

OMAHA'S NEW CITY OFFICIALS WHO TAKE OFFICE MONDAY

Personnel of the City's New Official Roster and Some Notion of the Problems of Administration that Confront the Several Departments at the Beginning of the Term



LOUIS BERKA, 1st Ward.



LEE BRIDGES, 2nd Ward.



DAN B. BUTLER, City Clerk



J.G. DAHLMAN
MAYOR



H.E. BURNAM, City Attorney



M.F. FUNKHOUSER, 11th Ward.



G.M. DAVIS, 12th Ward.

OMAHA'S city government will be turned over to a new administration on Monday. At that time the new city council, the mayor, city clerk, comptroller, attorney, engineer, building inspector and Board of Fire and Police Commissioners will take office and the affairs of the city will proceed for the next three years under their guidance. Of the incoming city officials the mayor, city clerk, comptroller, attorney, building inspector and six of the councilmen are democrats. Of these all are re-elected. The city engineer, six councilmen and four members of the police board are republicans. Thus of the twenty-two elective officers of the city each of the leading parties has eleven. For the first time the city engineer and the members of the police board are elected. In the past the engineer has been appointed by the mayor and the police board by the governor.

The change in administration will be accomplished without any especial ceremony. The council will meet and its first business will be to organize by electing a president. As it is evenly divided on party lines it is likely a deadlock may result for a time. Five of the democrats are candidates for the position of president, so the voting for the office may go on for some little time before a choice is made. At best it will require some member to vote for one candidate not belonging to his party to achieve an election by a majority. The police board will organize with less effort, for its members are all republicans. The other officers will simply take the oath, file their bonds and proceed to reorganize their office staffs. As no change is made in the political aspect of any of the offices it is not probable that any extensive changes will be made in the list of city employes, although Mayor Dahlman may alter his selections in some regards. In the engineer's office some extensive changes may be made, as the new charter has removed from the control of the engineer the larger part of the force formerly employed under his direction, and the death of Engineer Rosewater some weeks ago placed the office temporarily in the control of the democrats. Other offices are so organized that few of the employes will be disturbed.

The new city administration will have some very extensive problems to deal with. The growth of the city has been so rapid that its management is constantly presenting new questions and new responsibilities for its officials. New contracts for lighting the streets are to be made by the incoming council and means for providing a considerable extension of this service must be secured. The continued extension of paved streets—and more than a million dollars will be expended during the coming summer in Omaha on this item of improvement alone—means that the task of cleaning and maintaining the streets in proper order is more of a task each year than ever. This work must be overlooked by the mayor and city council, the city engineer and the street commissioner having direct charge of it. Then the construction and maintenance of sewers is another big item in the work of the engineering department, while the street sweeping and repairing is looked after by the street commissioner. Matters pertaining to the relations of the public service corporations with the city and with each other are pending before the council and will receive some attention, as the democrats in their platforms pledged certain reforms which will have to be worked out some way. The clerical and administrative functions of the city government will be carried on in much the same way, except on the larger scale incident to the growth of the city.

The Board of Fire and Police Commissioners has some problems of its own to solve. To start with the matter of equipping two fire houses that are without men or machinery must be taken up early. Chief Salter is anxious for the building of two other fire houses, with further additions to the working force of the department. These matters are also forced on offi-

cial attention by the continued expansion of the city. In the same lines comes the affairs of the police department. The late legislature passed a law to increase the pay of the members of the police force, but neglected to enact legislation whereby the money could be provided to meet the increased expense. This means that the policemen must work for less pay than the law allows them, or the force must be reduced in number. As Omaha already suffers from the fact that its police force is too few in number the board is here faced with a serious administrative proposition right at the outset. At present the policemen are nearly all willing to work for the old rate of pay in order that none may be laid off. The police board will also have the excise business of the city to look after, dealing with saloon license and similar questions.

The personnel of the incoming government of Omaha is as follows:
Mayor—James C. Dahlman, democrat.
City Clerk—Daniel B. Butler, democrat.
City Attorney—Harry E. Burnam, democrat.
Comptroller—Charles O. Lobeck, democrat.
Building Inspector—Charles H. Withnell, democrat.
Engineer—G. W. Craig, republican.
City Councilmen—
First Ward—Louis Berka, republican.
Second Ward—Lee Bridges, democrat.
Third Ward—Louis Burmeister, republican.
Fourth Ward—L. B. Johnson, democrat.
Fifth Ward—Goodley F. Brucker, democrat.
Sixth Ward—W. S. Sheldon, democrat.
Seventh Ward—Fred Schroeder, rep.
Eighth Ward—Joseph B. Hummel, republican.
Ninth Ward—Thomas McGovern, democrat.
Tenth Ward—A. C. Kugel, republican.
Eleventh Ward—Millard Filmore Funkhouser, democrat.
Twelfth Ward—Charles M. Davis, republican.

James Charles Dahlman was born in Texas, "punched" cows in Wyoming and the Dakotas, entered the political game in Dawes county and landed in the mayor's chair after a residence in Omaha of only eight years. He was sheriff of Dawes county, mayor of Chadron, national committeeman for two terms and state chairman for one; earned the name of being Mr. Bryan's closest personal and political friend, distinguished himself by lassoing the Peerless Leader in New York harbor and was all but extinguished by Governor Shallenberger, whom he tried to defeat for the gubernatorial nomination a year ago. Mr. Dahlman has lived in the state about twenty years and in Omaha less than a dozen years. Dan B. Butler has made Omaha his home since early school boy days. He was graduated from the High school and took the full course at Creighton university, finishing in 1898. While attending the university he was star man on the foot ball team. Upon completing his school course he took a position with the Pacific Express company, but when the headquarters were moved to St. Louis he could not

bear the thought of living anywhere but in Omaha and returned to this city in three months to become deputy county clerk, a position he held until elected city clerk three years ago.

Politics was born and bred in C. O. Lobeck. His father was a close political friend of Owen Lovejoy, Lyman Trumbull and General Henderson, and his grandfather was city treasurer of Demmin, in the province of Pomerania, Prussia, before they began to count. The present Mr. Lobeck has been in politics since 1892. In that year he was elected to the state senate as a republican; in 1896 he was elected to the council as a silver republican and in 1903, 1906 and 1909 he was elected city comptroller as a democrat. Aside from this he was talked of for congress and governor at times. Mr. Lobeck came to Omaha in 1880 and was a pioneer salesman in this state.

Harry E. Burnam is a graduate of the Georgetown University of Washington, D. C., receiving the degrees of L. L. B. and L. L. M. Upon his graduation he was legal reviewer and special examiner for the pension bureau

Mr. Withnell was born in Omaha and the house in which he was born still stands. He has seen the city grow from almost its very beginning and says that had he been building inspector fifty years ago it would not now be necessary to condemn scores of buildings every year.

The initials G. W. generally stand for George Washington, and if any man has a right to these names it is George Washington Craig, for he was born in the library of the old Mount Vernon home of the first president. Mr. Craig's father, J. Y., former member of the Board of Park Commissioners, was employed by the government to reconstruct Mount Vernon after the war, and the family was living there when the future city engineer was born. Mr. Craig came to Omaha in 1883 and was employed by the city engineering department twenty years, half of which time he was assistant city engineer.

Omaha is supposed to be a rather good city, but in the eleven years Louis Berka served as police judge he tried over 100,000 cases. Judge

Berka was born in Bohemia, has lived in America forty-seven years and in Omaha twenty-six years, and is a graduate of the State University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Before he became police judge, a position he held at four different times, Judge Berka was appointed a justice of the peace.

While he is proud of the majorities he received this spring and three years ago, Lee Bridges is just as proud of a couple of medals he secured in his younger days when he was a proficient swinger of Indian clubs and puncher of punching bags. Lately he has been too busy contracting to pay much attention to his athletic paraphernalia, though it is said that he always gets into trim before entering a political campaign. Mr. Bridges has lived in Omaha twenty-five years.

Louis Burmeister was born in Omaha and has lived here constantly. His father came to this city in 1860 and the following year enlisted in Company B, First Nebraska Volunteers. Mr. Burmeister was a member of the council from 1896 to 1900 and was instrumental in the passage of the ordinance

steambot on the Illinois river. That river was too small for him, so he came to Omaha in 1870 in the hope he could get a run on the Missouri, but the Big Muddy was no more navigable than that now. He then thought he would like to run a Union Pacific locomotive, but when he found there were eighty applicants ahead of him he went into other lines of work. He was first elected to the city council in 1906.

W. S. Sheldon came to Omaha in 1889 to take charge of the gymnasium of the Young Men's Christian association, but for the last fifteen years has been engaged in either making pies or selling real estate. He was graduated from Oberlin, (O.) college and the physical training school at Springfield, Mass., and had charge of the Cleveland Young Men's Christian association gymnasium for a short time before coming to Omaha. He is still something of an athlete and enjoys rowing and swimming at Manawa and Cut-Off lakes. His first venture in politics was three years ago, when he went into the city council on the top of the democratic wave.

One of the new members of the city council is Fred Schroeder, who is 24 years of age. He was born in Omaha and has lived most of his life in the Seventh ward. He is a member of the Bricklayers' union, was secretary one term and was sent to Detroit last year as the union's delegate to the national convention. Mr. Schroeder holds the distinction of being the youngest delegate ever sent to a national convention of the Bricklayers' union.

Several members of the present administration played together in the "kid" base ball nine some forty years ago, and one of these is J. B. Hummel, who came to Omaha in 1864 at the age of 2 years. He used to play ball with Louis Burmeister, Charles Karbach, Charley Withnell and Fred Hoyer. For forty-two years Mr. Hummel has lived in the same house, at 524 North Eighth street. When he takes his seat as councilman he will retire from the superintendency of street repair work, a position under the city engineering department which he has held some time.

Thomas McGovern is the only hero the council has. While employed by the Union Pacific he attended the picnic at Logan, Ia., and was instrumental in saving the lives of eleven people plinked under the wreck in which scores of picnickers homeward bound

lost their lives. Mr. McGovern worked for the Union Pacific thirty-two years, beginning as a messenger boy and working up. His home is at 2615 Chicago street and he has lived in the same house since the day of his marriage, twenty-three years ago. He is now entering on his second term. Another union man in the new council is A. C. Kugel, who has held every office in the plumbers' organization. In 1907 Mr. Kugel was sent to Norfolk, Va., as a delegate to the national convention of the American Federation of Labor. The new councilman has lived in Omaha twenty-five years, learned his trade here under his father and served a short time as plumbing inspector for the city before the induction into office of Harry McVea, the present incumbent.

Before the political game began to look good to him Millard Filmore Funkhouser was a ball player and during the early '80's played all over this western country with the Union Pacific team. Mr. Funkhouser came to Omaha to work in the freight auditing department of the Union Pacific, but later went into the insurance business. He was born in St. Louis, graduated from the University of New York, is a thirty-third degree Mason, an Elk and belongs to several other lodges, and prides himself with having served five years on the Omaha Board of Education before he broke into the city council three years ago.

The youngest member of the new city council is Charles M. Davis, who is eleven months younger than Fred Schroeder. Mr. Davis was not born in Omaha, but came to this city when he was only two years of age, which was twenty-two years ago. He was a "newsie" when a small boy, later worked for the street car company for a number of years and has all along found time to educate himself at home and is now engaged in the study of law, needing two more years in which to complete his course. The young man supports his widowed mother and sister. This is his first appearance in politics.

Fred H. Hoyer was born in England, but as soon as he was old enough to travel came to America and chose Omaha as his place of abode. He served on the council as member from the Second ward from 1900 to 1906, when he was succeeded by Lee Bridges, his business partner. Mr. Hoyer is in the contracting business and has had something to do with many large enterprises in this city.

William J. Hunter has lived in Omaha since the early days and has been in business on the north side during most of his residence. He is now in the grocery business at Twenty-fourth and Binney streets. Mr. Hunter was a member of the Board of Review before that body was abolished by charter amendment.

One of the new city officials who was born in Omaha is Charles J. Karbach. Mr. Karbach was born in 1869 and the family home at that time was at Fifteenth and Howard streets, across the alley from the Orpheum theater, and these associations may account somewhat for the police commissioner's love of the theater, he says. He learned the plumber's trade and worked at it seven years, but since the death of his father Mr. Karbach has managed the Karbach block.

William F. Wappich came from the great state of Iowa. Keokuk was his birthplace. He added to the fame of that city and state by his advent in 1863. Law has been Mr. Wappich's lifework, though, like most youths, he scrambled around in other lines of occupation for a few years jockeying for a start down the circuit in the real race. He studied law in the offices of H. Scott Howell and George W. McCrary, secretary of war and later United States circuit judge, and still later attorney for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad, both of Keokuk. From that sequestered little city down in the lower right hand pocket of Iowa Mr. Wappich came to Omaha twenty years ago. He has practiced law here continuously since and has been very successful. This is his first public office. Mr. Wappich is of the old German stock

Board of Fire and Police Commissioners



for years. Mr. Burnam came to Omaha in 1893; four years later he was appointed municipal judge, and from 1901 to 1903 was deputy county attorney. He was elected city attorney the first time in 1906.

The principal pride of Charles H. Withnell is that he has always received the largest vote of any candidate whenever he has run for office, though in the last election he secured only 106 more votes than did Mayor Dahlman.

providing that eight hours shall constitute a day's work for a city employe. He organized the Metal Workers' union and has held every chair in that organization. Though he is now as sedate as a judge, L. B. Johnson in his younger days was something of a sport and carries a broken finger as a memento of a game of base ball he played while shortstop for the California, Mo., team. Mr. Johnson is a Missourian by birth and was graduated from the