

Republican Governor and Democratic Legislature at Work



OPENING SESSION OF THE HOUSE
SPEAKER PRO TEM GERDES IN CHAIR.

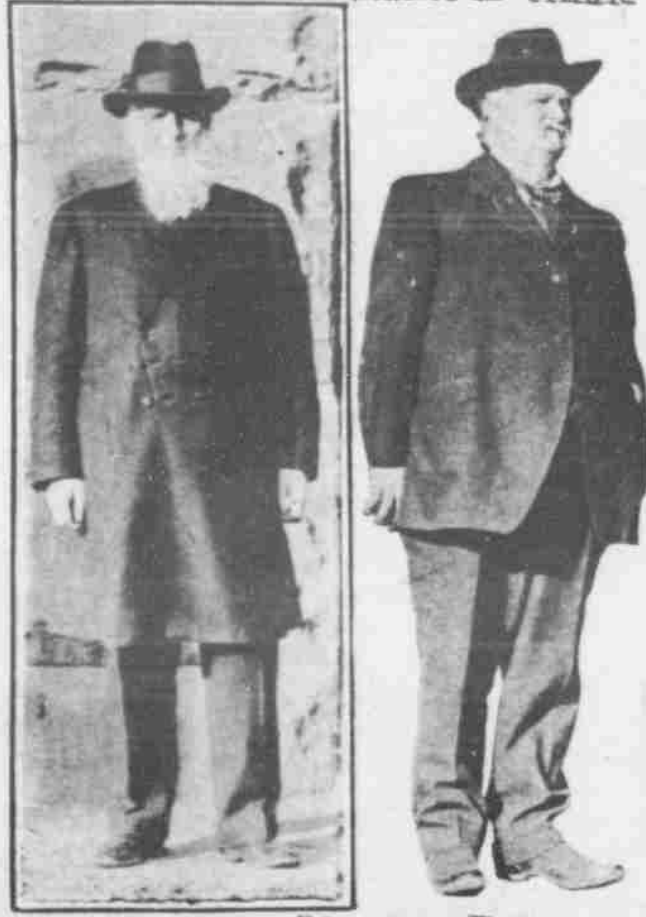


HENRY C. RICHMOND
CHIEF CLERK OF HOUSE

JOHN BOTTL
SPEAKER

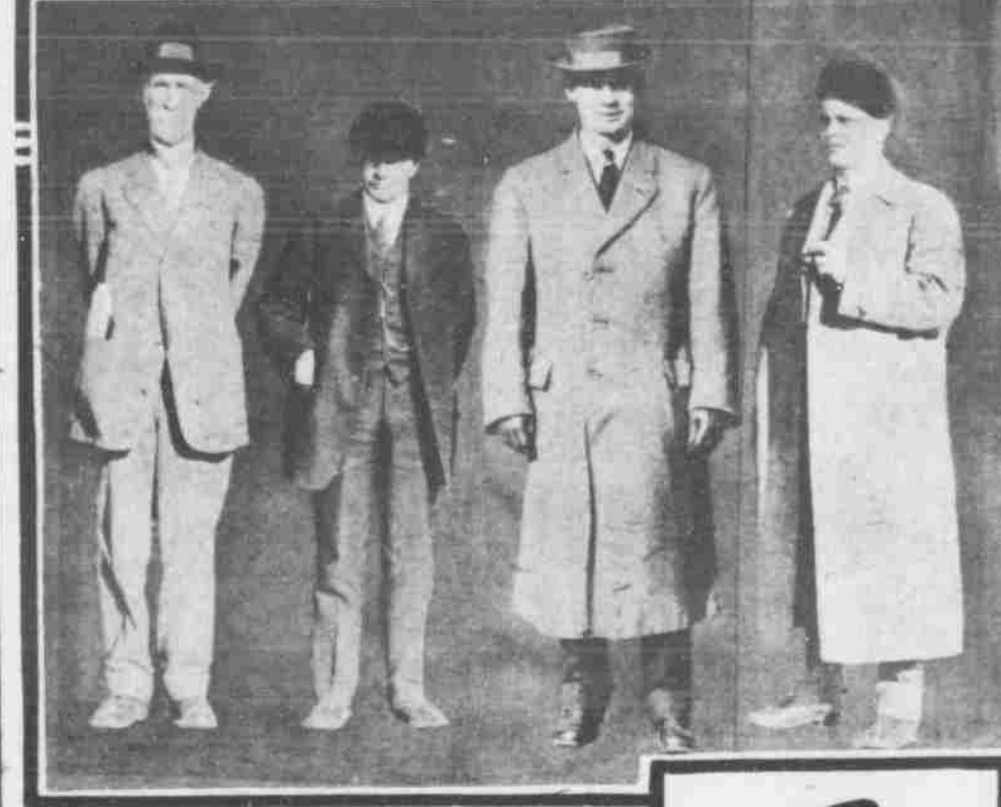


Gov. Chester H. Aldrich



Ekler James Huff
Chaplain of Senate

Repr. Haller
Wash. County



Left to Right - Reprs. Minor, Mockett
Eager, McElvne of Lancaster County



Left to Right - Senators Skiles, Volpp and Morehead
(Pres. Pro Tem of Senate) - Sec. W. H. Smith, Asst. J. G. Hildebrand.



CHESTER H. ALDRICH, of David City, on Thursday last succeeded Ashton C. Shallenberger as governor of Nebraska. The new chief magistrate of the state is a republican, a lawyer by profession, with some pretensions to farming. The retiring governor is a democrat, whose business is banking, though he raises blooded stock with a good deal of success. Mr. Shallenberger has his home in Harlan county, which borders on the Kansas line, while Aldrich comes from a Platte river county that corners on Lancaster, wherein the capital city is located.

Both the incoming and outgoing governors have mixed in politics to a greater or less degree for a good many years. Governor Aldrich has served in the state senate, and Mr. Shallenberger was twice elected to congress by the democrats. Both men are orators of some note in their respective parties, and their services have been in demand on the stump in past campaigns; so it follows the people of the state are well acquainted with their personalities. Neither man is in the wealthy class, yet each is counted as being comfortably well off. Each has a family, now grown up, but neither one is yet a grandfather.

Mrs. Aldrich, like Mrs. Shallenberger, whom she succeeds as mistress of the executive mansion provided by the state, is a woman of plain tastes and home-loving character. It was in deference to her wishes that Governor Aldrich let it be understood the customary inaugural ball would be dispensed with as a feature of his inauguration. That she will worthily discharge the duties of her position as the wife of the governor is considered a matter of course by her neighbors in David City and by those others who have the privilege of knowing her. The family is affiliated with the Methodist church.

Each Had Paramount Issue

Governor Aldrich, like Governor Shallenberger, was elected largely on one issue. Shallenberger made his campaign almost exclusively on the demand for a law that would guarantee the deposits in banks, and the statute passed in response to his urging has just been sustained by the supreme court of the United States. Governor Aldrich made his fight mainly as an advocate of a county option law, with the result that party lines were obliterated, so far as the governorship was concerned, in the state election.

With the republican governor, every candidate of that party for a state office was successful. In spite of this, the legislature is democratic in both branches, although in the state senate the prevailing party has but one majority. In the house the democrats have a more comfortable margin.

So it came about that democracy's day of triumph was Tuesday, when that party organized the senate and house. The inauguration of the republican governor occurred two days later, and Friday morning the other heads of the various offices of the state took possession. The republican governor has with him all the state boards, and the heads of all state institutions, although he went outside his own party for some of his appointees.

Three New Men in Office

The new state officers, aside from governor, are Walter A. George, state treasurer, of Broken Bow in Custer county; Addison Wait, secretary of state, of Syracuse; Grant Martin, attorney general, of Fremont, Dodge county; J. W. Crabtree, superintendent of public instruction, of Peru, Nemaha

county; and possibly Peter Mortensen of Ord, Valley county, for railroad commissioner. At the election Mr. Mortensen received approximately 70,000 votes for member of the state railroad commission to fill the vacancy caused by the death of the late W. H. Cowgill. Governor Shallenberger appointed to fill this vacancy his private secretary, Colonel W. J. Furse, and the legislature has refused to canvass the vote for Mortensen and declare him elected. This will necessitate a fight in court for the office.

Auditor of State Elias R. Barton succeeds himself, as does Land Commissioner Cowles and Railroad Commissioner Clarke. Secretary Wait has been for several years the deputy secretary of state, and of course is at home in the office. Messrs. George and Crabtree may also be considered trained men for their positions, the one having been for several years engaged in banking and having been a county treasurer, while the other has been identified with educational affairs for most of his active life.

Governor and Legislature May Agree

One of the propositions on which the chief magistrate and perhaps a majority of the legislature hope to agree is county option. Yet the outcome is not a certainty by any means; and it was noticed that the temporary speaker, discussing "important matters that have not been settled by other legislatures," did not mention county option. As Mr. Gerdes is a leader among the democrats, and was considered a strong possibility for speaker, his omission caused some comment.

In the consultations among democratic members of the house, preliminary to organization, the members in favor of county option secured from the majority an agreement to give a county option bill the right-of-way whenever the "drys" got ready to push it; to leave it exclusively in the hands of its friends for amendment, and generally to let the anti-liquor group have full possession of the bill.

At one stage of the negotiations it looked very promising for a combination of "dry" democrats and republicans to organize the two houses. The psychological elements were at hand, only needing a competent hand to gather them up and make them work; but the chance passed. It will always stand to the credit of the republicans that, with rare exceptions, the temptation did not carry them away. They very generally agreed the democrats should have the fruits of their legislative victory and be allowed to do the best they can.

Organization is "Wet"

Both branches are organized "wet" on the face of the returns as made up when the caucus choices were put in the various positions; but there is evident among the "drys" a feeling of satisfaction that is causing some nervousness among the more pronounced anti-county option men.

Some of the democratic representatives pledged against a county option measure of any character talk as if they believe the republican "wets" will be agreeable to taking up the task of blocking the game of the county optionists.

Besides the county option bill, the initiative and referendum and reapportionment of legislative districts are very important matters to be settled by the present legislature. Both parties are committed to these proposed measures. The initiative and referendum seems fairly sure of being engrafted on the statutes of Nebraska; but reapportionment on a plan that will be satisfactory to all sections of the state promises to be difficult. The legislators from the newer and

more rapidly growing sections are keen to have it pushed. While the senators and representatives from the counties now enjoying heavy representation, compared to population, are not saying much in opposition to this proposed reapportionment bill, they are studying very seriously possible combinations.

Politicians Watch Maneuvers

When the new legislature is being organized and new state officers installed, a great many people are drawn to the capital who have no particular business there, except possibly to gain political knowledge and enjoy the excitement of the "jockeying for position." The commencement of the thirty-second session of the Nebraska legislature was no exception. John C. Byrnes of Columbus, democratic state chairman, was on hand for consultation and advice; and so was "Bill" Husenetter, republican state chairman.

"I'm a farmer, not a politician," said Husenetter, showing his horny hands and looking the picture of the agriculturist resting up in the closed season.

Education a National Asset

PROGRESS in the education of the people today was declared to be of greater economic value to the country than the conservation of resources by President Edmund J. James of the University of Illinois. Prof. James was addressing the twenty-fifth annual meeting of the American Economic association at St. Louis, and said: "We are coming to see more and more that the wealth of a nation lies not in its fields, its forests, and its mines, but in the developed capacities of its people. And we are coming to recognize more and more clearly that such capacities cannot be discovered and trained to their fullest extent except by a systematic, carefully considered, comprehensive national purpose incorporated in a definite policy."

"Compared with the possibilities for the development of national wealth which lie in the increased knowledge and skill of the community, the saving effected by a so-called conservation of natural resources becomes a mere bagatelle." He insisted we may and shall find a substitute for coal as a means of converting the energy of the sun into means of heating, lighting, and driving machinery, long before our coal will be exhausted, if we will give our attention to the developments of science. "We shall find means of restoring or protecting

However, "Bill" has mixed in politics a time or two, and is now studying up on oil, with a view to making the Standard and other octopuses give up a fair amount of coin to fatten the state treasury. He is the new state oil inspector.

Officers of House and Senate

John Kuhl, the speaker of the house, is a quiet, genial man on the sunny side of 50, and seems to possess the qualities needed to hold the scales level when the stress of combat is on.

Henry Richmond, who won out for chief clerk of the house, is a newspaper man with winning ways. He missed the office at the last session by an eyelash, but had it cinched from the jumpoff this time. W. H. Smith, re-elected secretary of the senate, is also a newspaper man, publishing a democratic paper at Newark and J. G. P. Hildebrand, one of his assistants, was formerly in the business.

When it came to mixing gospel medicine, the Mormon elder, James Huff, proved his capacity by securing the senate pulpit for the session. He is just relinquishing the chaplaincy of the state penitentiary, to which he was appointed by Governor Shallenberger. An attempt was made to break the slate on Huff, but it failed by one vote. It may be mentioned, as something of a coincidence, that his predecessor at the penitentiary, Rev. P. C. Johnson of Tecumseh, is now a member of the house. Johnson is a retired preacher, and could be used any hour of the day as a correct presentment of Uncle Sam, without any sort of makeup.

The house chaplain is Rev. Jeremiah Mickel of

Lincoln, an old soldier as well as a preacher. He carries an empty sleeve.

Grief for Patronage Dispensers

Senator John E. Reagan and "Ed" McArdle are the two Douglas county men whose troubles are ready-made. They are on the committees on employes of the senate and house, respectively. And more than one or two of the local unfortunates have let it be known they very much desire to hold a door or keep a committee room in order.

"So many of the aspirants will perforce be compelled to seek a position selling automobile whips or something like that, it is a relief to be free of the disagreeable task of telling them so," remarked Senator Tanner, who knows something of the grief ahead of Reagan and McArdle.

Committee assignments are now the main consideration with the Douglas county members of the two houses. It has been made pretty clear by the anti-Douglas bunch in control of these assignments that senators and representatives from Omaha are not considered the very best timber for use in building the temperance committees, or those having to do with corporation measures. And yet, from a perverseness inherent in human nature, perhaps, various of the Douglas county legislators desire to be on these committees particularly. They take the modest position that as Omaha is commercial headquarters for the state, and as corporations of one kind or another are quite numerous here, senators and representatives from this neck of the woods should have an inside chance to scan and prune the corporation measures. If any pruning should be necessary, they will possibly be given minority representation, with all real work carried to the floor.

Lobbyists Sing Low

Several gentlemen heretofore classed among lobbyists for one interest or another, are already practicing up on a song which had its origin in Washington:

Notin' to do but listen,
Notin' to do but wait
And patiently hear with attentive ear
What the statesmen have to state,
Notin' to do but watch 'em
As they gather in strength once more
To lead the way and have their say,
As they've done so oft before.

They might also sing "It Was Not Like This in the Old Days," for lobbying of the old order has passed out. Smiling and agreeable gentlemen who appear to have a good deal of time on their hands are still to be noticed about the hotels, and occasionally in the corridors of the capitol or outside the bar of the house. They are exceedingly modest, especially if interested in the affairs of large corporations, and depend on severely quiet work among personal acquaintances for whatever results they achieve. They would deny being lobbyists, if asked, and probably an appropriate name for this new group would be "watchers" or "listeners."

There is a species of lobbyist, nevertheless, that will not be put down. Both men and women are in this second class, and they buzz the tired and tried statesmen wherever they can be found, singly and in committee. County option will be the theme of a good many initiative and referendum of others, and still more will express a deep interest in various measures of sociological or humanitarian character. Then the friends of the different state institutions and boards will also have to be heard, so that he will be a clever member who can get entirely clear of the whispered advice or plea of those who want something for themselves or want something done in the lawmaking line.