims of the depression other than to place the responsibility of caring for those in need onto the counties. As a result, Delaware was not allowed the opportunity to demonstrate whether or not it could have been able to deal with the effects of the Great Depression without federal government assistance. In the light of the state's sound financial condition throughout the whole period of the depression, though, there is little reason to doubt that it could have financed its own relief programme, on a state-wide basis, without too much difficulty.

It seems unlikely, however, that the counties individually would ever have been able to support their own relief needs, and it is obvious that New Castle county on its own could not have provided the finance required to meet its obligations, particularly after the demise of the state TERC. This was mainly because of the magnitude of the problem and the apparent reluctance of the many philanthropists financially to support these needs. One possible explanation for this, which must be a matter of speculation, is that it was probably due to the federal intervention in relief, and that

this may have caused those who continued to support other worthy causes to consider that the federal involvement removed the need for them to contribute further. Consequently, New Castle county had no alternative but to rely upon federal aid prior to the WPA becoming effective, and the responsibility for unemployables being returned to the local authorities in each county.

The pattern of voting in the state during the period 1928-1940 (shown in Table 4 below) indicates the growth of support for the Democrats in Delaware. The county-level voting data also provides an indication of the distribution of this support within the state. This clearly demonstrates that from 1932 Kent county was solidly Democratic. It also shows that, despite the benefits that the New Deal brought to the unemployed it was not until 1936 that New Castle county - the greatest beneficiary - cast a majority of votes for the Roosevelt administration and gave its support to a Democratic governor. It is equally interesting to note that although Delaware had gone completely over to the Democrats in the 1936 General Election, in 1940 a Republican governor won majority support from the electorate in all three counties.

Table 4:<sup>7</sup> Voting Behaviour in Delaware 1928-1940.

State-Level Voting Data,

*Democratic percentage vote of major  
party vote for:*

| Year | President | Governor | Senator | Congressman | Total vote |
|------|-----------|----------|---------|-------------|------------|
| 1928 | 33.9      | 39.0     | 39.0    | 36.4        | 104,345    |
| 1930 |           |          | 45.4    | 44.5        | 87,587     |
| 1932 | 48.1      | 44.5     |         | 45.7*       | 112,901    |
| 1934 |           |          | 46.3    | 46.3        | 99,163     |
| 1936 | 54.6      | 52.0     | 52.3    | 50.7        | 127,603    |
| 1938 |           |          |         | 43.7        | 107,659    |
| 1940 | 54.7      | 46.4     | 56.2    | 51.8        | 136,374    |

\* Independent Republican candidate polled 7.3% of vote.

County-Level Voting Data

*Democratic percentage vote of major  
party vote for:*

| Year              | President | Governor | Senator | Congressman | Total vote |
|-------------------|-----------|----------|---------|-------------|------------|
| <hr/>             |           |          |         |             |            |
| Kent County       |           |          |         |             |            |
| 1928              | 40.7      | 52.7     | 47.0    | 46.4        | 14,162     |
| 1930              |           |          | N/A     | N/A         |            |
| 1932              | 57.0      | 55.8     |         | 55.2        | 15,490     |
| 1934              |           |          | 55.3    | 52.4        | 14,270     |
| 1936              | 56.4      | 53.2     | 54.2    | 55.7        | 17,005     |
| 1938              |           |          |         | 51.1        | 15,515     |
| 1940              | 53.2      | 48.0     | 50.7    | 50.6        | 17,353     |
| Sussex County     |           |          |         |             |            |
| 1928              | 35.5      | 44.0     | 40.2    | 38.7        | 20,240     |
| 1930              |           |          | N/A     | N/A         |            |
| 1932              | 54.1      | 54.9     |         | 51.7        | 23,302     |
| 1934              |           |          | 44.9    | 42.6        | 21,238     |
| 1936              | 51.5      | 47.0     | 50.5    | 49.0        | 24,832     |
| 1938              |           |          |         | 41.9        | 20,105     |
| 1940              | 52.6      | 49.1     | 50.9    | 51.3        | 25,085     |
| New Castle County |           |          |         |             |            |
| 1928              | 32.0      | 34.9     | 37.0    | 33.7        | 70,011     |
| 1930              |           |          | 43.8    | 42.3        | 56,009     |
| 1932              | 44.3      | 38.7     |         | 41.8        | 74,109     |
| 1934              |           |          | 44.9    | 46.3        | 63,522     |
| 1936              | 55.2      | 52.8     | 53.3    | 52.0        | 85,166     |
| 1938              |           |          |         | 42.6        | 72,039     |
| 1940              | 55.5      | 45.4     | 58.7    | 52.2        | 93,936     |

The question of whether or not the du Ponts' national political involvement coloured the federal government's perception of Delaware is more difficult to answer. There is no doubt that the du Ponts and the state were synonymous to many in the federal administration; this is evident in some federal reports, one of which made reference to "Wilmington the Dupont [sic] bailiwick".<sup>8</sup> Moreover, their support for the American



Liberty League must have coloured the opinion of the state held not only by the President himself but also by many of the lesser administrators involved in relief activity. However, there is no evidence that this affected in any way the action taken by the FERA and other agencies in providing Delaware with the funds for unemployment relief and other forms of federal aid. In fact, FERA funds were occasionally provided on the promise of future matching funds at the local level that did not materialise; and although the amounts requested from the federal government were not always fully granted it appears that, at times, these were in excess of those actually required. Therefore, it is fair to assume that in spite of undoubted dislike and distrust of the du Ponts', Delaware was not unduly penalized on their account.

#### Self-help and voluntarism found wanting

At the on-set on the Great Depression there is ample evidence that self-help and voluntarism, as advocated by President Hoover, were traditions that were followed in Delaware. The actions by the mayors of Wilmington in setting up the several relief organizations that cared for the victims of the depression prior to 1932, and the support of the city's citizens for these, plainly demonstrates these traits. Moreover, it is quite evident that the philanthropists in the state were more than willing to finance these relief bodies, and that the great majority of those who had jobs were also willing to make their contribution to aid those less fortunate.

However, the intervention of the state in 1932, and later the federal government in 1933, appears to have limited the generosity of these wealthy individuals, at least as far as the funding of relief for the unemployed was concerned. Perhaps the high level of federal taxes that they had paid was a factor influencing their decision. Whatever the reason for this curtailment of philanthropy, the generosity of individuals such as Pierre du Pont made the plight of the unemployed less distressing than it might otherwise have been, particularly when the established relief

organizations failed because of the political divisions within the state. Unlike his wealthy contemporaries, philanthropists such as Rockefeller and Carnegie, Pierre was more inclined to invest in Delaware and in her people than to endow libraries and other public buildings which served more as monuments to their benefactors rather than being of immediate benefit to the unemployed victims of the Great Depression. For this the state and its citizens owed him their thanks.

Governor Clayton Douglass Buck also proved to be a champion of Delaware's unemployed. It was only by his intervention at crucial times that the provision of relief was ensured throughout the depression. No less important was his role as mediator in the various disputes which arose due to the political and geographical divisions within the state. It was through this vital function that he was able to ameliorate the circumstances of the unfortunate victims of the depression. He too is owed the thanks of those citizens who, but for his actions, would have suffered a great deal more.

APPENDIX 'A'

Brief biographies of the principal personages in this thesis.

ACKART, Everett G., b. 1881, chief engineer Du Pont Co; Republican member of the state TERC, Nov 1932 - Apr 1934 and vice-chairman Dec 1932 - Jun 1933.

ADAMS, Wilbur Louis, b. 23 Oct 1884, admitted to Delaware Bar 1907, Democratic candidate for Attorney General of Delaware 1924, US Representative from Delaware 1933-35.

ALLEN, William F., b. 19 Jan 1883, elected to the Delaware Senate in 1924, serving in two sessions, 1925 and 1927, elected to the 75th Congress on 3 Nov 1936.

BROWN, Fred, Republican city councilman for Wilmington's 1st Ward, founder of the Brown-Democrat coalition which controlled the council from Sept 1933 to Jun 1934.

BUCK, Clayton Douglass, b. 21 Mar 1890 d. 27 Jan 1965, married Alice du Pont; chief engineer state Highway Department 1922-29; Governor of Delaware 1929-37; president and chairman of the Equitable Trust Company 1931-53; Republican US Senator from Delaware 1942-48; state tax commissioner 1953-57.<sup>1</sup>

CANDEE, Charles L., b. 16 Jan 1874 d. 9 Jan 1961, ordained Presbyterian Ministry 1901; president of the state Old Age Welfare Commission 1931 - 1945; member of the board of Associated Charities; chairman of the state welfare commission.<sup>2</sup>

CARPENTER, Robert R. M., b. 8 Jun 1882 d. 11 Jun 1949, married Margaretta du Pont 1906; vice president and director of E.I. du Pont Nemours & Co. Inc., vice president News Journal Co., Wilmington

CRANE, Jasper E., b. 1900 d. Dec 1969; state temporary relief director prior to establishment of the Delaware TERC in 1932; chairman of Delaware TERC and CWA in 1933; director of the Wilmington YMCA for 25 years; chairman of the United Community Fund of Northern Delaware 1946-50.<sup>3</sup>

COLLINS, Frank, b. 1865 d. 8 Oct 1943, member of the state legislature 1920-21; Mayor of Newark 1931 to 1943; member and acting chairman of state TERC and chairman of the TERC for NCC from 1932 - 1935.<sup>4</sup>

COOK, Phillip, b. 14 Oct 1863 d. 25 Mar 1938, bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Delaware, consecrated 1920. Republican member of TERC for NCC.<sup>5</sup>

du PONT, Alfred I., b. 12 May 1864 d. 29 Apr 1935, philanthropist; he financed a statewide old-age pension plan in 1929 and was the instigator of Delaware's old-age pension legislation in 1931.

du PONT, Francis V., b. 28 May 1894 d. 20 May 1962, son of T. Coleman du Pont; commissioner and chairman of the state Highway Department for 27 years; state chairman and national committee-man of the Republican Party of Delaware; a commissioner of the US Bureau of Public Roads 1953-56. The climax of his public career was the construction of the Delaware Memorial Bridge.<sup>5</sup>

du PONT, Irénée, b. 21 Dec 1876 d. 1963, brother of Pierre; president E.I. du Pont Nemours & Co. Inc. 1919-26, vice-chairman 1926-40, director of General Motors, co-founder of the American Liberty League.

du PONT, Lammont b. 12 Oct 1880 d. 24 Jul 1952, brother of Pierre, chairman and director of General Motors 1918 - 1937, president of E.I. du Pont Nemours & Co. Inc. 1926 - 1940, chairman of the Family Society's finance committee 1932<sup>6</sup>

du PONT, Pierre S. b. 15 Jan 1870 d. 5 Apr 1954. Industrialist; philanthropist; active in Delaware government as member of state Board of Education, 1919 - 1921, built schools for black and white children; tax commissioner, 1925 - 1937 and 1944 - 1949; helped organise E.I. DuPont Nemours & Co. Inc.; director of General Motors; chairman of the United Repeal Council established to repeal of the 18th Amendment to the US Constitution and supported Association Against the Prohibition Amendment; liquor commissioner of Delaware 1933-38; co-founder of the American Liberty League.<sup>7</sup>

du PONT, T. Coleman, b. 1863 d. 1930, president of E.I. DuPont Nemours & Co. Inc. 1902-15; chairman of the Republican State Committee of Delaware 1902-15; appointed member of the US Senate Jul 1921 to fill vacancy for period ending Nov 1922, elected US Senator from Delaware 1925-31.

du PONT, Jr. William, b. 11 Feb 1896 d. 31 Dec 1965; banker, financier and philanthropist; president of the Delaware Trust Company; one of the wealthiest men in the US.<sup>8</sup>

FORREST, W. K., Mayor of Wilmington 1929-30, established the Mayor's Emergency Unemployment Relief committee in December 1930 to provide relief during the winter of 1930/31.

GRANTLAND, Charles H., b. 16 May 1872 d. 20 May 1940; elected member of the state legislature 1913, re-elected in 1915 served as Speaker until 1918; assistant secretary and secretary of state 1927-1934.<sup>9</sup>

GAWTHROP, Helen W., relief director for rural New Castle County and director of women's relief programmes in Delaware from Oct 1933; also responsible for the state Transient Bureau from Nov 1933.

GARRIGUES, John K., b.1893 d.8 Apr 1970, vice-president and board member of the Delaware Trust Company; member of the board of Delmarva Power and Light Company 1934-67; chairman of the executive committee of the New Castle County Citizens' Relief Committee 1932-33; member of the state board of education and the state housing commission.<sup>10</sup>

HASTINGS, Daniel O., b. 5 Mar 1874 d. 9 May 1966, admitted to Delaware Bar 1902; deputy Attorney General of Delaware 1904-09; Delaware Secretary of State 1909-13 and associate Justice Delaware Supreme Court for 12 year term, resigned 1911; special council for the legislature and city solicitor for Wilmington 1911-17; Municiple Court Judge 1920-29; appointed to succeed Senator Coleman du Pont 10 Dec 1928, elected 4 Nov 1930, for the unexpired term ending 3 Mar 1931, and for the full term of 6 years beginning 4 Mar 1931.<sup>11</sup>

HAZZARD, John C., b. 8 Sept 1888 d. 31 Jan 1954, Wilmington Democratic chairman 1927-33; elected president of the Wilmington City Council 1933; unsuccessful Democratic Congressional Nominee in 1934; Democratic state chairman 1944-46.<sup>12</sup>

HOPKINS, Harry Lloyd, b. Aug 17 1890 d. Jan 29 1946, U.S. Government official, social worker, considered the most trusted adviser and most intimate friend of President F.D. Roosevelt; Federal Administrator of Emergency Relief (1933); Works Progress Administrator (1935-38); Secretary of Commerce (1938-40); special assistant to the President, member of War Production Board, Pacific War Council, and special envoy on various delicate diplomatic missions 1942-45.<sup>13</sup>

HOLCOMB, Bankson T., b. 20 Jan 1879 d. 9 Jan 1945; mayor of New Castle 1928-29; first WPA Administrator in Delaware 1935-37.<sup>14</sup>

HUGHES, James H. (Mrs) Relief Director Kent County.

HUGHES, James H., Democratic Senator from Delaware, elected to the Congress in 1936.

KELSO, Robert, FERA regional field representative, replaced by Arch Mandel in Mar 1934.

LAYTON, Landreth L., b. 1 Nov 1860, d. 14 Jun 1934. Democratic nominee for governor in 1932; president of the Georgetown Trust Company, the Georgetown Gas Company, Layton and Layton Inc., and Layton Cold Storage Company; member of the state TERC from 1932 and relief director for Sussex county until 1933.<sup>15</sup>

MANDELL, Arch, FERA regional field representative, appointed to replace Robert Kelso in Mar 1934.

McHUGH, Frank A., b. 7 Feb 1889 d. 1 Dec 1946; P. du Pont's confidential secretary 1915 to 1932, chairman of Mayor's Emergency Unemployment Relief Committee Dec 1930 - Feb 1931, chairman of Mayor's Employment and Relief Committee Sept 1931 - Nov 1932, vice-chairman of the Delaware Chapter, American Red Cross 1938 to 1942.<sup>16</sup>

McCANN, Francis E. B., US Employment Service Director for Delaware, secretary of Mayor's Emergency Relief Committee Dec 1930 - Feb 1931.

McMULLEN, Richard C., b. 2 Jan 1868, d. 18 Feb 1944, city councilman, member of the Public Utilities Commission and the Unemployment Commission; elected the first Democratic Governor of Delaware for 40 years in 1936 he served until 1941; renominated for governor in 1940 but withdrew due to ill health.<sup>17</sup>

MULLEN, B. Ethelda, joined Associated Charities in 1917 and was appointed general-secretary in 1918 and named executive secretary in 1919, a post she held until January 1951. She was seconded by the Family Society to the state TERC, the RCI, and TERC for NCC, and served as the executive secretary for these organisations, from 1932 to 1935.<sup>18</sup>

SAYLOR, John C., b. 28 Sept 1888 d. 26 Jun 1947, editor of The Labor Herald from 1925 to 1947 and secretary of the Central Labor Union from 1914 to 1918 and 1920 to 1937; publicity committee chairman of the Mayor's Employment and Relief Committee in 1931; secretary of the Industrial Accident Board of Delaware under the administration of Governor McMullen.<sup>19</sup>

SMITH, Walter Dent, b. 26 Aug 1899; president of the Wilmington City Council 1931-32; chairman of Block-Aid Committee 1932; relief director for Wilmington 1932-34; appointed secretary of state in 1934 to succeed Grantland.<sup>20</sup>

SPARKS, Frank C., b. 3 Jan 1876 d. 24 Dec 1944; mayor of Wilmington 1931-33 established the Mayor's Employment Relief Commission to care for the unemployed during the winter of 1931-32; member of the board of health 1911-15; commissioner and president of the Street and Sewer Department 1915-31 and 1933-44.<sup>21</sup>

SPEER, William H., b. 5 Feb 1888 d. 2 May 1948; elected mayor of Wilmington in 1933, the first Democrat to be elected to this office since 1917.<sup>22</sup>

STEWART, J. George, member of the state TERC; Congressman from Delaware, elected in 1934.

STILWELL, Richard, FERA field representative.

THOMPSON-BROWN, J., b. 8 Jun 1882, Vice President E.I. du Pont Nemours & Co. Inc. 1925-31, president of the Family Society.



TOWNSEND, John G., b. 31 May 1871, largely identified with banking, farming and business interests in Delaware; member of Delaware General Assembly 1901-03; Governor of Delaware 1917-21; elected US Senator from Delaware 6 Nov 1928; re-elected 6 Nov 1934 and served until 1942.

TROUGH, John Wiley, relief director, Sussex county Oct 1933 - Apr 1934, appointed to replace Landreth Layton.

WILLIAMS, Aubrey W., b. 23 Aug 1890 d. 3 Mar 1965, social worker; publisher; advisor to President Roosevelt; Director of Wisconsin Conference on Social Work 1922; field representative, American Public Welfare Association 1932; head of the National Youth Administration 1935-43; deputy Federal Relief Administrator.<sup>23</sup>

WARREN-GREEN, P, State Attorney General.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN NOTES TO CHAPTERS.

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| CWA            | Civil Works Administration.  |
| DSA            | Delaware State Archives, Hall of Records, Dover,<br>Delaware.              |
| <u>EE*</u>     | <u>Every Evening</u> , Wilmington, Delaware.                               |
| <u>EJEE*</u>   | <u>Evening Journal Every Evening</u> , Wilmington, Delaware.               |
| FERA           | Federal Emergency Relief Administration.                                   |
| FDR Library    | Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.                        |
| HML            | Hagley Museum and Library, Greenville, Delaware.                           |
| HSD            | Historical Society of Delaware, Wilmington, Delaware.                      |
| <u>JEE*</u>    | <u>Journal-Every Evening</u> , Wilmington, Delaware.                       |
| LMSS           | Longwood Manuscripts   |
| MN             | <u>Morning News</u> , Wilmington, Delaware.                                |
| NA             | National Archives, Washington, D.C.  |
| RCI            | Relief Commission Inc., Wilmington, Delaware.                              |
| RSC            | Roosevelt Study Centre, Middleburg, The Netherlands.                       |
| TERC           | The State of Delaware Temporary Emergency Relief<br>Commission.            |
| TERC for NCC   | Temporary Emergency Relief Commission for New Castle,<br>County, Delaware. |
| U of D Library | Morris Library, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.                  |

\* The Evening Journal and Every Evening were consolidated on January 2nd 1933; no serial or volume numbers were used after this date. The paper was renamed Journal-Every Evening on 29 Aug 1934 and serial and volume numbering reintroduced on 1 Jan 1935.

Unless otherwise stated copies of documents are to be found in the location specified.

#### NOTES TO PREFACE

1. Williams to Mrs James H. Wolfe, 11 Dec 1935, Democratic National Committee Women's Division Correspondence - Delaware 1934-36, Wilson, Mrs Oscar, FDR Library.
2. John W. Jefferies, Testing the Roosevelt Coalition: Connecticut Society and Politics in the Era of World War II (Knoxville, Tenn.: The University of Tennessee Press, 1979), passim.

#### NOTES TO INTRODUCTION.

1. Stephen W. Baskerville, "Political Economy" in Stephen Baskerville and Ralph Willett eds., Nothing Else to Fear: New Perspectives on America in the Thirties (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985) p. 260.
2. James T. Patterson, in the "Preface", p. 7, to The New Deal and the States. Federalism in Transition (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969) observes: "... only a state-by-state analysis would give proper emphasis to the great dissimilarities among the states." He also describes some of the "countless variations in state responses" [to the depression and the New Deal]. The responses of particular other states may be found in John W. Jeffries, Testing the Roosevelt Coalition (Knoxville, Tenn: The University of Tennessee Press, 1979), which gives an account of the effects of the Great Depression in Connecticut; Anthony J. Badger, Prosperity Road: The New Deal, Tobacco, and North Carolina (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); and North Carolina and the New Deal (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources Division of Archives and History, 1981); John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody, eds., The New Deal: The State and Local Levels (2 vols, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1975), the second volume of which contains papers on the effects of the New Deal in a number of states. There are also unpublished "state" theses of variable quality relating to the effects of the depression and the New Deal on other states. See especially: Roger D. Tate, "Easing the Burden: The Era of Depression and New Deal in Mississippi." Ph.D. diss., University of Tennessee, 1978; Charles Michael Kimberly, "The Depression and New Deal

in Maryland." Ph.D. diss., The American University, 1974; Harold Truman Smith, "New Deal Relief Programs in Nevada 1933 to 1935." Ph.D. diss., University of Nevada, Reno, 1972; Jack Irby Hayes Jr., "South Carolina and the New Deal, 1932-1938." Ph.D. diss., University of South Carolina, 1972; Michael Stephen Holmes, "The New Deal in Georgia: An Administrative History." Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1969; Ronald Lynton Heinemann, "Depression and New Deal in Virginia." Ed.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1968; James Frederick Wickens, "Colorado in the Great Depression: A Study of New Deal Policies at State Level." Ph.D. diss., University of Denver, 1964; Harold Gorvine, "The New Deal in Massachusetts." Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1962; Richard Munson Judd, "A History of the New Deal in Vermont." Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1960; John Dean Minton, "The New Deal in Tennessee, 1932-1938." Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1959; Lionel V. Patenaude, "The New Deal and Texas." Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1953.

3. John A. Munroe, History of Delaware (Newark, Del: University of Delaware Press, 1979), p. 10.
4. Ibid., pp. 137-40.
5. Delaware Small Wonder, Pamphlet published by the Delaware State Tourism Office, (Dover, Del., 1991), passim.
6. United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, "Population. Alabama - Missouri", (7 vols, Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1932), vol 3, Part 1, p. 24.
7. Delaware, a booklet prepared under the supervision of the Director of the Bureau of Markets of the State Board of Agriculture, (Dover, Del., 1936), p. 50 (copy in the HML).
8. Munroe, History of Delaware, p. 156. The "hundred" is an ancient English territorial unit used for some functions of local government. The "hundred" in Delaware corresponds to the township in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and to the town in New England. Ibid., p. 149.

9. Article 11, "Legislature" Constitution of the State of Delaware, as adopted on 4 June 1897; Munroe, History of Delaware, p. 167; Fifteenth Census. "Unemployment" (7 vols, Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1931), vol 1, pp. 18 and 25. The 1890 census showed the population of New Castle county as 97,182, of whom 61,431 lived in Wilmington; Kent county had 36,664; and Sussex county 38,647. By 1930, the population of New Castle county had risen to 161,023, which was more than two-thirds of Delaware's total residents, 106,597 of whom lived in Wilmington, and 2,383 were unemployed representing 4.2 per cent of "gainful workers" in the city.
10. Munroe, History of Delaware, p. 168.
11. Ibid., pp. 169, 182 and pp. 266-7; Joseph Frazier Wall, Alfred I. Du Pont: The Man and his Family (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1990), pp. 364, 387, and 390. For more information on the du Ponts' involvement with the Republican Party, see Wall, Alfred I. Du Pont, pp. 357-91 and Robert F. Burk, The Corporate State and the Broker State: The Du Ponts and American National Politics 1925-1940 (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 20, and 25-7.
12. See chapter 5, pp. 107-9, for a discussion of the Levy Court system in Delaware.
13. Carol E. Hoffecker, Delaware: A Bicentennial History (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1977), p. 201; Report of Committee to Study Franchise Taxes in the State of Delaware, 14 Feb 1935, p. 17 (copy in the HML). The franchise tax was levied in accordance with the number and par value of the shares authorised, varying in amount from \$5 to \$25,000 per corporation. M.M. Daugherty, Studies in Taxation in Delaware, The Cost of State Government 1924 to 1937 (Newark, Del.: University of Delaware Press, 1938), p. 72.
14. In 1911, the oil and tobacco 'trusts' were both ordered to be broken up as a result of the judgements in United States v Standard Oil and United States v American Tobacco Company. The immediate aftermath of these two cases was a small but important crop of government successes, amongst which was the splitting up of the du Pont group of explosives manufacturers into three parts. A. D. Neale, The Antitrust Laws of the

- United States of America: A Study of Competition Enforcement by Law (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 100.
15. Wall, Alfred I. Du Pont, pp. 43, 101, 207; Munroe, History of Delaware, pp. 186-7; Burk, The Corporate State, pp. 3-4 and 21.
  16. Carol E. Hoffecker, Corporate Capital: Wilmington in the Twentieth Century (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), p. 5.
  17. Burk, Corporate State, pp. 8 and 41.
  18. A full account of Pierre du Pont's involvement and achievements in these fields may be found in Munroe, History of Delaware, pages 197 to 202.
  19. Hoffecker, Delaware, p. 110; Burk, Corporate State, p. 5. Burk states that the du Ponts' beliefs fitted "comfortably within the centralizing, bureaucratic traditions of social control of the Progressive Era." p. 296. The bibliography on Progressivism is vast; the following is just a representative selection: Robert Wiebe, Search For Order 1870-1920 (London: MacMillan, 1969); Martin Sklar, Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Otis L. Graham, The Great Campaigns (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1971); James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968); Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism. A Reinterpretation of American History 1900-1916 (Chicago, Ill.: Quadrangel Books, 1967); Robert Wiebe, Businessmen and Reform (Chicago, Ill.: Quadrangle Books, 1968).
  20. Wall, Alfred I. Du Pont, p. 19. The Progressive Era, which has been described as a period of social change and political ferment, is generally accepted as having occurred between the end of the depression of the 1890s and the conclusion of World War I. Lewis L. Gould, ed., The Progressive Era (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1974), p. 1.
  21. Munroe, History of Delaware, pp. 202 and 208; Wall, Alfred I. Du Pont pp. 524-5; "G.O.P. Women Told Of Benefits to State From du Ponts' Gifts", JEE, 29 Oct 1936, pp. 1 and 4; Daugherty, Studies in Taxation in Delaware p. 97.

22. Elliot A. Rosen, Hoover, Roosevelt and the Brains Trust, From Depression to New Deal (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 1 and 7.
23. Frank Freidel, Franklin D. Roosevelt: The Ordeal (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1954), pp. 254-6. In 1921, Franklin Roosevelt, a former Assistant Secretary of the Navy, was struck down by poliomyelitis. During his rehabilitation, he found that the waters at Warm Springs, Georgia, heavy with mineral salts, allowed extended exercise without overtiring or enervating him. By 1928, FDR had invested a large sum of his own money turning Warm Springs from a rather seedy resort into a leading hydrotherapeutic centre. James MacGregor Burns, Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956) pp. 88 and 100.
24. Burk, Corporate State, pp. 52 and 61-2.
25. David E. Kyvig, ed., "Sober Thoughts: Myths and Reality of National Prohibition after Fifty Years", in Law, Alcohol, and Order Perspectives on National Prohibition (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 15. The election of 1928 was not a simple occurrence. Smith was the first Roman Catholic candidate to attempt to win the presidency, and after his defeat observed: "There is no chance for a Catholic to be President. Not in my lifetime...." William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal 1932-1940 (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 5.
26. Burk, Corporate State, pp. 26, 35-7, 107, 120; Wall, Alfred I. Du Pont, p. 521.
27. George Wolfskill, The Revolt of the Conservatives: A History of the American Liberty League, 1934-1940 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962), Preface p. 8. The magnitude of Roosevelt's victory in the 1936 election resulted in the decision to close down completely the public activities of the League. Charles Michelson, Publicity Director of the Democratic National Committee, concluded that about all the League got for its efforts was "the conversion of America's favorite family - the Du Ponts - into political enemy number one." Ibid., pp. 247 and 263;

28. Ibid., pp. 545-6; Munroe, History, pp. 211-2; Samuel I. Rosenman, ed. The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, (6 vols, New York: Random House, 1938), vol. V, p. 588.
29. Leuchtenburg, Roosevelt and the New Deal, pp. 1-3.
30. Message of the Hon. C. Douglass Buck, Governor of Delaware to the 104th General Assembly, 3 Jan 1933, p. 26 (copy in the HML); Burk, Corporate State, p. 408.
31. Memorandum from E.E. Lincoln to P. du Pont, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 765-3, HML. In this it is stated that the total of federal direct relief grants to the State of Delaware during the period 1933 to 30 Jun 1937 was \$28,400,000, as compared with federal tax receipts from Delaware in the same period amounting to \$160,266,000. Even allowing for other federal payments under non-relief programmes, this is indicative of the imbalance between the volume of federal funds received in and federal taxes paid out by the state.
32. See Chapter 1, p. 20, for an account of the development of the Delmarva Broiler industry.



NOTES TO CHAPTER 1.

1. Quoted in Albert U. Romasco, "Herbert Hoover's Policies for Dealing with the Great Depression: The End of the Old Order or the Beginning of the New" in Martin L. Fausold, ed., The Hoover Presidency: A Reappraisal (Albany: State University of New York, 1974), p. 71.
2. Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Herbert Hoover. Containing Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President March 4 to December 31 1929, and January 1 to December 31, 1930 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974 and 1976), "Address to the Gridiron Club, December 14, 1929", pp. 472-3; "Radio Address to the Nation on Unemployment Relief, October 18, 1931", p. 490. On 3 February 1931, in a public statement Hoover confirmed his belief that "the spirit of charity and mutual self-help through voluntary giving ... [was] the basis of successful relief" and that this "has been the American way of relieving distress...." Herbert Hoover, The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover, The Great Depression 1921-1941 (London: Hollis and Carter, 1953), pp. 55-6.
3. James T. Patterson, America's Struggle Against Poverty 1900-1980 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. 42-3. See Hoover Memoirs, pp. 2-15 and 38-40, which gives his perspective of the causes and phasing of the Great Depression; Jim Potter, The American Economy Between the World Wars (London: The MacMillan Press, 1974), pp. 4-5, 106-107 and 109; William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal 1932-1940 (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 244; and Anthony J. Badger, The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-40 (New York: MacMillan Press Ltd., 1989), pp. 112-4.
4. 75 Years of Service 1884-1956, Family Service in Northern Delaware Associated Charities 1886-1931, Family Society 1931-1956, Pamphlet issued by the Family Society (copy in the HML).
5. B. Ethelda Mullen, "The Development of Welfare Services in Delaware since 1930", in Henry Clay Reed, Delaware, A History of the First State, (2 vols, New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1947), II, 824-6.

6. "Reminiscences of Miss B. Ethelda Mullen", in The First Fifty Years, The Family Society (formally Associated Charities) 1884-1934 (Wilmington, 1934), p. 30 (copy in the HML).
7. L. du Pont to Raskob, 18 Nov 1930, L. du Pont Papers, ACC 473, File 473-101, HML.
8. TERC for NCC, Interim Report, 1 Mar 1935 - 31 Mar 1936, p.1. HML.
9. "Mayor Requests Fund of \$100,000 to Aid City Needy", EE, Vol. 63, No. 289, 5 Dec 1930, p. 1. William J. Barber, From New Era to New Deal (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 94, commenting on unemployment in the construction industry in the early 1930s, states that: "Information on the precise dimensions of the problem was cloudy at best. Accurate current data on trends in the labor force were simply not available." This is indicative of the problem which was recognised by President Hoover in July 1930 when he appointed a committee "to advise ... on methods for revision of the statistical service for the determination of unemployment...." The problem was not fully addressed until 1933 when the FERA began collecting statistical information on unemployment. Even so, Hopkins admitted in 1936 that: "A major obstacle in the path of meeting the problem of unemployment has been the absence of really adequate unemployment figures." Patterson, America's Struggle Against Poverty p. 41.
10. Leo Wolman, "The Measurement of Unemployment", a discussion held on 24 June 1931, at the University of Chicago, Norman Wait Harris Memorial Foundation Eighth Institute Round Table Conference on "Unemployment as a World Problem", June 23 to July 2, 1931, p. 7. Copy supplied by Dr S. W. Baskerville.
11. Barber, From New Era, p. 25.
12. Forrest to P. du Pont, 21 May 1931, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS Series 10, File 1164, HML.
13. Work and Relief In Wilmington Delaware 1931-1932, issued by the Mayor's Employment and Relief Committee of Wilmington, Delaware (Wilmington, 1932) (copy in the HML).
14. EE, 5 Dec 1930, p. 25.

15. Udo Sautter, Three Cheers for the Unemployed: Government and Unemployment Before the New Deal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 121. For useful discussion of the USES, see Ch 3, especially p. 121; Ch 4 III, p. 154; and Ch 5 III, p. 251.
16. Donald Crowe, "Work Relief Programs Wilmington and State of Delaware 1930-1936", "Federal Writers' Project Papers", vol. 6 (6 November 1936), p. 2, Special Collections Dept., U of D Library.
17. "Nearly 1500 Aided During Month By Fund Subscribers.", EE, Vol. 63, No. 309, 30 Dec 1930 p. 1.
18. Proceedings, 5th Biennial Convention, Delaware State Federation of Labor, Hotel Richardson, Dover, Del., 9 Feb 1931, Resolution No. 2 (copy in the HML).
19. The Family Society (Formerly Associated Charities) and Wilmington's Problem of Unemployment and Relief. A Message From the Family Society (Wilmington, 1931), L. du Pont Papers, Acc 473, File 101, HML.
20. US Bureau of Census, Special Report, Relief Expenditure By Governmental and Private Organisations 1929 and 1931 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1932), Table 1, p. 11, and Table 3, p. 31.
21. "Mayor's Unemployment Relief Committee, Audit 9 Dec 1930 to 18 Sept, 1931", P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, "Unemployment and Relief 1930-39", HML.
22. Crowe, "Work Relief Programs", pp. 3-5.
23. Editorial "Wilmington's Work or Relief Plan Commended.", Wilmington Morning News, 28 Jan 1931, p. 5.
24. McCann to P. du Pont, 16 Sept 1931, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164-6, HML.
25. Wilmington's Non-Competitive Work Program, Pamphlet issued by the Mayor's Committee, Sept, 1931 (copy in the HML). The morale-building effect of work-relief was also found by Lorena Hickok when she investigated the effects of the Civil Works Administration programme of 1933-34. She wrote to Hopkins from Des Moines, Iowa, on 25 Nov 1933:

Today was the first CWA payday in the state ... over 5000 men ... lined up and got paid - MONEY.... They took it with wide grins and made bee-lines for the grocery stores ... [to] buy

what they pleased, with cash.... I wonder if you have any idea of what CWA is doing for the morale of these people and the communities. Officials ... tell me it's almost beyond belief.

Richard Lowitt and Maurine Beasley, eds., One Third of a Nation (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1981), p. 112.

26. McCann to P. du Pont, 16 Sept 1931, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
27. Crowe, "Work and Relief In Wilmington Del.", p. 7. The provision made for Wilmington's unemployed compared favourably with those of Detroit and Boston, two of the most generous cities in the nation for public help of the jobless. Detroit's Department of Public Welfare cared for the unemployed between 1929 and 1933; however, in the summer of 1931, due to lack of funds the relief rolls had to be halved. Boston's Overseer of Public Welfare coped with a sixfold increase in the number of jobless between 1929 and 1932, although it was still only aiding one out of every four families in need: see Badger, The New Deal, p. 36.
28. Delaware, a booklet published by the Bureau of Markets of the State Board of Agriculture, State of Delaware, (Dover, Del., 1932) (copy in the HML). The value of all crops produced in Delaware in 1929 was \$15,010,134, including poultry - \$3,896,510, and eggs - \$4,066,278. Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census: 1930 (7 vols, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1932), vol 4 "Agriculture - General Report. Statistics by Subject", pp. 688 and 712.
29. Richard S. Kirkendall, "The New Deal and Agriculture", in John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody, eds., The New Deal, (2 vols. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1975), vol I, p. 84, states that farm income fell from almost \$17 billion in 1919 to less than \$9 billion in 1929; and in 1929, the purchasing power of farm goods was only 91 per cent of the pre-war level. This view is supported by Potter, The American Economy Between the World Wars, pp. 26-7. For more details of the state of U.S. agriculture in the period following the Great War see W.D. Rowley and W.L. Wilson, M.L. Wilson and the Campaign for Domestic Allotment (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970); Theodore Saloutos and J.D. Hicks,

Agricultural Discontent in the Middle West, 1900-39 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1951).

30. "Clayton Douglass Buck Sr." in Roger A. Martin, A History of Delaware Through its Governors 1776-1984 (Wilmington Del.: McClafferty, 1984), p. 400. The Japanese Beetle, an insect that injures trees, crops and garden plants, first entered the USA in 1916. See The World Book Encyclopedia (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 1973), p. 44.
31. Hoffecker, Delaware, p. 58. "Truck" crops are those which are usually transported from the producer to market by road, e.g. vegetables and fruit. The total value of these in 1929 was in excess of \$10 million and included: tomatoes - \$1,370,265, beans - \$350,602, and more than \$7.5 million of poultry products. Census: 1930, pp. 688 and 803.
32. Richard B. Carter, Clearing New Ground. The Life of John G. Townsend Jr. (Georgetown, Del.: The County Press Inc., 1983), pp. 438-9.
33. Buck to mayors, 7 Sept 1931, Governor's Papers, DSA.
34. Brown, President, Associated Charities, 15 May, 1931, L. du Pont Papers, Acc. No. 473, File 101, HML.
35. "More Than 1000 Families Look to Public Help Here.", EE, Vol. 64, No. 143, 16 Jun 1931, p. 1.
36. L. du Pont to I. du Pont, 18 Jul, 1931, L. du Pont Papers Acc. 228, Series J-100, HML.
37. Telegram from Buck to Hoover, 3 Sept, 1931, Governor's Papers, DSA. Missouri, Rhode Island, Indiana, Michigan, Connecticut, Illinois, New York, California and West Virginia also informed the President that they were able to care for their own unemployed. Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States. Herbert Hoover. January 1 to December 31, 1931 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), "Statement on Unemployment Relief Efforts in the State of Missouri", p. 449.
38. "Delaware's Financial Problem No. 1: Condition of the States Funds", Greater Delaware, A Bulletin of Information Published by the Taxpayers' Research League of Delaware. (10 Dec, 1931) (copy in the HML). Badger (New Deal, p. 56) states that: "Some of the most effective grass-roots

political pressure during the Depression came from organisations of taxpayers anxious to cut government spending in order to relieve their own tax burdens."

39. Martin, A History of Delaware, p.400. Delaware's principal reason for borrowing during the period 1924-1937 was for the purpose of constructing highways. It did not borrow for this purpose after 1932. From 30 June 1929 to 1 July 1934 inclusive, the state retired highway bonds to the par value of \$10,325,000, none of which was due until 1958. See M. M. Daugherty, Studies in Taxation in Delaware, The Cost of State Government 1924-1937 (Newark, Del.: University of Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station, 1938), pp. 65-99. For discussion of indebtedness in other states, see Patterson, The New Deal and the States. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 26-8, 39-43 and 46-7.
40. Message of Hon. C. Douglass Buck to the One Hundred and Third General Assembly of the State of Delaware, 6 Jan 1931, pp. 22-4 and 36, Governor's Papers, DSA.
41. P. du Pont to Buck, 9 Sept, 1931, Governor's Papers, DSA.
42. "Mayor Announces City Committee on Unemployment.", EE, Vol. 64, No. 211, 5 Sept 1931, pp. 1-2.
43. Loan Plans 1931, 4 Feb 1931, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164-5, HML.
44. Crowe, "Work Relief Program", p. 5.
45. L. du Pont, 30 Nov 1931, L. du Pont Papers, Acc. 228 Series J-100, HML.
46. "Relief Group Gets Phone Company's Unused Building.", EE, Vol. 64, No. 257, 28 Oct 1931 p. 1.
47. Impressions Concerning Relief in Wilmington, 31 Jul 1932, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164-6, HML.
48. "\$200,000 Set By Mayor Sparks' Relief Committee.", EE, Vol. 64, No. 247, 16 Oct 1931, p. 1.
49. Crowe, "Work Relief Program", p. 7.
50. Denney to Buck, 18 Sept 1931, Governor's Papers, DSA.
51. "Solicitations For Relief Funds Now Underway In City.", EE, Vol. 64 No. 252, 28 Oct 1931, p. 1.

52. "Relief Donations Are Untaxable.", Ibid., p. 1.
53. Foster to I. du Pont, 21 Oct 1931, I. du Pont Papers, Acc. 228 Series J-189, HML.
54. Buck to various companies, 25 Sept 1931, Governor's Papers, DSA.
55. "State to Issue \$1,000,000 Road Bond.", EE, Vol. 64, No. 236, 31 Oct 1931, p. 1.
56. "Cuts May Involve Higher Officials", EE, Vol. 65, No. 130, 28 May 1932, p. 1. Wilmington's bonded indebtedness had reached more than \$3 million in 1930 and at that time the balance of the city's Sinking Fund was only \$773,000. Message of Hon. C. Douglass Buck to the 103rd General Assembly, 6 Jan 1931, p. 49, Governor's Papers, DSA.
57. "Teachers' Pay Cut Not To Be Made At Present Time", EE, Vol. 65, No. 139, 1 Jun 1932, p. 19.
58. John A. Munroe, The University of Delaware: A History (Dover, Del.: University of Delaware, 1986), p. 279.
59. "Results of Unemployment Survey", 6 Nov 1931; and P. du Pont to Walter S. Gifford, Chairman of POUR, 16 Nov 1931, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML. In the fall of 1930, President Hoover set up a committee on unemployment to collect information, monitor the situation, and encourage voluntary action. A year later it was converted into the President's Organization for Unemployment Relief. Its major task was to stimulate voluntary activity, but implicit in its brief was the need to demonstrate that the local and private resources were sufficient to weather the storm and thus rebut the case for federal action: see Brock, Welfare, Democracy, and the New Deal, p. 87.
60. Buck to Hallam, 27 Oct 1931, Governor's Papers, DSA.
61. Buck to Sawyer, 27 Nov 1931, Ibid.
62. Telegram from P. du Pont to Gifford, 27 Oct, 1931, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
63. Crowe, "Work Relief Programs", pp. 7-8.
64. EE, 16 Oct 1931, p. 2.
65. Crowe, "Work Relief Programs", pp. 8-9.
66. W. du Pont to I. du Pont, 3 Mar, 1932, I. du Pont Papers, Acc 228, Series J-189, HML.

67. Report, Traffic Survey of Wilmington, Delaware, Mayor's Employment and Relief Committee, p. 7 (copy in the HML).
68. I. du Pont to Scott, 9 May 1932, I. du Pont Papers, Acc.228 Series J-189, HML.
69. McHugh to various organisations, 25 May 1932, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
70. "Impressions Concerning Relief in Wilmington", 31 Jul 1932, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164-6, HML.
71. "Completing Final Arrangements of Block-Aid Drive.", EE, Vol. 65, No. 131, 28 May 1932, p. 1.
72. "Block-Aid Drive Leaders Enroll 2000 Volunteers.", EE, Vol. 65, No. 130, 28 May 1932, p. 18.
73. Smith to Sparks, 31 Oct 1932, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
74. "Pierre Du Pont Sees Success For Block-Aid Drive.", EE, Vol. 65, No. 139, 1 Jun 1932, p. 19.
75. Jones to Buck, 5 May 1932, Governor's Papers, DSA.
76. Sharp to Buck, 14 Jun 1932, Ibid.
77. Smith to Sparks, 31 Oct 1932, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
78. "Deny Unemployed Rally Permission.", EE, Vol. 65, No. 140, 9 Jul 1932, p. 1.
79. "Unemployed Here Present Demand For Food Orders.", EE, Vol. 65, No. 184, 1 Aug 1932, p. 1-2.
80. Michael B. Katz, In the Shadow of the Poor House. A Social History of Welfare in America (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1986), p. 210.
81. Patterson, America's Struggle Against Poverty, pp. Preface 7, 50, 54-5
82. EE, 1 Aug 1932, p. 12
83. Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), pp. 68-9, and 71.
84. Badger, The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940, p. 39.



85. "Relief Body Appointed By Governor.", EE, Vol. 65, No. 141, 10 Jun 1932, p. 1. It is interesting to note the appointment of three women to the Unemployment Commission, especially as they may not necessarily all have been social workers. In the 1920s and 1930s, this was one of the few professions in which women were able to reach positions of real power and influence.
86. Report of the Unemployment Relief Commission of the State of Delaware, 30 September 1932, pp. 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 18, and 20 (copy in the HML).
87. Ibid., pp. 18-9.
88. Ibid., pp. 21-2.
89. Ibid., pp. 16, 22-4 and 28.
90. "Plan For Winter Relief Launched By Mayor Sparks.", EE, Vol. 65, No. 240, 6 Oct 1932, pp. 1 and 18.
91. "Frank A. McHugh Again Heads Relief Activity.", EE, Vol. 65, No. 244, 11 Oct 1932, pp. 1 and 18.
92. Crowe, "Work Relief Programs", p. 13.
93. I. du Pont to McHugh, 30 Dec 1932, I. du Pont Papers, Acc. 228 Series J-191, HML.
94. "Governor Buck Pledges State's Credit To Help Unemployed." EE, 1 Nov 1931, Vol. 65, No. 263, p. 1 and 22.
95. Crane to McHugh, 21 Nov 1931, I. du Pont Papers, Acc. 228 Series J-191, HML.
96. McHugh to I. du Pont, 21 Nov 1932, Ibid.
97. Crowe, "Work Relief Program", p. 13.
98. EE, 1 Nov 1932, p. 22. Memorandum from Haynes to Croxton, 1 Sept 1932, The Papers of Harry L. Hopkins, Box 56, Delaware - Field Reports 1932-35, FDR Library. Haynes also noted that: "The state has ample balances in various state accounts to cover this relief need, but these cannot be made available without action of the Legislature."
99. "Governor Buck Asks Solons [to] Act Speedily On Relief Work.", EE, vol. 65, No. 275, 15 Nov 1932, pp. 1-2.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2. .

1. "Democratic Trend Throughout US Reflected In State", EE, Vol. 65, No. 270, 9 Nov 1932, p. 1. The election for Congressman was a three-cornered fight, with Adams polling 46.1 per cent of the vote. The independent Republican candidate, Burdette Short, polled 9.4 per cent; so if the election been a choice between candidates of the two major parties, it is almost certain that the official Republican candidate, Reuben Satterthwaite, would have been elected: see Walter J. Norbet, "The Vote for United States Representative from Delaware in Relation to the Trend Towards Urbanization in the State 1920 - 1952" (Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Delaware, 1954), pp. 11-12. In the 1930s, Kent and Sussex counties had equal representation in the state legislature, each with five Senators and 10 Representatives. New Castle county, because of the size of its population, had additional representation and elected seven Senators and 15 Representatives. Each member represented a separate district; but since the districts were more equal in area than in population, the inequities grew with time. This apportionment was declared unconstitutional in 1964: Robert B. Harmon, Government and Politics in Delaware and the District of Columbia: An Information Source Survey - Public Administration Series: Bibliography (Monticello, Illinois: Vance Bibliographies, 1978), p. 6.
2. "Clayton Douglass Buck Sr." in Roger A. Martin, A History of Delaware Through Its Governors 1776-1984 (Wilmington, Del.: McClafferty, 1984), p. 403. Buck, who was generally regarded as something of an independent, was elected with the help of thousands of Democratic votes. "Du Pont", Part 1 "The Family", Fortune, Vol. X, No. 5, Nov 1934 (copy in HML).
3. "Legislature Convenes At Dover", EE, Vol. 65, No. 275, 15 Nov 1932, p. 1.
4. "\$2,000,000 Relief Passes House, Senate.", EE, Vol. 65, No. 289, 2 Dec 1932, pp. 1-2.
5. "Relief Session Of Legislature Costs State \$12,247.17.", Ibid., p. 1.

6. Emergency Relief Act, 1932, p. 1 (copy in HML).
7. \$1 million was taken from the total receipts from franchise taxes, which in 1932 totalled \$4,173,755. The balance went into the school fund. The other \$1 million was appropriated from the cash in the general fund, \$700,000 of which was subsequently replaced by transfer from the sinking fund. See M. M. Daugherty, Studies in Taxation in Delaware, The Cost of State Government 1924-1937 (Newark, Del.: University of Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station, 1938), p. 65.
8. Walter Dent Smith, Six Months Report, submitted to the New Castle County Citizens Relief Committee, 10 May 1933, p. 1, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
9. Emergency Relief Act, 1932, pp. 1-2. The back-dating of this Act to 1 Nov 1932, overcame the difficulty created by the Attorney General's ruling of 21 Nov 1932.
10. "Aid For Destitute As State Legislators Act", EE, Vol. 65, No. 288, 1 Dec 1932, p. 2.
11. Interim Report of the Temporary Emergency Relief Commission, 1 Nov 1932 to 30 Sept 1933, pp. 3-4 (copy in HML).
12. McHugh to Buck, 28 Dec 1932, Governor's Papers, DSA.
13. Donald Crowe, "Work Relief Programs Wilmington and State of Delaware 1930-1936", Federal Writers' Project Papers 6 vols., (vol. VI, 1936-7), pp. 17-18, Special Collections Dept., U of D Library.
14. Interim Report of the TERC, p. 17.
15. Smith, Six Months Report, p. 20.
16. W. du Pont to I. du Pont, 14 Dec 1932, Iréné du Pont Papers, Acc. 228 Series J-191, HML.
17. Interim Report of the TERC, pp. 8-9; Garrigues to P. du Pont, 7 Aug 1933, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
18. Crowe, "Work Relief Programs", p. 19.
19. Smith, Six Months Report, pp. 1 and 4; J. B. Jessup, New Castle County Citizens Relief Committee, Circular, 12 May 1933, Irénée du Pont Papers, Acc. 228 Series J-100, HML.

20. Message of the Hon. C. Douglass Buck, Governor of Delaware to the 104th General Assembly, 3 Jan 1933, pp. 5-6, 10-11, 18 and 26 (copy in HML). See Anthony J. Badger, The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940 (London: MacMillan Press Ltd., 1989), pp 67-9, for an account of the bank closures nationally, which occurred prior to Roosevelt's inauguration on 4 March 1933.
21. Anna T. Lincoln, Wilmington Delaware: Three Centuries Under Four Flags, Middle Atlantic States Historical Publication Series No. 18 (New York: Kennikat Press, 1972), p. 371.
22. William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940 (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), pp. 52 and 120; William R. Brock, Welfare, Democracy, and the New Deal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 171-77; Badger, p. 191; James T. Patterson, America's Struggle Against Poverty 1900-1980 (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. 57-8.
23. Michael B. Katz, In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America (New York: Basic Books Inc. Publishers, 1986), p. 219.
24. Ibid., p. 224; Lewis Meriam, Relief and Social Security (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1946), p. 17; TERC for NCC, Interim Report March 1 1935 - March 31 1936, p. 26.
25. Interim Report of TERC, p. 12.
26. James A. Kelley, Essay "My Experiences in the Civilian Conservation Corps 1933 - 1936" in I Remember When, Part 2, Reminiscences by Delaware Area Senior Citizens, 1900-1941 University of Delaware Continuing Education and the Delaware State Arts Council, p. 32 (copy in HSD).
27. "Delaware Assigned Two CCC Camps", EJEE, 3 Oct 1933, pp. 1 and 16; "Washington, D.C. Nov 18 (Special)", EJEE, 18 Nov 1933, p. 1.
28. TERC, Report of Operations to February 1934, pp. 20-1 (copy in HML).
29. "Dr Speer Chosen Mayor Of City", EJEE, 5 Jun 1933, pp. 1 and 16.
30. TERC, Interim Report, p. 5.
31. "Del. Payrolls 33 P. C. Higher In November", EJEE, 15 Dec 1933, p. 1.

32. Director of the Bureau of Markets of the State Board of Agriculture, Delaware (Dover, Del., 1936), p. 67 (copy in HML).
33. Annual Report of the State Auditor 1932-1933, p. 198 (copy in HML).
34. Buck to Crane, 8 Jan 1933, Governor's Papers, DSA. The TERC was so keen to provide the maximum of work-relief that \$440,550 of the \$500,000 allotted had been authorized by the end of April 1933. Smith, Six Months Report, p. 2.
35. Crane to Buck, 12 Jun 1933, Governor's Papers, DSA.
36. Attachment to letter W. D. Smith to I. du Pont, 30 Jun 1933, Irénée du Pont Papers, Acc.228 Series J-191, HML.
37. Crane to Buck, 23 Oct 1933 and attachment Memorandum of Relief Funds and Expenditures, Governor's Papers, DSA.
38. Crane to Hopkins, 19 Jun 1933; Hopkins to Crane, 26 June 1933; Collins to Hopkins, 6 Jul 1933 and 25 Aug 1933 Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware, NA.
39. Hopkins to Buck, 12 Sept 1933, Governor's Papers, DSA.
40. Smith to Buck, 18 Aug 1933, Ibid.
41. "Relief Body May Have To Cease Work", EJEE, 28 Aug 1933, p. 1.
42. "Fewer Receive Direct Relief In State Now", EJEE, 22 Sept 1933, pp. 1 and 14.
43. Crane to Buck, 23 Oct 1933, Governor's Papers, DSA.
44. Brock, Welfare, Democracy, and the New Deal, p. 178
45. Final Report on the WPA Program 1935-43 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1976), pp. 5-6; "US Transient Camps For Wil., Dover, Laurel", EJEE, 1 Nov 1933, p. 1; Gawthorp to du Pont, 2 Nov 1933, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML. In October 1933, Helen Gawthrop was appointed, by Ellen S. Woodward, Head of the Federal Women's Programme, to direct Delaware's relief programmes for women. In November, at the request of the TERC, she and Roberta Williams, state director for transients, assumed the responsibility for the state FERA-funded Transients Bureau.

46. Hopkins to Buck, 19 Sept 1933, Governor's Papers, DSA. The Federal Surplus Relief Corporation (FSRC) was incorporated in Delaware on 5 October 1933; its purpose was the distribution of farm surpluses to persons on relief rolls. This programme was designed not only to help farmers by the removal from the market of certain price-depressing crop surpluses, but also to assist persons on relief rolls who received these farm products through distribution systems set up by the state emergency relief administrations. Between October 1933 and October 1935, the FSRC distributed to states commodities valued at \$265 million. In November 1935, the FSRC was renamed the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation and placed under the direction of the Department of Agriculture. Final Report on the WPA Program 1935-43, p. 5; FERA Press Release No. 268, "Federal Surplus Relief Corporation Gets Under Way", 5 Oct 1933. Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, Mar 1933-36, 400 General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
47. Hopkins to Buck, 20 Nov 1933, Governor's Papers, DSA.
48. Crowe, "Work Relief Program", pp. 28-9.
49. Interim Report of the Temporary Emergency Relief Commission for New Castle County, March 1, 1935 - March 31, 1936, pp. 15-17 (copy in HML). William Virden, a member of Rehoboth Town Council and a life long friend of Layton, giving evidence to the joint legislative committee investigating the TERC's allegations, claimed that "Layton's appointment was compensation for his defeat in the Gubernatorial election of 1932." Minutes of Committee Investigation of Temporary Emergency Relief Committee, 2 vols., vol. II, "Hearings from 19 Jan to 23 Feb 1934", p. 806 (copy in U of D Library).
50. Crane to Hopkins, 18 Oct 1933; Memorandum Hopkins to Bane, 26 Oct 1933, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
51. Crane to Hopkins, 6 Nov 1933, Ibid.
52. Buck to Hopkins, 6 Nov 1933; Hopkins to Buck, 25 Nov 1933, Ibid. The TERC's Interim Report was submitted to the General Assembly on 3 Nov and the Joint Committee was not appointed until 23 Nov.

53. Concerning The Work Of The Former Executive Director Confidential Report On Sussex County, 23 Nov 1933, Ibid.
54. F. R. Stilwell, Confidential Report On Sussex County Of Present Activities And Plans For The Future, 23 Nov 1933, Ibid.; "Layton Demands Full Probe In Denying Charges", EJEE, 22 Nov 1933, p. 1; TERC, Interim Report p. 18;
55. P. du Pont to Brodinsky, 3 Jan 1934, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS, 10 Series A, File 1164, HML.
56. Buck to Hopkins, 17 Nov 1933, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware; Report of the Joint Committee of the Legislature of the Administration of the Temporary Emergency Relief Commission, pp. 1, 2, 6, 16, 18, 19-21, Governor's Papers, DSA.
57. Katz, In the Shadow of the Poorhouse, p. 225; "Prompt Work By Assembly Gov.'s Hope", EJEE, 14 Oct 1933, p. 1.
58. Ibid.
59. "Mismanagement Of Sussex Relief Work Is Charged Against Layton", EJEE, 4 Nov 1933, p. 2.
60. "Loan For State Projects Not To Exceed \$2,500,000", EJEE, 18 Sept 1933, pp. 1 and 19.
61. State of Delaware, Journal of the State Senate at a Special Session of the General Assembly 18 Oct-6 Dec 1933, pp. 190-1 (copy in DSA).
62. EJEE, 18 Sept 1933, p. 19.
63. "Favor Cities, Towns To Get Loans Of NRA", EJEE, 7 Nov 1933, p. 2.
64. Martin, A History of Delaware Through Its Governors, p. 405.
65. "Legislature Has Set Record For Sessions", EJEE, 1 Jan 1934, p. 1.
66. "Gov. Buck's Proclamation, First To Dissolve Delaware Assembly", EJEE, 9 Dec 1933, p. 1.
67. "Work Plans In Bills Up To Governor", EJEE, 9 Dec 1933, p. 1;  
Report of Mosquito Control Work, State of Delaware October 2 1933 - December 31 1934, p. 3 (copy in HML); EJEE, 1 Jan 1934, p. 17.
68. "Dispute By Biggs On Eligibility Of Legislators", EJEE, 1 Jan 1934,  
Senator Keith, who was secretary to the state Board of Charities resigned from this post on 2 October 1933; Senator Maull completed the

unexpired portion of his term as a member of the state Game and Fish Commission on 19 September 1933; Senator Wharton resigned from the office of state revenue collector on 12 January 1934; and Representative Schroeder resigned his seat and the attempt to unseat him was abandoned. "Senate Upholds Three Members' Right To Seats", The Sussex Countian, Vol. 44, No. 40, 19 Jan 1934, p. 1; "Mandamus On Senate Seats Up On January 31", Vol. 44, No. 41, 26 Jan 1934, p. 1.

69. Ibid. p. 17.

70. P. du Pont to Roosevelt, 13 Nov 1933, President's Personal Files 1933 - 45, PPF 979, Du Pont, Pierre S., FDR Library.

71. "\$93,465 Liquor, Beer Revenue For Delaware", EJEE, 8 Jan 1934, p. 1.

72. "Legislature Has Set Record For Session", EJEE, 1 Jan 1934, pp. 1 and 17.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER 3.

1. Richard Lowitt and Maurine Beasley ed, One Third of a Nation; Lorena Hickok Reports on the Great Depression (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1981), p. 13; "Civil Works Under State Relief Body", EJEE, 13 Nov 1933, pp. 1 and 8.
2. Smith to Buck, 27 Nov 1933, Governor's Papers, DSA.
3. "Men And Women To Start Next Week On Jobs", EJEE, 16 Nov 1933, pp. 1 and 14.
4. Ibid., p. 14.
5. TERC Report, Delaware's Unemployment Relief Problem, 1934, p. 22 (copy in HML).
6. Donald Crowe, "Work Relief Programs Wilmington and State of Delaware 1930-1936", Federal Writers' Project Papers, 6 vols, Vol VI, (6 November 1936), p. 24 (copy in U of D Library).
7. "Thousands On State Works Next Monday", EJEE, 18 Nov 1933, p. 1.
8. Review of CWA Activities in the State of Delaware, 7 May 1934, p. 1 (copy in U of D Library).
9. Crowe, "Work Relief Programs", p. 24. These sewing units provided the majority of employment for women and by 18 January 1934 Delaware had



reached almost 98 per cent of its quota of 983. See Review of CWA Activities, p. 7.

10. EJEE, 16 Nov 1933, p. 14.
11. "Expect 8000 In State Will Get Jobs At Once", EJEE, 16 Nov 1933, p.
12. "CWA Program Is Approved By Council", EJEE, 1 Dec 1933, p. 11.
13. "Work For 2000 More Men, Women Under CWA Plan", EJEE, 5 Dec 1933, p. 1.
14. Ibid., p. 1.
15. "Council To Act On City Works Crisis", EJEE, 8 Dec 1933, pp. 1 and 8.
16. Ibid., p. 1.
17. "Council Goes Along With CWA Program", EJEE, 9 Dec 1933, p. 1.
18. "Hazzard, Mayor Clash Over Date In Calling Parley", EJEE, 8 Dec 1933, p. 1. The Wilmington City Council comprised 12 ordinary members and a president with 8 members elected by district; four others plus the president elected city-wide, each for a four year term. The mayor was also elected for a similar term: See League of Women Voters of Greater Wilmington, Wilmington, Know Your City Government, 1967 (copy in HML).
19. Review of CWA Activities, p. 4.
20. "Smith Directs Aid, Also CWA Work In State", EJEE, 9 Dec 1933, pp. 1-2; TERC, Report of Operations to 1 February 1934, p. 15.
21. Crowe, "Work Relief Programs", p. 23; and Review of CWA Activities, p. 3.
22. "State Asks Further CWA Assistance", EJEE, 20 Jan 1934, p. 9.
23. Smith to Aubrey Williams, 1 Feb 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, File 400 - General Correspondence State Administrations - Delaware, NA.
24. "CWA Jobs For Skilled 'Collar Men'", EJEE, 20 Dec 1933 pp. 1 and 10; Bonnie Fox Schwartz, The Civil Works Administration 1933 - 1934, The Business of Emergency Employment in the New Deal (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 133-4. Delaware's Incorporation Law was passed in 1899; by 1929, 84,146 companies had incorporated in the state. These companies were not required to do business in the state and had only to keep a minimum of office staff

- there. Carol E. Hoffeecker, Delaware, A Bicentennial History (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. Ltd., 1977), p. 201. In 1935, more than 25 per cent of the corporations listed on the New York Stock Exchange were incorporated in Delaware. Delaware Report of the Department of State, 1 Jan, 1935 to 31 Dec 1935, p. 5 (copy in U of D Library).
25. "City Council Approval On More CWA Work", EJEE, 15 Dec 1933, p. 1.
  26. "Christmas City Trade Up 20 PCT", EJEE 21 Dec 1933, p. 1.
  27. Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, "C.W.A. In Delaware", in Wilmington, Vol 8, No. 9, January 1934, p. 43 (copy in HML).
  28. Review of CWA Activities, p. 15.
  29. Ibid., p. 8; Haley to McHugh, 12 Feb 1934, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
  30. P. du Pont to Brodinsky, 3 Jan 1934, Ibid.
  31. "Report 26,408 As Unemployed", EJEE, 6 Jan, p. 1.
  32. "Jobs This Week For 426 In War On Mosquitoes", EJEE, 2 Jan 1934, p. 1;  
"\$100,000 More For CWA Work In Delaware", EJEE, 27 Jan 1934, p. 1.  
Work on the mosquito control projects was reduced to half-time on 15 January and discontinued on 15 February. Report of Mosquito Control Work in Delaware, 20 Oct 1933 to 31 Dec 1934, p. 3 (copy in HML).
  33. Review of CWA Activities, pp. 4-7, 10 and 14.
  34. Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the Second Session of the 73rd Congress of the United States of America (Washington, DC, 1934), Vol 78 Part 2, 23 Jan 1934 to 9 Feb 1934. p. 2207, (copy in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester); Schwartz, The Civil Works Administration, p. 213; "State Asks Further Assistance", EJEE, 20 Jan 1934, pp. 1 and 9.
  35. Ibid., p. 9.
  36. James T. Patterson, The New Deal and the States, Federalism in Transition (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 63.
  37. "\$100,000 More For CWA Work In Delaware", EJEE, 27 Jan 1934, pp. 1-2.
  38. P. du Pont to Brodinsky, 3 Jan 1934, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
  39. EJEE, 27 Jan 1934, pp. 1-2.

40. Forrest A. Walker, The Civil Works Administration, An Experiment in Federal Work Relief, 1933-1934 (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1979), p. 153; Schwartz, Civil Works Administration, p. 227.
41. "2000 City CWA Will Hold Jobs Another Month", EJEE, 17 Feb 1934, pp. 1 and 11.
42. "Snow Over State Sets Back Spring", EJEE, 23 Mar 1934, p. 1.
43. Review of CWA Activities, p. 13.
44. Ibid., p. 6.
45. TERC, Delaware's Unemployment Relief Problem, Mar 1934, p. 7.  
An unemployment survey carried out in April 1933 indicated that 24,925 persons were fully unemployed in the state.
46. TERC, Report of the Executive Director for the Month of March 1934, p. 6, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
47. Earl R. Short, CWA Project Engineer Delaware to John M. Carmody, Chief Engineer FERA, Washington DC, 14 Jul 1934, Ibid.; Schwartz, The Civil Works Administration, p. 219; Walker, Civil Works Administration, p. 153.
48. Ibid., p. 15.
49. I. du Pont to Buck, 8 May 1934, I. du Pont Papers, Acc 228, Series J-191, HML.
50. "CWA in Delaware", Wilmington, Jan 1934, p. 44.
51. Lowitt and Beasley, One Third of a Nation, p. 172.
52. Review of CWA Activities, p. 16.
53. "State Relief Funds Exhausted \$2,000,000 Needed", EJEE, 17 Feb 1934, p. 1; Delaware's Unemployment Relief Problem, p. 5.
54. Hopkins to Buck, 13 Feb 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. Anthony J. Badger, The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940 (London: MacMillan Press Ltd., 1989) p. 197.
2. TERC, Delaware's Unemployment Relief Problem, Feb 1934, pp. 11 and 13. (copy in HML); TERC, Report of Operations, p. 21.

3. "Aid Is Given In 600 Homes By Family Society", EJEE, 28 Oct 1933, p. 1.
4. TERC, Report of Operations to February 1934, p. 17, U of D Library.
5. TERC, Unemployment Relief Problem, pp. 16-7; William R. Brock, Welfare, Democracy, and the New Deal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 36
6. TERC, Report of Operations, p. 25.
7. Hopkins to Smith, 6 Sept 1933, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware, NA.; TERC, Unemployment Relief Problem, p. 17. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration employed crop control and the purchase of surplus commodities as methods of price maintenance. See Badger, The New Deal, pp. 153-60 for an account of the AAA.
8. Smith to Buck, 18 Dec 1933, Governor's Papers, DSA
9. Garrigues to I du Pont, 27 Dec 1933, I. du Pont Papers, Acc 228, Series J-191, HML. The county committees collectively raised \$323,777 as their 20 per cent contribution to direct relief. In addition, the Levy Courts of Kent and Sussex counties contributed \$18,392 during 1933. TERC, Report, p. 24. The payment of matching funds for the amounts that had been raised by the county committees was a reversal of the ruling given by Hopkins on 26 Jun 1933.
10. "Relief Work In County Is Up To Best Standards", EJEE, 18 Dec 1933, pp. 1-2; TERC, Report, p. 15; F. Richard Stilwell, Confidential Report, Delaware State Emergency Relief Commission, Nov 1933, pp. 6, and 16-17; Crane to Hopkins, 6 Dec 1933, and Stilwell to Hopkins, 14 Dec 1933, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware; "No Politics With Relief, Smith Says", EJEE, 28 Dec 1933, p. 17.
11. TERC, Report, pp. 23-4.
12. Smith to Corrington Gill, 29 Mar 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware; TERC, Report of the Executive Director for the Month of February 1934, pp. 1 and 4, U of D Library. Smith estimated that 4752 families in the entire state would require relief

during January. New Castle county's unemployment level was now at 14.9 per cent of its population; Kent county's 12 per cent; and Sussex county's 16.5 per cent. Snyder to Smith, 2 Feb 1934; Williams to Buck, 24 Mar 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.

13. Rickards to Mary Daly, et al, 21 Feb 1934; Petition, Farmers to Governor and members of the General Assembly, 19 Feb 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA; Donald Crowe, "Work and Relief Programs Wilmington and State of Delaware 1930-1936", Federal Writers' Project Papers, Vol 6, (6 Nov 1936), p. 27, U of D Library. The Sussex Countian reported:

... legislators from lower Delaware are opposed to any further expenditure for relief ... they represent a very large majority of their constituents in this attitude. This is especially true of the farmers who say they are unable to get men to work on their farms because they are being paid by the relief.

"Kent and Sussex Legislators Blame Farmer's Plight Upon Aid Given Needy in This Section", Vol. 44, 9 Mar 1934. p. 1.

14. TERC, Unemployment Problem, p. 10.

15. Ibid., p. 5.

16. Telegram Smith to Corrington Gill, 10 Feb 1934, and Memorandum Webbink to Williams, 10 Feb 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.

17. Hopkins to Buck, 13 Feb 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA. This grant was the result of a meeting held in Washington on 7 February between Hopkins and Smith at which Hopkins made a promise of federal aid to "see the unemployed of Delaware through the interval between the exhaustion of state's resources for relief and the convening, and action of the legislature to provide further relief resources": TERC, Executive Director's Report, p. 3.

18. Telegram Smith to Hopkins, 24 Feb 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware; "Governor Asks \$175,000 U.S. Aid For State Needy", EJEE, 21 Feb 1934, pp. 1 and 8.

19. Telegram Buck to Hopkins, 27 Feb 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with

State Administrations - Delaware; "F[E]RA Allows Del. \$175,000 Additional", EJEE, 27 Feb 1934, pp. 1 and 16. As Brock has observed: "A reluctant legislature could not be compelled to ... appropriate, but if it failed to do so, the consequences were clear: ... the state would lose its grant...." Welfare, Democracy and the New Deal, p 176.

20. "Del. Paid Most Federal Tax Per Capita", EJEE, 8 Jan 1934, p. 1. A state-by-state comparison of federal tax incidence and federal aid in 1940 reveals wide variations. Delaware residents ranked first in per capita tax incidence with a figure of \$172, and ranked fourtieth in aid with \$22.24 per capita. James T. Patterson, The New Deal and the States (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 198; TERC, Unemployment Problem, p. 9; M. M. Daughterty, Studies in Taxation in Delaware, The Cost of State Government 1924-1937, Table 90, p. 98; Annual Report of the State Auditor, 1 Jul 1933 to 30 Jun 1934, "Exhibit B". A total of \$3,284,260 was expended on relief by the TERC up to 1 Feb 1934.
21. Merriman to du Pont, 28 Feb 1934, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
22. Smith to Kelso, 10 Feb 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware, and "No Federal Aid Unless State Helps", EJEE, 1 Mar 1934, pp. 1 and 12.
23. Smith to Hopkins, 5 Mar 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
24. Memorandum, "Record of Telephone Conversations", Hopkins/Crane, 26 Mar 1934, Papers of Harry L. Hopkins, Group 24, Container 73, Transcripts of Telephone Conversations, Colorado - Florida, FDR Library.
25. "Governor Asks Action On Relief, Finances", EJEE, 6 Mar 1934, pp. 1-2.
26. "Legislature Back, Starts Off With Tilt", EJEE, 6 Mar 1934, p. 1.
27. "State Solons Seek Unity On Relief Plans", EJEE, 13 Mar 1934, p. 1.
28. "Solons Now At Work On Relief Plans", EJEE, 14 Mar 1934, p. 1.
29. "Relief Fund In Delaware About Spent", EJEE, 13 Mar 1934, pp. 1-2.

30. "State Relief To Continue Until Mar. 25", EJEE, 14 Mar 1934, p. 1 and 23.
31. "Two Methods For Relief To Be Passed On", EJEE, 16 Mar 1934, pp. 1 and 8.
32. "\$108,000 For Relief Until End Of April", EJEE, 23 Mar 1934, pp. 1 and 24.
33. "Must Cut Out Rent, Coal In Relief Plan", EJEE, 23 Mar 1934, p. 1.
34. Smith to Hopkins and attachment, 29 Mar 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
35. EJEE, 23 Mar 1934, p. 24.
36. TERC, Report of the Executive Director for the Month of March 1934, p. 4. (copy in U of D Library).
37. "Senate Votes \$1194 As Mileage Claims", EJEE, 24 Mar 1934, p. 2.
38. "Federal Aid At End, State Must Finance Relief", EJEE, 28 Mar 1934, p. 1; Relief Memorandum, 24 Mar 1934, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML. Hopkins was reluctant to allow Kelso to address the legislature, and did not agree to him doing so until 27 March, when in a telephone conversation he told Kelso to "confine yourself to the importance of [the legislature] making money available". It was agreed he was to tell the special session that "... it is certainly not Mr Hopkins decision to put much money or any at more money in Delaware." Memorandum of telephone conversations, Hopkins/Kelso and Hopkins/Biggs, 27 Mar 1934; Hopkins/Crane, 26 and 27 Mar 1934, Papers of Harry Hopkins, Federal Relief Agency Papers Group 24, Container 73, Transcripts of Telephone Conversations, Colorado - Florida, FDR Library.
39. TERC, Report March 1934, pp. 1-2 and 5; "State Relief Sufficient For 4 Weeks", EJEE, 28 Mar 1934, p. 11.
40. W. du Pont to Buck, 24 Mar 1934, and Buck to P. du Pont, 28 Mar 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
41. Charles Neugebauer and members of the Joint Legislative Committee to Hopkins, 29 Mar 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.

42. "\$2,000,000 For State Relief In Plan Submitted", EJEE, 3 Apr 1934, pp. 1-2; and State of Delaware Journal of the House of Representatives at a Special Session of the 104th General Assembly 2 April 1934, pp. 145-8 HSD. A copy of the joint committee's proposed legislation was sent to Hopkins by Alexander R. Abrahams, secretary of the committee, on 2 Apr 1934: see Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware. The \$6,302,086 was made up of: federal grants for school projects - \$3.2 million; state highway commission contracts - \$1,708,299; unexpended funds of the highway commission - \$405,000; PWA projects - \$178,787; and Construction of Federal buildings - \$1,115,000.
43. "Curtail Works To Aid Needy Is Gov.'s Plan", EJEE, 3 Apr 1934, p. 1; Buck to P.du Pont, 28 Mar 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA. The governor wrote:
- I see no need at this time of increasing income taxes, gasoline taxes or any other taxes. My thought for financing a direct program ... would be for the Highway Department to provide half a million dollars ... and the school authorities to sanction the transfer of half a million dollars from franchise taxes.
- Buck to the Senate, 2 Apr 1934, State of Delaware Journal of the State Senate at a Special Session of the 104th General Assembly 2 April 1934, pp. 147-8, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
44. Buck to Members of the Senate, 10 Apr 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
45. Crane to Hopkins, 7 April 1934; "Note of Telephone Conversations" Hopkins/Kelso/Crane, 19 Apr 1934 and Hopkins/Neugebauer, 12 Apr 1934; Telegram Crane to Hopkins, 18 Apr 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
46. Badger, The New Deal: The Depression Years., p. 194.
47. "Senate and House Still At Odds Over Relief", EJEE, 21 Apr 1934, p. 1. Hopkins told the legislature on 21 Mar 1934 that "we could not approve the Scott Bill." "Note of Telephone Conversations" Hopkins/Kelso, 21 Mar 1934; Telegram Kelso to Simonton and Robinson, 21 Apr 1934: Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.



48. "Relief Crisis In Rival Bills; Seek Bond Issue", EJEE, 20 Apr 1934, p. 1.
49. "State Relief Office Here Closed Today", EJEE, 21 Apr 1934, pp. 1 and 10.
50. "Bread Their Only Food - And Glad To Get It", EJEE, 28 Apr 1934, p. 1.
51. "No Funds To Relieve Needs Of Suffering", EJEE, 25 Apr 1934, p. 1.
52. TERC, Report of the Executive Director for the Month of April 1934, pp. 1-2, U of D Library.
53. Ibid., p. 4.
54. Telegram Hopkins to Buck, 27 Apr 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
55. "Compromise On Relief Drafted By House", EJEE, 23 Apr 1934, p. 1 and 10.
56. "House Passes Relief; Senate May Change It", EJEE, 26 Apr 1934, pp. 1-2; "State Relief Peace Plan Is To Go In Today", EJEE, 24 Apr 1934, pp. 1 and 14; Crane to Hopkins, 7 Apr 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
57. Crane to Hopkins, 24 Apr 1934; "Note of Telephone Conversations Hopkins/Terry, 25 Apr 1934: Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware, NA. Hopkins told Charles Terry of Dover "I think this [Kelly] bill is pretty terrible --- just gets this all into politics."
58. EJEE, 26 Apr 1934, pp. 1 and 2.
59. Editorial, "Don't Cheer Boys; The Poor Devils Are Dying", EJEE, 27 Apr 1934, p. 1.
60. Buck to House of Representatives, 2 May 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
61. RCI, Monthly Report May-1934, p. 1, U of D Library.
62. "Relief Work In Delaware Big Business", J-EE, 13 Sept 1934, p. 3.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER 5.

1. Warren Green to Buck, 1 May 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA. The Associated Charities of Wilmington was incorporated by legislative act in 1885; the original act is to be found in Chapter 579 of 17 Delaware

Laws and also in Chapter 70, paras. 2258-2264 of the Revised Code of Delaware (1915).

2. WPA, "Delaware Historical Records Survey", Inventory County Archives of Delaware - New Castle County (Dover, Del., 1941), pp. 46-9, HSD; Carol E. Hoffecker, Delaware, A Bicentennial History (New York: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1977), pp. 202-3. In 1965, New Castle county abandoned the Levy Court in favour of a county executive-council plan of government. Sussex did likewise but Kent county still retains its old system.
3. RCI, Monthly Report May-1934, p. 1 (copy in U of D Library).
4. Ibid., p. 1; "New Relief Plan By Corporation Starts In City", EJEE, 3 May 1934, p. 1. On 30 April 1934, the TERC had a deficit of \$25,872: State Auditor to Smith, 21 May 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
5. William R. Brock, Welfare, Democracy, and the New Deal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 176.
6. Telegram Kelso to Williams, 28 Apr 1934; Memorandum Williams to Hopkins, 30 Apr 1934; "Notes of Telephone Conversations, Subject: Matching of Funds by Wilmington", Williams/Smith; and Williams/Buck, 1 May 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware, NA.
7. Hopkins to Buck, 2 Mar 1934; Smith to Hopkins, 5 Mar 1934; telegram Hopkins to Smith 6 Mar 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware. Although Arch Mandel had been appointed as FERA field representative responsible for Delaware on 2 Mar 1934, replacing Robert Kelso, his appointment was delayed at the request of Dent Smith so that Kelso could continue to represent the FERA in Delaware until the legislature had reached a decision on a relief measure.
8. Memorandum Mandel to Hopkins, 5 May 1934, Hopkins' Papers, Group 24, Box 56, Delaware - Field Reports 1932 - 1935, FDR Library. Mandel told Hopkins: "The complexion of the Levy Court is Republican. The Mayor of Wilmington is a Democrat. The City Council is a Mixture."

9. Telegram Buck to Williams, 7 May 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware; "Setting Up New Agency For Relief", EJEE, 4 May 1934, p. 1.
10. Memorandum Mandel to Hopkins, 5 May 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
11. "Suffering Is Found In City Homes", EJEE, 7 May 1934, pp. 1-2.  
Although the relief payments by the RCI seemed small they compared favourably with the national average for relief payments in 1933, which were \$15.07 per month. However, payments varied from state to state; for example, in Mississippi the monthly relief payment was \$3.96 and in Louisiana \$13.89. See Anthony J. Badger, The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940 (London: MacMillan Press Ltd., 1989), p. 193.
12. Telegram Buck to Williams, 8 May 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware; "Levy Court Votes Out \$300,000 County Relief", EJEE, 8 May 1934, p. 14.
13. "Gov. Thanks Court For Help", EJEE, 15 May 1934, p. 1.
14. "\$3,000,000 Work On County Bridges, Roads By State", EJEE, 15 May 1934, pp. 1 and 20; Donald Crowe, "Work and Relief Programs Wilmington and State of Delaware 1930-1936" (copy in U of D Library).
15. RCI, Report May-1934, p. 2; I. du Pont to Buck, 8 May 1934, I. du Pont Papers, Acc 288, Series J-191, HML.
16. Buck to I. du Pont, 9 May 1934, Ibid.
17. "Conferees Of Senate Tell Of Parley Clash", EJEE, 3 May 1934, p. 17.
18. Buck to House of Representatives, 2 May 1934, Governor's Papers, 1934 Legislative Special Session, DSA; "Governor Says House Played Political Game", EJEE, 3 May 1934, p. 1.
19. "Adjourning Of House Balked By Tie Line-up", EJEE, 3 May 1934, p. 17.
20. "Legislators In Endurance Test Vote No Relief", EJEE, 5 May 1934, pp. 1-2.
21. H. U. Manity to Editor, "People's Column", EJEE, 4 May 1934, p. 24.
22. "Legislature Fails To Help Needy, But Votes Mileage To Members", EJEE, 8 May 1934, p. 14.

23. "Legislature Is Seen 'Bankrupt' By Bishop Cook", EJEE, 8 May 1934, p. 1.
24. "Legislature About To End Sets Records", EJEE, 4 May 1934, p. 24.
25. Buck to Hopkins, 10 May 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA; Warren Green to Buck, 9 May 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
26. Linden to Baker and Hopkins, 16 May 1934, Ibid.
27. Crane to Buck, 15 May 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA; telegram Buck to Mandel, 22 May 1934; Buck to Mandel, 31 May 1934; and Speer to Hopkins, 1 Jun 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
28. RCI, Report May-1934, p. 2; and "New Relief Commission Announced", EJEE, 30 May 1934, pp. 1 and 17.
29. "The Power and the Glory" in Fortune, vol. 11, No. 1, Jan 1935, p. 126; P. du Pont to Knight, 19 Mar 1934, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 765-13, HML. On 23 September 1932, Pierre wrote "I have made no secret of the fact that I would vote for [FDR]...." P. du Pont to Joseph H. Leib, 23 Sept 1932, President's Personal Files 1933-35, PPF 979, Du Pont, Pierre S., FDR Library.
30. RCI, Report May, p. 2.
31. I. du Pont to Buck, 4 Jun 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA; telegram Williams to Buck, 6 Jun 1934; Helen Gawthrop to Hopkins, 13 Jun 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
33. RCI, Monthly Report June-1934 p. 4 (copy in U of D Library); telegram Buck to Williams, 4 Jun 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
33. Buck to Brown, 15 May 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
34. RCI, Report May-1934, pp. 2-5; telegram Smith to Corrington Gill, 14 May 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
35. "Employment Increase, C of C Shows", EJEE, 14 June 1934, p. 1.

36. RCI, Report June-1934, pp. 6-7; Brock, Welfare, Democracy, and the New Deal, p. 177.
37. RCI, Report May-1934, pp. 2 and 6; Report July-1934, pp 3-6, U of D Library. Authorization for the handling of the student aid programme was not given to the RCI until August 1934.
38. Buck to Mandel, 22 May 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware; "Federal Aid For County Also Seen", EJEE, 10 May 1934, p. 1.
39. Brock, Welfare, Democracy, and the New Deal, p. 177; Badger, The New Deal p. 195.
40. RCI, Report June-1934, pp. 5-6. The incorporated towns were Wilmington, Elsmere, Newark, Newport, St Georges, Bellefonte, Delaware City, Odessa, Townsend, Middletown and New Castle.
41. Hughes to Hopkins, 16 May 1934; Memorandum Thomas Hibben to Keys, "Subject: Sewer Extention - Dover, Del.", 28 May 1934; Perry Fellows, (FERA administrative assistant) to Hughes, 15 Jun 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
42. Telegram Buck to Hopkins, 25 May 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA. In this Buck informed him: "This will aid in relieving an acute situation."; Williams to Buck, 6 and 7 Jun 1934; Buck to Hopkins 15 Jun 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware. This was the first month that the RCI had to meet the cost of transient relief out of the federal grant. On 13 June, the FERA made a final grant of \$9,595 for transient relief. "Relief Group Will Widen Its Range", EJEE, 30 July 1934, pp. 1-2; RCI, Report June-1934, p. 5.
43. Crowe, "Work and Relief Programs", p. 30, U of D Library.
44. Ibid., p. 35.
45. Reports of Special Commission to Study the Need for Relief in New Castle, Kent and Sussex Counties, Oct 1934. pp. 20 and 22 (copy in HML).
46. Ibid., p. 7; RCI Report July-1934, pp. 6-7; telegram Corrington Gill to Smith, 23 Jun 1934; Mullen to Hopkins, 5 Jul 1934, Record Group 69,

Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations- Delaware. A grant of \$4,376 was made available for this project, \$3,811 for labour and \$565 for non-labour expenses

47. RCI, Report June 1934, pp. 9-10 and 12.
48. RCI, Monthly Report for August 1934, p. 8; Monthly Report for September 1934 (copies in U of D Library).
49. RCI, Monthly Report for October 1934, p. 7 (copy in U of D Library).
50. "Brown Rejoins Republicans To End Pact, Elect", EJEE, 18 May 1934, p. 1  
"Council Fails To Adopt New Year's Budget", EJEE, 1 Jun 1934, pp. 1 and 11;  
"Council Get Budget Law Tonight", EJEE, 7 Jun 1934, p. 1;  
"\$3,018,166 Is City Budget For New Year", EJEE, 8 Jun 1934, pp. 1 and 22; RCI, Report May, p. 2.
51. "State Deficit Of \$300,000 In General Fund", EJEE, 28 Jun 1934, pp. 1 and 24.
52. RCI, Report July-1934, pp. 1-3.
53. Ibid., pp. 4-5.
54. "Collection Of Federal Taxes In State Gains", EJEE, 9 Aug 1934, p. 1.
55. "\$806,592 Due City By Tax Delinquents", EJEE, 23 Aug 1934, p. 1.
56. RCI, Report for August, pp. 5-6.
57. Ibid., pp. 4-5.
58. Ibid., pp. 7-8.
59. Ibid., p. 6.
60. "Families On Relief To Get Beef", J-EE, 22 Aug 1934, p. 1; RCI, Report August-1934, pp. 5-6.
61. "Relief Talks Balked By Tie Vote In Council", J-EE, 14 Sept 1934, pp. 1 and 12.
62. RCI, Report July-1934, p. 9.
63. "Democrats Choose Adams For Senate, Hazzard For House", J-EE, p. 1.
64. "City Council To Cooperate With Relief Board", J-EE, 22 Sept 1934, pp. 1 and 3.
65. "Council To Aid Relief Plan", J-EE, 28 Sept 1934, p. 1.
66. "Democrats Urge Harmony For Success Of Their Party At Polls", J-EE, 12 Sept 1934, p. 2.
67. "Democrat Platform", Ibid.

68. Ibid., p. 9. and Hickman to Buck, 21 Aug 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
69. Hopkins to Buck, 7 Sept 1934; Mullen to Buck, 27 Sept 1934, Ibid.
70. RCI, Executive Director's Report September-1934, pp. 1-2 (copy in U of D Library).
71. "Job Office Has Boom In Calls By Employers", J-EE, 28 Sept 1934, p. 1.
72. RCI, Report September-1934, pp. 4-5 and 8.
73. "\$100,000 For Relief May Be Council Part", J-EE, 3 Oct 1934, pp. 1-2 and 4; RCI, Report October-1934, p. 1.
74. "1,000 Wait For Jobs Pending Council Relief", J-EE, 9 Oct 1934, p. 1; "200,000 From Council For City Relief Likely", J-EE, 4 Oct 1934, p. 1; Report October-1934, p. 1.
75. Mullen to Arthur Goldschmidt, 7 Nov 1934; Goldschmidt to Mullen, 5 Nov 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
76. Mullen to Buck, 27 Sept 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA. The \$6,835 grant comprised of \$4,800 for educational purposes; \$1,443 for Statistical Project F-48, which had been completed; and \$592 remaining from the June funding of the National Re-employment Service. The RCI was authorized to transfer this sum to its general relief programme and was told that the FERA grant for November would be reduced by this amount: Williams to Hickman, 8 Oct 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
77. Hopkins to Buck, 2 Oct 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
78. RCI, Report October-1934, pp. 2 and 5-6; Mullen to Buck, 19 Oct 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA; "4156 Families In New Castle County Aided", J-EE, 23 Oct 1934, pp. 1 and 18.
79. "Buck Appoints Board To Study Relief Needs", J-EE, 4 Oct 1934, pp. 1 and 4.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER 6.

1. Richard B. Carter, Clearing New Ground, The Life of John G. Townsend Jr. (Georgetown, Del: The Coutain Press Inc., 1983), pp. 454-5.

2. Delaware was represented by a Congressman-at-large in the lower federal House, the entire state being considered a single-member district for electoral purposes. The eligible Delaware voters invariably elected one of the two major party candidates for the office. Walter J. Norbett, "The Vote for United States Representative from Delaware in Relation to the Trend Towards Urbanization in the State 1920-1952", unpublished MA Thesis, University of Delaware, June 1954, p. 1.
3. "Republicans Win State Legislature", JEE, 7 Nov 1934, pp. 1 and 13. Instead of suffering the expected off-year losses the Democrats made substantial gains in both Houses in the 1934 Congressional Elections.
4. "State Senate Republican For 4 Years; 9 Hold Over", JEE, 8 Nov 1934, pp. 1 and 13.
5. "Sussex GOP Elects Entire County Ticket" and "Democrats In Kent Get All But One Office", JEE, 7 Nov 1934, pp. 1 and 13; "Democrats Get Only Two Offices In Sussex County", JEE, 8 Nov 1934, p. 14; "Official Results Of Election In State", JEE, 9 Nov 1934, p. 10; Biggs to Howe, 8 Nov 1934, President's Official File, OF 300, Box 14, Democratic National Committee, Delaware 1933-45, FDR Library. Biggs offered the following excuse for the Democratic national candidates' failure: "... the reason for the small pluralities in Wilmington is that the Republicans feared special agents of the Department of Justice and special agents of the Loring Black Committee allegedly in the city. This fear did not extend down the State."
6. RCI, Wilmington-New Castle County Nov 1934, p. 1, U of D Library.
7. Ibid., pp. 1-6 and 10-11; Mullen to Buck, 19 Oct 1934; Hopkins to Buck, 30 Oct 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
8. Donald Crowe, "Review of Work Relief Activities April 1 1934 - July 1 1935", Federal Writers' Project Papers vol 6, 29 Oct 1934, p. 5, U of D Library; Mullen to Buck, 24 Nov 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA. The Federal Housing Administration was an administrative agency set up by executive order under the authority of the National Housing Act of 1934. It was a New Deal recovery measure designed to stimulate the capital industries through small loans to householders. See James



- Truslow Adams and R.V. Coleman, eds., Dictionary of American History, vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), pp. 260-1
9. RCI, Report Nov 1934, p. 1.
  10. "Groups Asked By Gov. Buck To Back Private Relief", JEE, 16 Nov 1934, p. 1.
  11. "President Asks Public To Back Private Relief", JEE, 23 Oct 1934, p. 18.
  12. William R. Brock, Welfare, Democracy, and the New Deal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 251.
  13. Claff to Hopkins, 8 Dec 1934, Papers of Harry L. Hopkins 1928-1945, Group 24, Box 65, FERA - WPA - Survey of Conditions Nov '34 - Jan '35, FDR Library.
  14. Mullen to Buck, 20 Nov 1934; Hopkins to Buck, 27 Nov 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA; telegram Williams to Mullen, 28 Nov 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware, NA.
  15. RCI, Wilmington - New Castle County - Dec 1934, pp. 2, 4, 6, and 8-9. U of D Library.
  16. Ibid., p. 6; Crowe, "Work Relief Programs", p. 5; "House Repair Jobs To Give Work To 1,000", JEE, 19 Dec 1934, pp. 1 and 6.
  17. "Local Relief May Be Ended On January 1", JEE, 4 Dec 1934, pp. 1-2.
  18. "Need \$175,000 For January Relief Work", JEE, 18 Dec 1934, pp. 1-2.
  19. "No State Aid Likely From Legislature", JEE, 14 Dec 1934, pp. 1 and 29; RCI, Report-Dec 1934, p. 1.
  20. "Governor Is Hopeful Of Relief Aid", JEE, 19 Dec 1934, p. 1.
  21. "Relief Commission Need To Be Made Known To Council", JEE, 20 Dec 1934, pp. 1 and 14.
  22. L.L. Ecker-R, Summary Data Regarding State and Local Relief Funds, 14 Dec 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
  23. "Relief Board Asks Council For More Cash", JEE, 21 Dec 1934, pp. 1-2.
  24. Buck to Hopkins, 21 Dec 1934, Governor's Papers, DSA.
  25. "Council Speeds Action On Fund To Help Needy", JEE, 4 Jan 1934, p. 2.

26. "City Council Talk Of Luxury Taxes; Votes \$25,000 For Relief", JEE, 28 Dec 1934, pp. 1 and 4.
27. "\$25,000 More County Money For Aid Work", JEE, 9 Jan 1935, p. 1. The county tax rate was 70c for each \$100 of assessed valuation in Wilmington and all incorporated towns in the county; on property outside incorporated towns, an additional road tax of 30c on each \$100 of assessed valuation was levied.
28. Hopkins to Buck, 2, 7, and 12 Jan 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA. The two supplementary grants of \$5,000 each were to be used in supplying commodities to relief clients and the grant of \$38,970 was made up of \$37,000 matching grant for January plus \$1,470 for student aid.
29. Memorandum Mandel to Hopkins, 16 Jan 1935, Papers of Harry L. Hopkins, Group 24, Box 56, Delaware - Field Reports 1932-1935, FDR Library.
30. Richard Lowitt and Maurine Beasley, One Third of a Nation, Lorena Hickok Reports on the Great Depression (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1981), p. 362; Hopkins to Mullen, 23 Oct 1934, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series, 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware. Hopkins wrote;

she is, on my behalf, going to observe not only the status of relief ... but its effect on people and to try and get a picture of how the ordinary citizen feels about relief.... She is going to explore those avenues which would not normally be approached by our Field Representatives.... Her visit every sense represents an effort on our part to learn from all sources the picture of our relief activities throughout the United States.
31. "Maloney And Lyons Head Senate, House; 55 Jobs Are Listed", JEE, 2 Jan 1935, p. 1; "Democrats To Vote As Unit On Some Bills", JEE, 8 Jan 1935, p. 2.
32. State of Delaware, Journal of the State Senate at a Session of the 105th General Assembly, 1 Jan 1935, pp. 32-55 (copy in HSD).
33. The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The Court Disapproves 1935 vol 2 (New York: Random House, 1938), pp. 19-20.
34. "Levy Court Loan For Relief Fund Is Urged", JEE, 8 Jan 1935, p. 2;  
"Plans Offered For Counties To Aid Needy", JEE, 9 Jan 1935, p. 10.
35. "State Loan Is Held Up; Clash Over Interest", JEE, 19 Jan 1935, p. 1.  
In 1934 and 1935 the State found itself in a precarious cash position

and borrowed \$1 million dollars from the Farmer's Bank to meet its commitments. No interest was charged on this loan which was repaid in 1935. M.M. Daugherty, Studies in Taxation in Delaware, the Cost of State Government 1924-1937 (Newark, Del: University of Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station, 1938), p. 100.

36. Reports of Special Commissions to Study the Need for Relief in New Castle, Kent and Sussex Counties, pp. 2-4, 13-14, and 19 (copy in HML).
37. Ibid., pp. 20-1
38. Ibid., pp. 22-5.
39. Crowe, "Review Of Work Activities", p. 5; RCI, Wilmington-New Castle County - Jan 1935 p. 1., U of D Library; Report Claflf to Hopkins, 2 Jan 1935, Papers of Harry L. Hopkins, Group 24, Box 56, Delaware - Field Reports 1932-1935, FDR Library.
40. Buck to Hopkins, 22 Jan 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
41. P. du Pont to Buck, 1 Feb 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
42. "County Income Tax To Raise Relief Money", JEE, 22 Jan 1935, pp. 1-2; "Income Tax On New Castle Co. Approved", JEE, 29 Jan 1935, p. 10.
43. Buck to E.P.Sawdon, 4 Mar 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
44. RCI, Report-Jan 1935, pp. 1-2, 4-5 and 8.
45. Mullen to Buck, 30 Jan 1935; Buck to Mullen, 4 Feb 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
46. RCI, Report-Jan 1935, pp. 3 and 7-8.
47. Deveral to Smith, 16 Feb 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
48. Mullen to Buck, 19 Jan 1935, and Buck to Hopkins, 19 Jan 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
49. Memorandum Mandel to Hopkins, 8 Feb 1935, Papers of Harry L. Hopkins, Group 24, Box 56, Delaware - Field Reports 1932-35, FDR Library.
50. "County Relief Board Named By Governor P.S. Du Pont, Mayor Collins, Bishop Cook And Richard Sellers On Body", JEE, 6 Feb 1935, p. 1; telegram Buck to du Pont, 5 Feb 1935, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML; "Relief Problem Now In Hands Of Levy Court", JEE, 29 Jan 1935, pp. 1 and 10; RCI, Wilmington - New Castle County - 1935, pp. 1-4, U of D Library.

51. "To Take Many Names From Relief Rolls", JEE, 23 Feb 1935, p. 1.
52. RCI, Report - Feb 1935, pp. 1-2.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7.

1. TERC for NCC, Interim Report, 1 Mar 1935-31 Mar 1936, pp. 6-7 and 10 (copy in HML).
2. "TERC Group To Take Over County Relief", JEE, 28 Feb 1935, p. 1.
3. "Relief Board May Get More County Money", JEE, 5 Mar 1935, pp. 1-2.
4. Mullen to Buck, 20 Mar 1935; Hopkins to Buck, 15 Mar 1935; Governor's Papers, DSA.
5. Hopkins to Buck, 12 Apr 1935, Ibid.
6. "\$25,000 Cut From County Relief Fund", JEE, 20 Mar 1935, p. 1;  
"\$850,000 For Relief Board In New Tax", JEE, 21 Mar 1935, p. 1.
7. "County Income Tax Is Scorned At City Meeting", JEE, 8 Mar 1935 pp. 1 and 9; attachment to Hopkins to LeHand, 8 Mar 1935, p. 10, "Extract From J.B. Claff's Report", Official File 444, FERA Mar-May 1935, FDR Library.
8. Taxpayers' Research League of Delaware, "Delaware's Financial Problem", in Greater Delaware No. 5, 8 May 1935 (copy in HML). Income from franchise taxes had fallen to its lowest level in 1935, even though more than 25 per cent of the corporations listed on the New York Stock Exchange in this year were domiciled in Delaware, and some 2,398 corporations were incorporated in the state and paid a total of \$143,383 in franchise taxes in 1935. Delaware Report of the Department of State 1 Jan to 31 Dec 1935, pp. 4-5 (copy in HML); "Legislature Ends; Passed 242 Bills And Cost \$157,687", JEE, 4 Apr 1935, p. 1.
9. Congressional Record-Senate, 74th Congress 1935, Session 1, Vol 79, Part 9, 8 Jul 1935, p. 10727, RSC.
10. "Relief Body Submits Budget To Levy Court", JEE, 9 Apr 1935, pp. 1 and 11.
11. "More Funds For Relief Are Available", JEE, 15 Apr 1935 pp. 1-2.
12. Mullen to Buck, 20 Apr 1935, Buck to Hopkins, 20 Apr 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.

13. "Relief Rolls To Be Purged Of Drones", JEE, 24 Apr 1935, p. 1.
14. "Court Cut May Cost County Federal Relief", JEE, 7 May 1935, pp. 1 and 14.
15. Telegram Williams to Mullen, 6 May 1935, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series May 1933-36, file 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware, NA; "US Relief Cut To \$35,000 For Month Of May", JEE, 9 May 1935, p. 1.
16. Hopkins to Buck, 6 May 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA
17. TERC, Interim Report, Chart 15, p. 33
18. "\$265,150 Of \$289,540 In Income Tax Spent For Aid ", JEE, 22 May 1935, p. 1.
19. Memorandum, Ruth Blakeslee to Williams, 26 Oct 1935, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series May 1933-36, File 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
20. Mullen to Buck, 18 May 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
21. "\$30,000 Voted For Relief In June; Big Cut", JEE, 21 May 1935, p. 1; Buck to Hopkins, 18 May 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
22. "Only Two Weeks June Relief Is In Sight", JEE, 24 May 1935, p. 1.
23. Hopkins to Buck, 3 Jun 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
24. "Republican Sweep City Election, Name Bacon By 6,522 Lead", JEE, 3 Jun 1935, p. 1.
25. Speer to P. du Pont, 5 Jun 1935, P. du Pont's Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 765-1, HML.
26. Congressional Record 74th Congress, Session 1 1935, vol 79, Part 8, 24 May-6 Apr 1935, p. 8556, 3 Jun, RSC.
27. TERC, Interim Report, "Statement 'C' Financial Report-Sources of Revenue for Resident Relief", pp. 11 and 27 (copy in HML).
28. "\$200,000 From Council for City Relief Likely", JEE, 4 Oct 1934, p. 1; "1,000 Wait For Jobs Pending Council Relief", JEE, 9 Oct 1934, p. 11.
29. TERC, Interim Report, p. 11; "Will Not Cut County Relief For The Present", JEE, 14 Jun 1935, p. 1; Hopkins to Buck, 19 Jun 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
30. Hopkins to Buck, 1 Jul 1935, Mullen to Buck, 20 Jun 1935, Ibid.

31. "3,000 Subscriptions To Date To Art Center; \$400,000 Hoped For", JEE, 14 Jun 1935, p. 1.
32. Frances E. McDermott to Stewart, 5 May 1935, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series May 1933-36, File 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
33. "\$4,180,000 Is Work Program", J-EE, 24 Jun 1935, p. 1.
34. TERC, Interim Report, p. 7.
35. Donald S. Howard, The WPA and Federal Relief Policy (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), pp. 108-9, 124-5, 131, and 144-6.
36. Archives of the WPA and Predecessors 1933-1943, Series 1, Final State Reports 1943, Final Report of the Delaware Works Progress Administration, 1 Feb 1943, (Brighton: Harvester Microform Publications Ltd., 1987), p. 3, RSC.
37. Ibid., p. 2; Wright C. Dizer, ed., Progress, Vol. 1 No. 1, Official Monthly Publication of the WPA for Delaware, Nov 1935, p. 16 (copy in HSD).
38. TERC, Final Report, pp. 4 and 7; Branion to Hopkins, 5 Jul 1935, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series May 1933-36, File 406.1 - Field Representatives' Reports - Delaware, NA.
39. Progress, Vol 1, No 1, p. 2; TERC, Interim Report, p. 27
40. Jeannette Eckman, "Professional Projects" in Progress, Vol. 2, No. 2, Feb 1936, p. 6 (copy in HSD); Final Report, pp. 1-2, and 4; "WPA Theater In Delaware To Close July 15", JEE, 14 Jun 1937, p. 1.
41. "WPA Looks Back on the Year's Activities", in Progress, Vol. 1, No. 11, Nov/Dec 1936, p. 6 (copy in HSD).
42. TERC, Final Report, p. 3.
43. Final Report on the WPA Program 1935-43 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1976), P. 15.
44. "National Youth administration", in Progress, Vol. 1, No. 2, Dec 1935, p. 11 (copy in HSD); TERC, Final Report, pp. 29 and 32 (copy in HSD).
45. "The Story of the Resettlement Administration in Delaware", in Progress, Vol 1, No 10, Oct 1936, p. 10 (copy in HSD); Lewis Meriam, Relief and Social Security (Washington: Henry Holt and Co., 1946), pp.

- 286-7; "US Retiring 4,968 Acres In Kent, Sussex", JEE, 14 Sept 1936, p. 1.
46. Progress, Dec 1935, pp. 35-6; TERC, Interim Report, p. 25; Major to Persons, 6 Jun 1935; Persons to Mullen, 11 Jun 1935, New Deal Agencies and Black America, Black Studies Research Sources, (Maryland: University Publications of America Inc., 1984), Reel 8, Record Group 35, CCC, "Selection Division, Policy: Negro General-Negro Question", RSC.
47. "State Balance Of \$100,000 As Year Ends", JEE, 3 Jul 1935, p. 1; "\$4,807,695 In State Taxes For Year '35", JEE, 12 Mar 1936, pp. 1 and 4; "\$3,202,676 Is U.S. Gift to Del.", JEE, 25 Apr 1936, p. 1. The figures given are from a federal treasury department tabulation of collections with disbursements to the states prepared for Senator Augustine of Connecticut.
48. Minutes of Levy Court, July 30, AD 1935, p. 32 (copy in DSA); "County Asks For Names On Relief Rolls", JEE, 30 Jul 1935, p. 1.
49. Minutes of Levy Court August AD 1935, p. 46 (copy in DSA).
50. TERC, Interim Report, p. 7; Mullen to Buck, 20 Jul 1935; Hopkins to Buck, 13 Aug 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA; Final Statistical Report of the FERA, Table 1, p. 128.
51. "County Relief Lists Will Be Given To Court", JEE, 9 Aug 1935, p. 17.
52. Mullen to Buck, 16 Aug 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
53. Minutes of Levy Court, September 24, AD 1935, p. 9 (copy in DSA); TERC, Interim Report, Schedule "C", p. 30; Mullen to Buck, 16 Sept 1935; Williams to Buck, 15 Oct 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.
54. Minutes of Levy Court, October 22, AD 1935, p. 128 (copy in DSA).
55. "Relief Chiselers To Be Prosecuted, Says Atty.-General Green", JEE, 26 Sept 1935; "Eight Accused Of Alleged Relief Fraud", JEE, 27 Sept 1935, p. 1.
56. Memorandum, Ruth Blakeslee to Williams, 26 Oct 1935, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series May 1933-36, File 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware.
57. Williams to Buck, 22 Nov 1935, Governor's Papers, DSA.

58. Buck to Williams, 29 Nov 1935, Ibid.
59. Elizabeth Wickenden to Buck, 2 Dec 1935, Ibid.
60. TERC for NCC, Final Report 1 Mar 1935 to 31 Mar 1937, p. 2 (copy in HML); "Miss Mullen To return To Her Old Position", JEE, 1 Oct 1935, p. 1.
61. "\$22,936 Cut In November Relief Made", JEE, 22 Oct 1935, p. 1;  
"Deadline May Find 2400 On Relief Rolls", JEE, 19 Oct 1935, p. 1;  
"State Relief Board Awaits Federal Word", JEE, 21 Oct 1935, p. 1;  
"Delaware Off Federal Aid December 1", JEE, 6 Nov 1935, p. 1;  
"\$4,500,000 For State, County Aid Is Given", JEE, 12 Nov 1935, pp. 1 and 12. Delaware's relief contributions were significantly generous when compared to some other states; Florida, Georgia, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota and South Carolina contributed no state funds for relief during the five years ending 30 June 1935, and Kansas had contributed \$300,630 during this period
62. "Jobs For All, Dec. Is Hope", JEE, 1 Nov 1935, pp. 1 and 28
63. Report of the Delaware Transient Bureau, Aug/Sept 1935, 14 Oct 1935, DSA; TERC for NCC, Interim Report, p. 20.
64. "223 On Relief Rolls Fail To Get Work By WPA 'Deadline Day'", JEE, 15 Nov 1935, p. 1.
65. Ibid., p. 10; Report of the TERC for NCC to the Governor of the State of Delaware and to the Levy Court of New Castle County, 29 Nov 1935, p. 1, in P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
66. Skelly to Collins, 25 Nov 1935, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
67. TERC for NCC Report, 29 Nov 1935, p. 2.
68. P. du Pont to Skelly, 26 Nov 1935, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
69. TERC for NCC Report, 29 Nov 1935, p. 2.
70. Collins to President and Members of the Levy Court, 12 December 1935, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML; "1200 Families Face Dropping From Aid Rolls", JEE, 13 Dec 1935, p. 14..
71. P. du Pont to Buck, 12 December 1935, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.



72. Buck to P. du Pont, 13 December 1935, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML. By 1935, Frank L. Speakman had been the Attorney of the Levy Court of New Castle County for nearly 30 years.
73. TERC for NCC Final Report, "Summary of Sources of Revenue for Resident Relief", 28 Feb 1935 to 31 Mar 1936", p. 2 and 45; FERA Final Statistical Report, p. 128.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER 8.

1. Caskie to Members of the Levy Court, 3 Jan 1936, Governor's Papers, DSA; "TERC Given \$36,074 For January Relief", JEE, 24 Dec 1935, p. 1-2; "TERC Report For Levy Court Expected Early", JEE, 1 Jan 1936, p. 1.
2. Minutes of Levy Court December 24, 1935, p. 193 (copy in DSA).
3. "Levy Courtman For Relief Head Proposed; No Funds, Citizen Aids", JEE, 23 Jan 1936, p. 1; P. du Pont to Levy Court, 11 Feb 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164-2, HML; Minutes of Levy Court February 18, 1936, p. 274 (copy in DSA).
4. "75 P.C. Cut In Income Taxes By The County", JEE, 8 Jan 1936, p. 1.
5. Joslin to Early, 9 Jan 1936, Presidents Personal Files, PPF 4273, FDR Library.
6. Minutes of Levy Court January 21, 1936, p. 234 (copy in DSA).
7. JEE, 23 Jan 1936, pp. 1-2.
8. Skelly to Members of RCI, 28 Jan 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164-3, HML.
9. Skelly to Members of the RCI, 17 Jan 1936, Ibid.
10. Minutes of Levy Court January 28, 1936, pp. 240-5 (copy in DSA).
11. Collins to President and Members of the Levy Court, 6 Feb 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164-2, HML; "Relief Board Holds Levy Court Demands Are 'Irreconcilable'", JEE, 8 Feb 1936, p. 1; TERC for NCC to Levy Court, 6 Feb 1936, Governor McMullen's Papers, DSA.
12. Collins to Levy Court, 6 Feb 1936.
13. P. du Pont to Levy Court, 12 Feb 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164-2, HML; Minutes of Levy Court February 18, 1936, p. 276 (copy in DSA).

14. Ibid., p. 275; and Caskie to President and Members of the Levy Court, 12 Feb 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164-2, HML.
15. Collins to Levy Court, 24 Feb 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML; Minutes of Levy Court February 18, 1936, p. 276 (copy in DSA).
16. Burbage to FERA, 31 Jan 1936, Record Group 69, Records of FERA "State" Series Mar 1933-36, File 400 - General Correspondence with State Administrations - Delaware, NA.
17. Ross to FERA, 3 Feb 1936, Ibid.
18. Williams to Burbage and Ross, 5 Feb 1936, Ibid.
19. "Surplus Commodities Distribution in Action", in Progress, Vol 1, No 9, Sept 1936 (copy in HSD).
20. "Says Sussex Needy Suffer As Supplies Are Hoarded", JEE, 13 Mar 1936, pp. 1 and 14; "Relief Agency For Sussex To Get Supplies", JEE, 2 Apr 1936, p. 2.
21. TERC for NCC, Minute, 31 Mar 1936; P. du Pont to Tallman, 21 Apr 1936; same to Alexander R. Abrams, 3 Apr 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164; and TERC for NCC, "Summary of Revenue for Resident Relief, 28 Feb 1935 - 31 Mar 1937, Statement 'E'", in Final Report, pp. 2, 12 and 29; TERC for NCC, Interim Report, p. 10 (copies in HML).
22. Minutes of Levy Court March 24, 1936, pp. 311-2 (copy in DSA); "Direct Relief In The County Ends On June 1", JEE, 24 Mar 1936, pp. 1 and 10
23. "Levy Court To Stop Direct Relief May 1", JEE, 25 Mar 1936, p. 4.
24. "March Trade Gain For City Is Reported", JEE, 9 Apr 1936, p. 1.
25. Tallman to P. du Pont, 20 Apr 1936 and P. du Pont to Tallman, 21 Apr 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML; TERC for NCC, Final Report, p. 3 .
26. "\$50,000 Given To TERC For Direct Relief", JEE, 21 Apr 1936, pp. 1 and 10
27. P. du Pont to Collins, 25 Jun 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164; TERC for NCC, Final Report, pp. 3 and 26, HML.
28. Ibid., p. 3.
29. P. du Pont to H.J. Joslyn, 24 July 1936, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.

30. "State Return In US Taxes Up 40.9 Per Ct.", JEE, 10 Jul 1936, p. 3;  
"Collections In Delaware Up 38 Per Cent", JEE, 9 Oct 1936, p. 1;  
"Hopkins Lists Delaware Last In Federal Aid", JEE, 3 Oct 1936,  
p. 2. This report quoted figures issued by the FERA, including the-  
year-by-year payments by Delaware in internal revenues: \$12.5 million  
in 1933-34; \$27,046,266 in 1934-35; and \$38,662,968 in 1935-36. In the  
period 23 May 1933 to 31 March 1936, Delaware received \$2,404,777 from  
the federal government in direct relief - the smallest of the grants  
made to any of the states and territories for that purpose. In the  
same period New York received \$411,530,774; Maryland \$35,667,069; and  
Nevada, which had a population not dissimilar in size to that of  
Delaware, received \$5,481,404.
31. "State and City Ending Year With Balance", JEE, 30 Jun 1936, pp. 1-2;  
"Levy Court Cuts 10 Cents From County tax For 1937", JEE, 23 Jun 1936,  
p. 1.
32. "Federal Aid Del. Projects Employ 4,146", JEE, 5 Aug 1936, p. 1; "U.S.  
to Spend 14 Million on C. & D. Canal", JEE, 25 Sept 1936, p.1;  
"\$4,522,800 Aid Total For State", JEE, 28 Sept 1936, p. 2. The task of  
improving the old waterway involved increasing the depth from 12 to 27  
feet and the width from 90 to 250 feet. The ultimate cost of  
converting it into a wide deep-draft ship canal was estimated at \$14  
million.
33. "6198 Find Jobs In City During Past 3 Months", JEE, 2 Sept 1936, p. 1.
34. "Prosperity For City Predicted", JEE, 28 Sept 1936, p. 2.
35. "Bank Assets Up 9 Million In 3 Months", JEE, 23 Nov 1936, p. 1.
36. Otteni to Farley, 30 Jun 1936, Official File 300, DNC 1933-45, FDR  
Library.
37. Biggs to Farley, 17 Aug 1936, Official File 300, Box 36 Farley's  
Correspondence - General 1936 Connecticut - Delaware, FDR Library.  
Several other correspondents responded to Farley's request for "the  
true political picture in Delaware" in the same vein. See James M.  
Tunnell, 3 Aug 1936; Sybil Shannon, 9 Sept 1936; Norman Collinson,  
9 Sept 1936; Mrs Benjamin Ableman, 12 Sept 1936; Hervey P. Hall, 12 Sept  
1936; John B. Jester, 28 Sept 1936; Mrs John E. Mayhew, 30 Sept 1936;

see also Stevenson to Mary Dewson, vice-chairman Democratic National Campaign Committee, 22 Oct 1936, Box 45, DNC - Women's Division Correspondence Miscellaneous 1933-36, Delaware 1936 Campaign by Counties. FDR Library.

38. "Short Faction And Democrats Join in Sussex", JEE, 15 Sept 1936, p. 6; "Coalition Is Being Opposed By Democrats", JEE, 16 Sept 1936, p. 3.
39. Robert F. Burk, The Corporate State and the Broker State, The Du Ponts and American National Politics 1925-1940 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 248; John A. Munroe, History of Delaware (Dover, Del.: University of Delaware Press, 1979), pp. 208 and 212; Walter J. Norbet, "The Vote for United States Representative From Delaware in Relation to the Trend Towards Urbanization in the State 1920 -1952", (unpublished MA Thesis: University of Delaware, 1954), p. 12; Henry Clay Reed, Delaware - A History of the First State (3 vols., New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1947), vol 1, p. 223. The state's Roosevelt electors received 67,591 votes, Landon electors 52,476 votes and the Independent Republican ticket 2,976 votes. The Roosevelt plurality was 15,115. "New Governor Has Divided Legislature" and "Tickets Beaten In All County Races", JEE, 4 Nov 1936, p.1. On 27 Oct 1938, John J. Morris Jr., United States Attorney for the District of Delaware, wrote to Farley: "The Democratic victory in Delaware in 1936 was due very largely ... to the President's popularity here, as well as elsewhere." Official File 300, Farley's Correspondence, Supplementary States Reports Del, Id. Ind, Iowa, FDR Library.
40. TERC for NCC, Final Report, pp. 45, 49, and 60.
41. "Text of Governor Buck's Message to State assembly", JEE, 28 Dec 1936, p. 2.
42. "Governor Buck Asks For Enactment Of Unemployment Insurance Measure", JEE, 28 Dec 1936, p. 2.
43. "House Prepares New Job Insurance Plan; Labor Flays Senate Bill", JEE, 29 Dec 1936, p. 1; "Editorial", JEE, 1 Jan 1937, p. 6. The other states which had failed to enact legislation were Arkansas, Florida,

Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Washington and Wyoming.

44. "Sharp Upturn In Business Reported In Wilmington", JEE, 11 Jan 1937, p. 1.
45. TERC for NCC, Final Report, pp. 45, 49 and 60.
46. "4 in Levy Court Retire Under New Act", JEE, 5 Jan 1937, p. 1.
47. "12,575,428 Budget Asked By Governor", Ibid.; "Method to Prevent Loss Of Revenue, Balance Budget Given Governor", JEE, 26 Feb 1937, pp. 1 and 4. The state finance commission was appointed by Governor Buck in 1935, and its membership included Pierre du Pont.
48. "Buck Trims State Debt \$9,184,785", JEE, 1 Oct 1936, p. 1.
49. "Text of Governor Buck's Message to the State Legislature", JEE, 15 Jan 1937, p. 4.
50. "Wise Economy and Balanced State Budget Promised in His address at Dover Ceremony", JEE, 19 Jan 1937, p. 1.
51. Unemployment Compensation Commission of Delaware, [Pamphlet], "The Delaware Unemployment Compensation Law, What It Means To You and Your Community", (New Castle, Delaware, 1937), pp. 3-7.
52. McMullen to General assembly, 20 Apr 1937, Governor's Papers, DSA. In this he wrote: "I feel it is my duty as your Governor, to appeal ... in behalf of those who are much less fortunate than we, and implore you ... to give your keen and valued consideration to ... a relief measure for the State of Delaware." See also Minutes, Meeting of Representatives of State-Wide Relief Organisations, held on 16 Mar 1937 and 19 Mar 1937, Governor's Papers, DSA; "State Relief Program To Be Considered", JEE, 13 Mar 1937, pp. 1 and 3; "State To Aid Relief Work In 3 Counties", JEE, 16 Mar 1937, p. 1; "Needy Facing Surplus Goods Halt by U.S.", JEE, 10 Mar 1937, p. 1.
53. Collins to McMullen, 25 Mar 1937, Governor's Papers, DSA.
54. "Tax On Income To Help Needy Passes House", JEE, 16 Apr 1937, p. 1; "Income Tax Plan To Raise Funds For Relief Left To Die", JEE, 20 Apr 1937, p.7.
55. Federal Writers' Project, "Government Relief", 1939, p. 3 (copy in U of D Library); TERC for NCC, Final Report, "Statement E" pp. 45 and 60

56. Collins to McMullen, 30 Apr 1937, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
57. Resolution of the Levy Court, 5 May 1937, Governor's Papers, 1937 Levy - Nat., DSA; "Levy Court Pledges Aid To Needy; Asks Relief Board To Handle Funds", JEE, 4 May 1937, pp. 1 and 4.
58. Mullen to Levy Court, 11 May 1937, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
59. "Relief Appeals Pile Up", JEE, 11 May 1937, pp. 1 and 10.
60. "Legislature Approves 5 Measures At Brief Session", JEE, 19 May 1937, pp. 1 and 4.
61. "Trade Activity In City Holds To High Levels", JEE, 10 Jun 1937, p. 1.
62. "Mayor Bacon Leads Ticket In Big GOP City Victory", JEE, 7 Jun 1937, pp. 1-2.
63. Alfred Steinberg, Mrs. R., The Life of Eleanor Roosevelt (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1958), p. 259; "President, First Lady In Delaware For Wedding Of Miss du Pont, Franklin, Jr." JEE, 30 Jun 1937, p. 1.
64. Candee to Sellers, 29 Nov 1937, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML.
65. Fechner to Corkran, 9 Jul 1937, Governor's Papers, DSA; Dean Snyder, (assistant to W. Frank Persons) to Joseph Knox, Executive Director, Delaware Old Age Welfare Commission, 9 Jul 1937. Snyder wrote: "The Director's office expresses grave concern over the number of ... men that must be brought into the State to maintain the six companies now located on Delaware work projects...." New Deal Agencies and Black America, Black Studies Research Sources, Microfilms and Major Archival Collections, (Maryland: University Publications of America, 1984), Reel 9, Record Group 35, CCC Selection Division, Policy: Negro General - Negro Question, RSC.
66. Corkran to McMullen, 17 Jul 1937, Governor's Papers, DSA.
67. McMullen to Taylor, 23 Jun 1937 and Taylor to Snyder 25 Jun 1937, New Deal Agencies and Black America, Reel 8.
68. Deveral to Persons, 11 Aug 1937, New Deal Agencies and Black America; "Asserts CCC Drainage Boon to Kent Farmers, JEE, 5 Apr 1938, p. 6.

69. Corkran to P. du Pont, 14 Mar 1938; and Corkran, Circular, "We Are Facing The Immediate Loss Of Our Two Remaining CCC Camps", 2 Mar 1938, P. du Pont Papers LMSS 10, Series A, Files 765-13 and 1164, HML.
70. Delaware State Employment Service, Census of Partial Unemployment, and Occupations: November, 1937, RSC; K.A. Horner, "Unemployment Survey - Wilmington", 22 Nov 1937, Federal Writers' Project Papers, pp. 3-4 (copy in U of D Library).
71. Anthony J. Badger, The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940 (London: MacMillan Press Ltd., 1989), pp. 111-3.
72. Candee to Seller, 29 Nov 1937.
73. Government Relief, p. 3; Joseph N. Knox, Executive Director of the State Old Age Welfare Commission, to Robert Fechner, 4 Jun 1937, New Deal Agencies and Black America.
74. American Public Welfare Association, Fred K. Hoehler, Director, Public Welfare Survey of the State of Delaware (Chicago, June 1938) (copy in U of D Library).

#### NOTES TO CONCLUSION.

1. Memo Lincoln to P. du Pont, 13 Oct 1937, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 1164, HML. The total federal relief expenditure for the United States was \$16,048,100,000, compared to a total of \$15,744,917,000 received in federal taxes. The "relief" figure did not include the expenditure of the "various" lending agencies, such as Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Farm Credit Administration, Home Owners Loan Corporation, Commodity Credit Corporation and Federal Housing Administration.
2. The confidential tabulation was supplied to E.E. Lincoln by Under Secretary of the Treasury Roswell Magill in August 1937. It was re-issued on 7 April 1939, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 765-13, HML.
3. Don C. Reading, "New Deal Activity and the States, 1933 to 1939", in the The Journal of Economic History, Vol 33, No 4, December 1973; "U.S. Internal Revenue Collections: Federal Income Tax Receipts, by States and Years", 1933-1939 World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1941,

p. 759. FDR Library. This is also confirmed by the account in James T. Patterson The New Deal and the States: Federalism in Transition (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 198: "A state-by-state comparison of federal tax incidence and federal aid in 1940 revealed wide variations. Delaware residents [who] ranked first in per capita tax incidence with a figure of \$172, ranked fortieth in aid with \$22.24 per capita."

4. Memo Lincoln to P. du Pont, 20 Oct 1937, P. du Pont Papers, LMSS 10, Series A, File 765-13, HML.
5. "Delaware Ranks Third From Bottom Among States in PWA Grants", JEE, 4 Nov 1938, p. 1. This was based on an announcement made by Harold Ickes on 3 Nov 1938.
6. Final Report on the WPA Program 1935-43 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1976), Table 8. - "Amount of WPA Funds Expended for Programs Operated by WPA and by Other Federal Agencies, by State and by Fiscal Year Through June 30, 1943" p. 120.
7. Cf., John W. Jefferies, Testing the Roosevelt Coalition: Connecticut Society and Politics in the Era of World War II (Knoxville, Tenn.: The University of Tennessee Press, 1979), p. 267. For the sources of data, see Edgar Eugene Robinson, They Voted For Roosevelt. The Presidential Vote 1932-1944 (California: Stanford University Press, 1947), pp. 70-1; and Official Congressional Directory 74th Congress (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1936), Statistical Information, p. 240, "Votes for Senators, Representatives, and Delegates 1928-1936"; EJEE, 10 Nov 1928, pp. 1 and 13; EJEE, 8 Nov 1930, pp. 1 and 2; EJEE, 9 Nov 1932, pp. 1 and 22; JEE, 7 Nov 1934, Vol. 2, No. 263, p. 1; JEE, 4 Nov 1936, pp. 1 and 2; JEE, 9 Nov 1938, pp. 1 and 11; and JEE, 7 Nov 1940, p. 1.
8. Claff to Hopkins, 8 Dec 1934, Papers of Harry L. Hopkins, Box 65, Field Reports 1932-1935 - Delaware, FERA - WPA - Survey of Conditions - Nov 1934 - Jan 1935, FDR Library.



NOTES to APPENDIX 'A'

1. EJ, 28 Jan 1965, pp. 1 and 3.
2. EJ, 10 Jan 1961, p. 1.
3. MN, 2 Dec 1969, pp. 1 and 6.
4. MN, 11 Oct 1943, p. 4.
5. EJ, 21 May 1962, p. 1.
6. JEE, 24 Jul 1952, pp. 1 and 6.
7. Marjorie Dent Candee ed., Current Biography,: Who's News and Why 1954 (New York: The H W Wilson Co, 1954).
8. MN, 1 Jan 1966, p. 1.
9. JEE, 20 May 1940, pp. 1 and 6.
10. MN, 9 Apr 1970, p. 7.
11. MN, 10 May 1966, p. 1.
12. JEE, 31 Jan 1954, pp. 1 and 2.
13. Anna Rothe ed., Current Biography: Who New's and Why, 1946 (New York: The H. H. Wilson Co, 1946).
14. MN, 10 Jan 1945, p. 4.
15. JEE, 14 Jun 1934, pp. 1 and 20.
16. JEE, 2 Dec 1946, pp. 1 and 4.
17. JEE, 18 Feb 1944, pp. 1 and 10.
18. JEE, 9 Jan.1951, pp. 1 and 8.
19. JEE, 28 Jun 1947, pp 1 and 4.
20. JEE, 30 Jun 1935, p. 2.
21. JEE, 26 Dec 1944, pp.1 and 4.
22. JEE, 3 May 1944, p. 1.
23. Charles Moritz ed., Current Biography Year Book 1965 (New York: The H.H. Wilson Co, 1965.)

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