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The Public Career of Maurice Hudson Thatcher

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THE PUBLIC CAREER OF MAURICE HUDSON THATCHER

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of History
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Randy W. Ream
December 1981
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The public career of Maurice Hudson Thatcher was wedded to one of the most interesting epochs in Kentucky history and Kentucky politics. From 1895, with his election as county clerk of Butler County, to his defeat for the United States Senate in 1932, Maurice Thatcher was intimately involved in almost every statewide political campaign. He participated in the rise of the Republican party to a point where it was a definite force in state politics and won almost as many statewide races as it lost. He also participated in the party's relegation to minority status with the advent of the depression of the 1930's.

In the period from 1895 until 1932 he made politics his career and it served him well. Though he was admitted to the Kentucky bar in 1898, his private law practice was confined to only two brief periods in which he practiced his profession in Louisville. The remainder of his time was spent in politics, a profession he called "public service," and which he found an honorable and rewarding one.

Thatcher began the first period of his remarkable public career of eighty plus years as a political aide
to Kentucky's first three Republican governors: namely, William O. Bradley, William S. Taylor and Augustus E. Willson. Though intra-party feuds were sometimes intense and loyalties shifted, they became Thatcher's patrons and through this patronage he gained several jobs and positions. With these, he would set the stage for his emergence as a political figure in his own right as Governor of the Panama Canal Zone from 1910-1913 and as United States Representative from the Louisville district of Kentucky from 1923 until 1933.

But the entire period up to 1933 was only the first part of the remarkable public career of Maurice Thatcher. At age sixty-three he could have returned to Kentucky after leaving Congress and retired or practiced law at a leisurely pace. But this was not the way for the man who at a banquet commemorating his 100th birthday in 1970 would be called a "dedicated, universal man." His service as Governor of the Canal Zone, brief though it was, provided him with one of the great causes of his life and one that he cherished until his death in 1973. That cause was the Canal Zone, its upkeep, and the welfare of the Canal company's employees. The second cause in which he became interested while serving in Congress was the nation's national parks and, more specifically, in a national park-to-park federal highway system.

Although his title for the last forty years of his life was attorney at law, a more apt description of his
activities would be lobbyist, for that was how he spent most of the remaining hours in thought and in action at the Capitol, lobbying Congress in behalf of the two great causes of his later life.

A view of the extensive collection of scrapbooks housed in the Scottish Rite Temple in Washington, D.C., and conversations with his friends and associates, reveals that these two causes became almost an obsession with him. Together with his involvement in the Masons and Scottish Rite, and his activities as general counsel of the Mayflower Society, Maurice Thatcher had little time to practice law. A colleague, whose office was down the hall from him, recalls Thatcher's doing only a small amount of work with deeds and wills and in legal research for such organizations as the Panama Canal and Mayflower Societies.

His time would be spent in conversations with friends and their mutual interests and before Congressmen and Congressional committees lobbying for such things as a payraise for Canal company employees or for completion of the Natchez Trace Parkway extending to Mammoth Cave National Park. He also found energy for travel to every part of the world and to write poetry, a hobby he acquired as early as 1910.

Truly, his lack of pursuit of pecuniary reward and his many years of service to others make the nearly eighty years of his public career the story of a "dedicated, universal man."
There is, unfortunately, little information available on Thatcher's early life and especially on what he may have known about the Goebel tragedy. He was intimately acquainted with many of the participants but what he may have known about the assassination was not recorded. Thanks go to Norman Snider of Frankfort, an avid student of the Goebel affair, for information concerning Thatcher's involvement in the events immediately following the election of 1899.

Acknowledgement should also be made to Walter E. Barton, a close Thatcher friend, for information on his later life and for his work in publishing *Maurice H. Thatcher: An Autobiography in Poetry*. New York, 1974. Another Thatcher friend, Captain Miles P. DuVal, provided invaluable material on the Panama Canal and the contributions that his friend made to it.

Further acknowledgement is made to Dr. Jim Klotter of the Kentucky Historical Society; Sherrill McConnell of the University of Louisville archives; Mrs. Prue Mason Darnell of Frankfort; Senator John Sherman Cooper of Washington, D.C.; Ricky Ashby of Western Kentucky University; and to Mr. Aemil Poulter and the staff of the Scottish Rite Temple in Washington.

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I. BEGINNINGS AND THE GOEBEL-TAYLOR BATTLES

Maurice Hudson Thatcher was born on August 15, 1870, in Chicago, Illinois. He was one of two sons born to Mary Graves and John Christophers Thatcher. Though information of this early period is sketchy, the family was in Chicago for only a brief time before returning to Morgantown, Butler County, Kentucky, the home of the infant's maternal grandparents.

Both sides of the family could boast of interesting blood lines and Thatcher would often do so. His mother was a direct descendent of Mary Boone, sister of Daniel Boone, who had made an impact on Kentucky history by going for water from the fort at Boonesborough when it was surrounded by Indians in 1780. The bloodline of John Thatcher was perhaps more notable and made Maurice a direct descendent of several royal lines. The line extended from Charlemagne to William the Conqueror to the British royal family. It also extended to Elder William Brewster of the Plymouth colony, and Thatcher's interest in the colony and his ancestors provided subjects for numerous poems.

John Thatcher farmed a section of what is called the Big Bend of the Green River in Butler County. The area is west of Morgantown, and normal access to it was by river.
for most of the year since the county had no railroad and the roads were impassable during the winter months. The John Thatcher family were small farmers, and Maurice shared in much of the work as a young boy.

At age twelve young Thatcher started his education. He was able to attend five months of free schooling and four months at a seminary where tuition was charged. The seminary was in Morgantown and Maurice boarded there during its term. An interesting letter to his mother, which survives in his private papers, indicated his home sickness at not being able to see her while he attended school.¹ Since home was only five miles away, his complaint attests to the poor transportation available at that time.

As a teenager Thatcher worked in town to pay part of his tuition. He secured a job as a typesetter at the Butler County Weekly News and worked there with two other boys his own age. It was here that he would say that he first became interested in politics.² With the Butler County courthouse nearby and with local, state and national politics exhaustively covered in newspapers of that time, it is small wonder that he developed this interest.

while setting the type for stories about it.

At the seminary school, a mock congress practice allowed students to debate the issues of the day. Here Thatcher and his two friends, J. V. Harreld and F. B. Howard, developed an interest in public life and dreamed of being elected to the United States Congress. 3 Thatcher and Harreld became avid Republicans in the county which today remains markedly Republican, and Howard no doubt was their main opponent, as he became a Democrat. The dream was to come true in 1922 as all three were elected to Congress on the same day. Harreld was elected to the United States Senate as a Republican from Oklahoma, and Howard as a Congressman from the same state. In 1923 yet another contemporary of the three was elected to Congress in a special election as John Moore of Morgantown was elected to represent Kentucky's Second Congressional District as a Democrat.

In this period of his life Thatcher became acquainted with the first of his three great political patrons. William Sylvester Taylor had been a one room school teacher in the county but studied law and set up practice in Morgantown. In 1886 he ran for county judge and was elected along with the first full Republican ticket to be elected in the county. The sixteen year old Thatcher had taken more than a passing interest in the campaign

and took a job in the office of the Republican county clerk, J. D. Tanner.

For the next six years Thatcher divided his time between work in the clerk's office and completing his education. His father had died a few years earlier, and his mother had remarried. With no family farm to go back to he settled on law as his life's profession. But politics intervened before he seriously took up his law studies.

In 1892, the last position held by a Democrat in Butler County was up for election. The office of Circuit Court Clerk was to be filled during the mid term of the other county offices, and the Republicans needed a candidate. At the urging of Judge Taylor, and with his experience in the county clerk's office, Thatcher was a natural for the job. At age twenty-two he was a popular young man in Morgantown, and he had a well regarded family in the county. As was common practice for such elections, Thatcher and his Democratic opponent debated the issues at canvass meetings in each precinct. At the conclusion of the speeches the voters were lined up and counted in lines for each man. Thatcher won the race in a close election and set out to serve his six year term.

Work in the courthouse was seldom full time in those days and Thatcher had time to study law. As was common for would be attorneys, he spent time in the offices of local members of the bar and familiarized himself with
the law and its procedures.

Thatcher also remembered this period of his life as the time that he became a vegetarian. As he related the story for a 1978 interview with The Washington Post, he first became interested in this by a conversation with a physician who pointed out to him that he had a frail body and could probably not expect to lead a long life. Indeed, the first photos of Thatcher as Governor of the Canal Zone show a tall and very thin frame. He also realized that he would probably lead a sedentary life doing office work, with little opportunity for exercise. Thatcher noticed, he said, that drinkers and smokers did not live as long as those who abstained, and he resolved then not to eat meat, smoke, or drink any form of liquor. Nor did he even drink coffee or any drink containing caffeine. The strict regimen became almost a Thatcher trademark for the remainder of his life. And it apparently worked, because he died at age 102.

In 1995 Thatcher's experience with politics was extended to the statewide level. After years of doing progressively better in statewide races, Republicans fielded a strong slate of candidates. Nominated for governor was William G. Bradley, who had run for the office twice before. The nominee for attorney general was Butler County's Judge and Thatcher's friend, W. E. Taylor. Accounts

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of the campaign mention Taylor's travels about the state with young aides, and it seems safe to assume that Thatcher was one of them. Bradley was successful in his effort and became Kentucky's first Republican governor. Elected along with him was the entire slate of Republican candidates for state office, including Taylor. Thatcher resigned as circuit clerk and accompanied the new attorney general to Frankfort. There he accepted a position in the office of the State Auditor, Sam H. Stone. He would work in Stone's office for the next three and one-half years and would also continue his part time study of law.  

Bradley's term established him as a strong personality and was notable for some progressive innovations in state government. But his incessant fights with the Democratic controlled General Assembly, and the stalemate between the two, made his term not overly popular with the public and made the election of another Republican to succeed Bradley seem a remote possibility.

Several Republicans began actively to seek the nomination for governor in late 1898. Chief among the early rivals were Thatcher's boss, Auditor Stone, and his friend Attorney General Taylor. Thatcher had to choose sides, and having been admitted to the Kentucky bar in 1898, he had a good excuse to resign from his job with Stone and accept a position in Taylor's office. 6 There he became an Assistant Attorney General of Kentucky and

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prosecuted court cases on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Little attempt was made in the Attorney General's office to separate politics from official duty, and the early months of 1899 saw Taylor spending most of his time running for governor. He worked hard for the nomination and went from county to county lining up delegates to support him at the state convention. However, it was assumed that the Republicans had little chance of winning against a united Democratic party and that Taylor was only seeking to run in order to build himself into a statewide figure for a future race for governor or United States Senator.7

But events occurred which gave the Republicans new hope for victory. A deep split developed in the Democratic party which nominated, after twenty-six ballots at their Louisville convention, Senator William Goebel as its candidate for governor. Goebel was hated by many Democrats for hedging on his support for the free silver issue when it suited his purposes, and also for his sponsorship of the Goebel election law.

Since a Republican was in the governor's office and controlled the executive branch, the Goebel election law, passed over Bradley's veto, allowed the legislature to appoint judges in each county to pass on the validity of all election results. In effect this law allowed Goebel, President Pro Tempore of the Kentucky Senate, to

R. E. Hughes, F. W. Schaefer and S. L. Williams, That Kentucky Campaign; or the Law, the Ballot and the People in the Goebel-Taylor Contest (Cincinnati, 1900), 50.
appoint both Democratic and Republican election judges of his liking in each county in the state. It also set up a three-man state commission which was to certify the validity of statewide election results. Republicans called the law grossly unfair and many Democratic newspapers did also.

Goebel also caused a stir at the party's Music Hall convention in Louisville by seeming to renege on a deal made with candidate William Stone to drop out of the race in return for control of the party machinery. When Goebel finally did secure the nomination, many Democrats refused to support him. Former Democratic Governor John Y. Brown was nominated at another convention in Lexington two weeks later. Thus the ballot for governor in November had two Democrats and one Republican on it.

The fight for the Republican nomination was given new significance after the events in the other party, but by that time Thatcher's employer had locked in most of the delegates. Taylorsville led the Western Kentucky faction of the party whose "lily white" philosophy on racial matters made them unpopular with Governor Bradley. The Governor and his supporters urged Judge Clifton Pratt of Hopkinsville into the race. Another late entry was John Yarbrough of Danville who was supported by Sam Roberts, the influential editor of the Kentucky Leader of Lexington.

8. Ibid., 56.

But their late start handicapped both men. Taylor was easily nominated despite the Governor's efforts to find a "better man," and the nominee sought to weld the party together for the fight with the Democrats. As a peace offering to Bradley, the nomination for Secretary of State was offered to his nephew, Edwin P. Morrow. But the offer was refused, and the nomination went instead to young Caleb Powers of Knox County. The remainder of the ticket was led by William Marshall of Louisville for Lieutenant Governor and Judge Clifton Pratt for Attorney General.

The fall election proved to be no less bitter than the two conventions had been. Taylor, Goebel and Brown campaigned across the state, making lengthy political addresses which were characteristic of the times. Many of Goebel's enemies, including several Democratic editors, openly and enthusiastically supported Brown.

A close election was expected by observers, and they were not disappointed. Though John V. Brown received only 12,140 votes, they were enough to deprive Goebel of victory and make William Sylvester Taylor Kentucky's second Republican governor by a margin of approximately 2,400 votes.

But the election was only the first move in what was to become a national sensation and the only time in the nation's history when the governor of a state has died from an assassin's bullet. Efforts to solve the murder were bungled by Democratic attempts to prove a
conspiracy involving Governor Taylor and Secretary of State Powers, and the identity of the killer has never been definitely proven. Thatcher, though never implicated in any of the alleged conspiracy schemes, knew intimately each of the men involved. At his death in 1973 he was the last living participant in the events surrounding the assassination.

Soon after Taylor's election, Goebel Democrats met and decided to contest the election on the basis of some voting irregularities and Governor Bradley's placement of the militia in Louisville on election day to insure order. The Goebel election law had set up a three-man state election board to decide on disputes for the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor. The three men had all been personally selected by Goebel, and two of them had even made campaign speeches for him.\(^\text{10}\)

Taylor and the other Republican officials had every reason to be concerned about whether or not they would be allowed to take their offices. In a move that would later exacerbate the tensions in Frankfort, the Republican leaders summoned hundreds of their partisans to the city by rail. Most of the men were armed, which gave the town an armed camp atmosphere. It was said that the men were "observers," but the unmistakable intent was to frighten the Democrats out of attempts to unseat the Republicans from

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\(^{10}\) Hughes, Schaefer and Williams, That Kentucky Campaign, 156.
the offices to which they had been elected. 11

Various accounts describe the men who were brought
to Frankfort by the Louisville and Nashville railway as
mountaineers. Actually, many of the men were from cen-
tral and western Kentucky. Secretary of State Caleb Pow-
ers was given charge of the overall effort, and hundreds
of men made their way to Frankfort from the Republican
counties of eastern Kentucky. Thatcher did a similar
job in western Kentucky, travelling to Leitchfield, Glas-
gow, Bowling Green, and Morgantown by courtesy of the
L & N. There he urged groups of Republican partisans to
go to the state capital and protect their rights. 12

In spite of the political leanings of the election
board members, and the atmosphere that the Republicans
had created in Frankfort, the election board members
proved to be honest, something that Goebel had not counted
on. By a two to one vote they ruled that Taylor and Mar-
shall had been elected, and on December 17, 1899 they
were inaugurated.

Thatcher went to work for Clifton Pratt, the new
Attorney General, though undoubtedly politics took up
most of his time. His office was in the Adjunct
General's office building which was to the left of the

11. Ibid., 192.

12. The Papers of William Goebel, reel 3 (Kentucky
Historical Society, Frankfort, KY.). Several examples
exist in the papers of telegrams from Thatcher to Powers
and to others about his recruitment efforts. Copies of
bills paid by Thatcher for the men also are included at
several points.
present site of the Old Capitol, and has since been torn
down. This building housed several of the state depart-
ments of government and, like the State Office Building
on the other side of the Capitol, was a center for much
of the activity of the Republican "visitors" who stacked
their rifles in its various offices. 13

Even though the election board had certified the
election, the Democratic leaders still had the option
of contesting the election. The election law allowed
the question to be decided by a committee selected by
the House of Representatives. On January 2, 1900 the
General Assembly convened and the contest committee of
eleven Representatives was elected. The committee was
supposedly chosen at random but was composed of nine Dem-
ocrats, one Republican and one Populist, even though the
Republicans held forty-two of the 100 seats. 14

As the contest committee heard the arguments, Thatcher
and Powers were back at work. Over 1,000 heavily arm-
ed Republicans were transported to Frankfort by rail with
the administration providing what food and shelter they
could for them at state expense. 15

On January 20, 1900 Goebel and two colleagues walked
to the Capitol, where he was to preside over the senate.

13. Hughes, Schaefer and Williams, That Kentucky
Campaign, 74.


As he passed the fountain directly in front of the building, a shot was fired and Goebel fell with a bullet wound in his chest. As pandemonium broke loose, Governor Taylor ran from his office, pistol in hand, to see what had happened. Goebel was carried to his room at the nearby Capitol Hotel, and Taylor called out the state militia to seal off the capitol grounds.

With Goebel's life ebbing away, the Democratic legislative caucus met, despite the efforts of the militia to stop them. They certified Goebel as Governor and J. F. W. Beckham as Lieutenant Governor. Both were sworn in, and Kentucky had two governors and lieutenant governors.

Goebel had his price, but at 6:30 p.m. on February 3, 1900 he died.

Beckham became the new acting Democratic governor, and the Republican position became weaker as the days and weeks rolled by, though they still held the capitol grounds. The Court of Appeals was in Democratic hands, however, and Taylor's appeal was voted down along partisan lines. Many counseled Taylor to relinquish the office and face the voters in a special election that would have to be held that fall to fill the vacancy.

On February 6 a meeting called by Taylor's Judge Advocate General, Augustus E. Mullan, was held between Democratic and Republican leaders. If Taylor would agree to step down, the Democrats would agree to repeal the Goebel election law and hold the special election.
the following November 16. Many thought that this was the best that Taylor could get, but others urged him to stand on his principles and refuse to give in.

Wilson brought the deal to Taylor who at first agreed to go along, but as one of his Democratic attorneys, W. C. P. Breckinridge, could say, he tended to agree with the last person he talked to. For three days Taylor vacillated on the deal, and at one point he called in a group of younger state officials for their advice. One of the group was W. H. Culley of Barbourville, a friend of Thatcher's. Upon learning the details of the proposition, he rushed from the room to find Thatcher to help dissuade the Governor from any such agreement. The two young men who had been through other battles with Taylor pleaded with him to stay and fight. Although they believed that Taylor could easily win the fall election, they, along with Breckinridge and another Democratic attorney, Basil Duke, persuaded Taylor not to sign the agreement.

This action left the Republicans with the appeal process as their only hope. But by a partisan 4–3 vote the Court of Appeals rejected the Republican arguments. The only


11. Ibid.


avenue left was the United States Supreme Court; and on May 21, with Kentucky Republican John M. Harlan dissenting, the Court refused to hear the arguments on the basis that no federal issues were involved. Governor Taylor had journeyed to Louisville that day, and as soon as word came about the decision, he slipped across the Ohio river to Republican Indiana to avoid the warrants for his arrest.

Thatcher had left Frankfort in February when, as one authority has said, the smart Republicans did. He made Louisville his new home and set up a private law practice there.

The appeals of all but one of the Republican office holders were also rejected, and they, like Taylor, were forced to relinquish their offices. Ironically, Thatcher's employer, Attorney General Pratt, was the only Republican to keep his office. Waiting until after November of 1900, when a new Republican member was elected to the Court of Appeals, he made his case. And by a partisan Republican 4-3 decision, the court gave him his office.

The trials of the persons implicated in the assassination dragged on for several years. Complicating the search for justice were various Democratic attempts to prove that Goebel had been murdered as a result of a Republican plot involving Taylor, Secretary of State Powers and another man who was the assassin. The Repub-


21. Hughes, Schaefer and Williams, That Kentucky Campaign, 104.
lican Governor of Indiana refused to extradite Taylor, and the chief target of the investigation became Powers. The fatal shot was fired from his office, though he was enroute to Louisville at the time. Powers was convicted by a jury of Goebel Democrats, but he and Thatcher's friend Culton were pardoned in 1909 by Republican Governor Augustus Willson. Though no one can be sure who actually fired the shot, Willson stated his belief that the murderer had been Henry Youtsey, a young stenographer in the auditor's office, who turned state's evidence and Implicated Powers and Taylor in the plot. But even Youtsey was pardoned in 1911 by Democratic Governor James Black.

Thatcher's office was not in the building from which the shot was fired, and this probably saved him from being implicated in the conspiracy theories and from testifying at the trials. His friend Culton was not so lucky, nor was Youtsey, whom Thatcher had worked with in his years in the auditor's office.

Though Thatcher was only peripherally involved in the Goebel affair, he had a part in one of the most famous political events in Kentucky history. It was also during this period that he made a number of lasting friendships, especially with Bradley, Willson and another young man named Chesley Searcy. These relationships would serve him well in the coming years.
II. ANOTHER DECADE IN POLITICS

The next decade in Thatcher's life, the first of the twentieth century, was an eventful one for both him and for Kentucky Republicans. The party continued its rise and proved that it was a permanent force that could win elections and wield patronage and influence. Thatcher's career was wedded to its success and to the fortunes of William O. Bradley and Augustus E. Willson. Through them and another man, John Yerkes, he held successive federal and state political posts which culminated in 1910 with his appointment as Civil Governor of the Panama Canal Zone. This position brought Thatcher into contact with what became a lifelong passion for him—Panama and the Zone. It also transformed him into a political figure in his own right, a figure who was mentioned as a candidate for statewide office and served ten years in the United States Congress.

The decade began with one of the brief periods of his life when Thatcher actually set up a law practice. In the period from February, 1900, when he left the Taylor administration, until mid-summer of 1901, when he was appointed Assistant United States Attorney, he set up practice in the Paul Jones building in Louisville.
A piece of his stationary which survives in one of his scrapbooks advertises, "H. H. Thatcher, Attorney and Counsellor at Law."

Also during this period, he attended Bryant and Stratton Business College in Louisville. It would be the only time in his life, apart from his early days in Butler County, in which he would participate in any form of organized education. Speaking of his education in later life, he would repeat the cliché that the only education that he had was at the school of "hard knocks." However, with formal law schools actually turning out only a fraction of those who passed admission to their states' bars, it was not at all unusual for a son in Thatcher's position to have little formal education. In 1937 he would receive an honorary LL.B. from the University of Alabama. This was, however, in recognition for his Panama Canal service, and not for any noted service to the legal profession.

The year 1900 was another campaign year in Kentucky, due to the provision in the Kentucky Constitution which provides for an acting governor and a special election in the case of a vacancy in the office of governor during the first two years of a term.

Republicans were confident of victory in the fall race for governor and, not surprisingly, there was a scramble for the nomination. Factions had already ap-

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peared in the party at the convention the year before which had nominated Taylor. The 1900 contest's leading contenders were John Yerkes and Augustus Wilson, and the intraparty fight between them left a schism that would ultimately involve Thatcher. 23

Wilson was supported by ex-Governor Bradley and Yerkes by Sam Roberts of Lexington. Bradley had made enemies as governor and they seemed to unite around the Yerkes candidacy. When it seemed that Louisvillian Wilson did not have the votes to win, the Bradley forces even tried to form a consensus of delegates to offer the nomination to Democrat John Y. Brown. 24 But the stop Yerkes movement failed.

The candidate and his manager, Roberts, had reason to be optimistic about the fall campaign. The partisan kangaroo courts which continued to try the defendants in the Goebel case were still very much in the news, and Powers and the others were looked upon with great sympathy by anti-Goebel Democrats and many independents. The unpopularity of the Goebel election law had even forced the acting governor to engineer its repeal in the General Assembly. The Republicans had also raised $200,000 for their effort, the most money ever raised for an election campaign until that time.

But a combination of factors worked to Yerkes' un-

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24. Ibid., 80.
Among then was the fact that Bradley and Wilson sat out the campaign and refused to work for their party's nominee. 25 John Grepp Stewart Beckham campaigned against the Republicans and their ties to the L & N railroad, and at age thirty-two became the youngest man in history to be elected Governor of Kentucky.

In August of 1901, Thatcher was able to gain appointment as Assistant United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky. His friendship with Bradley and Wilson was not yet a political alliance, and he was able to circumvent much of the bitter rivalry that permeated the Republican party during the period. Thatcher, who would later publish a collection of speeches and stories of William O. Bradley, was also able to get along politically with John Yerkes. And Yerkes, despite losing the race for governor, controlled most of the federal patronage in Kentucky at the time. 26

The feuding among the state's Republicans also spilled over into the national scene and helps explain why Bradley had no say in patronage jobs like Thatcher's. The ex-Governor had never been able to maintain a cordial relationship with Ohio Senator Mark Hanna, the political force behind President William McKinley. The feud was carried into the administration of McKinley's successor, Theodore Roosevelt, and is the reason why the anti-Bradley group controlled patronage. Bradley was even unable

25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., 60.
to obtain the position of United States Attorney for
William, who had coveted the job for years.27 His friend-
ship with Bradley not withstanding, Thatcher was able to
obtain an Assistant United States Attorney position for
himself and hold it for five years, until he too became
cought up in Republican factionalism and was forced out.

From 1901 through 1906, Thatcher travelled western
Kentucky, prosecuting cases involving federal jurisdiction
in much the same manner that the job is carried out today.
From all appearances he did a competent job. His home-
town newspaper in Morgantown, the Green River Republican,
which would keep track of Thatcher throughout his long
career, even mentioned his ability to sway juries in a
1910 recap of his already notable start in public life.28
It was an ability that the paper's readers may have remem-
bered him as acquiring in the most congress sessions that
he had participated in while a student in grade school.

The five years in which Thatcher served as Assistant
United States Attorney proved to be lean years politically
for Bradley. With federal patronage in the hands of Yeak
and another anti-Bradley leader, Dr. W. Godfrey Hunter
of Burkesville, Bradley's friends shared little in the
advantages of being a Republican. And with a Republican
in the White House there were many advantages to be pas-
sed around.

27. Ibid.
But "Billy O. B." Bradley, a man who had lost seven elections before being elected governor in 1895, was not a man to give up. His goal was to be elected to the United States Senate, and he finally succeeded, although seven years passed between 1900, when he first lost for that office in the legislature, and 1908, when he became Kentucky's second Republican United States Senator.

In 1906 Theodore Roosevelt was president, and it was no secret that his choice to succeed him in 1908 was William Howard Taft, Governor of the Philippines. Passed over in the process was Vice-President Charles W. Fairbanks who had presidential ambitions of his own. Fairbanks was from Indiana, a state to which Kentucky Republicans felt they owed no small amount of gratitude. 29 A succession of Republican governors there had refused to extradite ex-Governor Taylor to Kentucky to stand trial in the alleged plot to kill Goebel. Even two years before the presidential nominating conventions, the lines were drawn in Kentucky. The anti-Braley forces who controlled patronage were for Taft, and the former Governor and his friend Gus Willson were for Fairbanks.

The patronage situation shifted in Kentucky at about this time also. Yerkes was replaced by Louisville attorney William Marshall Bullitt and the party boss of northern Kentucky, Richard F. Ernst. 30 Both men were to head

29. Ibid., March 28, 1912.
30. Louisville Times, February 29, 1908.
the Taft presidential effort in the state.

Thatcher held his job as Assistant United States Attorney at the pleasure of whoever controlled patronage, Yerkes had allowed Thatcher to retain his job despite his friendship with Bradley, but Bullitt and Ernst were not so magnanimous. Thatcher had already committed himself to support Fairbanks for president, and had even accompanied the Vice President on a tour of Kentucky. This did not endear him to the Taft managers, and on August 1, 1906 he was fired. 31

After leaving the United States Attorney's office, Thatcher practiced law for a time and developed his relationship with Willson. He also became involved in the Louisville mayor's race, which saw James F. Grinstead and a long string of Republican defeats and be elected mayor in early 1907. But 1907 was also a statewide election year, and after failing to obtain the nomination for governor in 1900 and 1903, Willson tried again. 32 With the Republicans in control in Louisville, he seemed the logical candidate and was nominated.

The fall election was an opportunity for Bradley. He was on "outs" with the national Republicans and the White House, but if Willson could be elected governor, he could control state patronage. And with the governor's influence, and with a sufficient number of Republicans in the Kentucky House and Senate, he might be elected Senator.

Senatorial elections in Kentucky were then decided by joint ballot of the 138 members of the General Assembly. In 1896, when Governor Bradley had engineered the election of William J. Deboe to the Senate, Republicans controlled the House of Representatives but did not have an overall majority in the legislature. The election of Republican Deboe had been secured after 112 ballots by voiding the election of Democrats in the House and by taking advantage of Democratic party factions in the state Senate. Much the same situation existed in 1907, except that the Republicans were in an even weaker numerical position than they had been in 1896.

For Bradley, the job of electing Republicans to the General Assembly was crucial if he were to be elected to the United States Senate in early 1908. Thatcher was given the important job of managing all of the races and travelled the state recruiting candidates and raising and spending money in their behalf.33

Republican ambitions were helped in 1907 by the unpopularity of Governor J. C. W. Beckham. In office for seven years as acting governor and as governor, he had failed to maintain his popularity with the voters. Perhaps this was inevitable considering his length of stay in office, but he had also appeared to reverse his position on an important issue, the L & N railway. Though Beckham had portrayed himself in 1900 as anti-railroad,

In the image of a populist Democrat, he had accepted L & N endorsement and influence in his 1903 defeat of Republican N. P. Belknap. 34

The Beckham administration also faced criticism on two other fronts. Western Kentucky tobacco farmers wanted the state to place all of their crops into a pool so that they could force tobacco companies into paying a higher price. This the governor refused to do. Also, Beckham had appointed a reform mayor in Louisville when the Court of Appeals had voided the election of a man supported by the gambling and liquor interests. Graft was abolished in the police department and Sunday closings were enforced. But the Democratic machine was not interested in liberal reform measures.

The problems of the outgoing governor might not necessarily have been a problem for the Democratic nominee in 1907, except Beckham made them a problem. Like many governors in states which do not allow chief executives to succeed themselves, Beckham had his own hand-picked candidate in Judge Samuel Hager. The fall 1907 race for governor was also complicated by Beckham's own Senate ambitions for the next year.

The governor had changed Democratic party rules to provide for a U. S. Senate primary in 1907, to coincide


35. Ibid.
with the fall general election for statewide offices. The primary applied only to the Democrats and the election itself would still take place in the January, 1908 session of the legislature. But Beckham's primary campaign against incumbent United States Senator James B. McCreary made the fall election little more than a referendum on the administration. Indeed, the newspapers of the time are filled with almost as many charges between Beckham and McCreary and Beckham and Bradley, the expected Republican nominee, as between the two candidates for governor.

Republicans, united behind their nominee for governor, scented victory. Some were, undoubtedly, none too happy about the prospects of Bradley's faction in Frankfort, and about seeing him elected to the Senate. But after seven years of Democratic rule, and with a nominee from the normally Democratic city of Louisville, most pitched in to do their part in the campaign. Even some usually Democratic newspapers such as the Lexington Herald had tired of the administration and accused Hager of taking money from the liquor interests. 36

With Thatcher as a key campaign advisor, and with the silver-tongued Bradley leading the charge against the "Beckham-Hager machine," the Republicans swept the statewide offices. Thatcher, through his work with the legislative

36. Lexington Herald, October 5, 1907.
campaigns, was able to double the number of Republicans in the House and Senate to sixty-five.\(^\text{37}\) The number was still short of an absolute majority but was only a few votes away. The Republican strategists were confident that enough deals could be made to put Bradley ahead of Beckham when the balloting began.

As the Republicans celebrated their victory, the outgoing governor celebrated his own. In the primary election he had swept the state and embarrassed Senator McCreary. The Senator carried only eight counties and Beckham, who had changed party rules to avoid facing the prospect of being nominated by his party's joint legislative caucus, had the nomination. But now he had to weld that same party caucus into a solid block of votes against the Republicans.

Thatcher had become a close associate of Wilson, and on inauguration day he figured prominently in the festivities. It was announced that Thatcher would be appointed State Inspector, a position created by the General Assembly in 1888 to oversee state contracts and the expenditure of public funds. But that job would have to wait as more politics intervened.

Inauguration day saw numerous "Bradley for Senate" signs in the crowd, and as the session loomed near, a Bradley headquarters was opened on Main Street in Frank-

\(^{37}\) Louisville Courier-Journal, December 2, 1907.
fort. In it was Thatcher, who was made campaign manager. He was a natural for the job with his ties to the large number of new Republican legislators. With the factional problems within his own party, Bradley needed a man who could weld the Republican legislators together to form a united front, in much the same manner that Beckham would have to. But with Republicans in a minority position, the task would be even more important.

One of Thatcher's first announcements was that forty-six of the Republicans were supporting Bradley, with another ten leaning toward him. If there was to be a united front of Republicans, there was not one yet.

As the legislative session opened on January 3, Republican activity centered around the Main Street headquarters. It was there that campaign manager Thatcher made the deals and held the meetings. In an interview with the Barbourville Mountain Advocate, he spoke of the "great revolt among Democrats against the machine Democracy of Beckham," and of Republicans taking advantage of it.

On January 5, 1908 Bradley was nominated by the joint caucus of Senate and House Republicans. The Taft managers, Bullitt and Ernst, were opposed to Bradley but did not have the votes to block him. To secure Bradley's election, Thatcher would need to hold all of the Repub-

40. Barbourville Mountain Advocate, January 3, 1908.
licans in line and pick up the votes of four Democrats. With the numbers of the General Assembly diminished by election challenges and absences, the number of votes needed was sixty-three.

Beckham was not exactly the unanimous choice for the Senate among Democratic legislators, but the primary nomination process left them without a choice in the matter. The ex-Governor sought to whip his party in line by a number of measures. First, he reminded them of the old bugaboo about Bradley’s calling of the state militia into Louisville on election day in 1899. William Jennings Bryan was even brought into Frankfort to address the joint session and urge the election of Beckham.

But Beckham had yet another tool with which to keep his party in line. The only other issue of major importance scheduled to come before the session was a county unit bill. It provided that the entire state would be considered as a unit in regard to the wet-dry liquor issue, which would end the practice of counties voting on a local option basis. In a statewide vote, the liquor forces were sure to be defeated and cities such as Newport and Louisville would be forced to remain dry. The legislation was very popular with rural Bible-belt legislators, and by controlling the consideration of its passage Beckham hoped to link the issue with his election to the Senate.41 With the managers of the former gover-

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nor's campaign in control of the legislative docket, Beckham refused to bring the bill up for consideration until after his election.

The first of the forty-nine ballots gave Beckham fifty-nine votes, Bradley fifty-eight and two minor candidates three votes each. 42

As the balloting continued, many Democrats urged Beckham to release the country unit bill. But he was only two votes short of election, and he refused to release it until he got the two other votes. On the thirty-eighth ballot, Democratic leaders urged Beckham to leave the race and allow another Democrat to take his place so that the election would not go to a Republican. Still Beckham held out, and the anti-Beckham Democrats refused to give him their votes. 43 As the laborious process continued, deals were made by both sides for the supporters of the minor candidates. Their votes dwindled but went to both sides, with each man still short of victory.

With victory for both men only a few votes away, anti-Beckham Democratic legislators approached Thatcher and the Republican legislative floor leaders. If they would drop Bradley and support another Republican, enough Democratic votes would shift to elect him. 44 In 1896 a similar event occurred when Republicans dropped their

42. Lexington Herald, February 12, 1908.
43. Louisville Evening Post, February 29, 1908.
44. Louisville Herald, January 27, 1908.
support of Dr. V. Godfrey Hunter of Burkesville and the
election of Deboe was secured on the 113th ballot. But
Thatcher remained loyal to his friend and refused the
offer.

For Bradley to win, Thatcher needed two more Demo-
cratic votes. On Thursday evening, February 27, 1908,
after forty-eight ballots, he held a meeting at the Repub-
lican headquarters. Present were two previous Beckham
supporters: Democratic Senators H. S. McNutt and Albert
Charlton, both of Louisville. They were thought to be
controlled by the "whiskey ring," which was still angry
at Beckham's appointed mayor and his closing of the gam-
bling houses. The Senators agreed to break the impasse
and switch on the next day's vote. Both stated that they
had made every effort to persuade Beckham to drop out of
the race and support another Democrat, but to no avail.45

The vote on Friday was 64-60-1-1 for Bradley, one
vote more than was needed. As the startled Beckham forces
realized what had happened, they sought a recess before
the recapitulation and announcement of the final vote.
During the recess, Beckham agreed to drop out and support
another Democrat, but Charlton and McNutt honored their
commitments and Bradley became Kentucky's second Repub-
llican United States Senator. With the help of the "whis-
key ring," Thatcher, himself a devoted dry, got the Demo-
cratic votes that he needed.

The ring got what it wanted also. The county unit bill passed the House by a resounding 75-14 margin, but went on to die a somewhat mysterious death in the Senate.\textsuperscript{46} It remains speculative as to whether there was any connection between Bradley's election to the Senate by the votes of Louisville Democrats and the defeat of the county unit bill. Many newspapers printed headlines of a deal, and stories abounded about the reason for the death of the unit bill. Certainly, there was nothing illegal about a deal to hold up the bill in return for the extra votes for Bradley. It would have been in keeping with the grand old Kentucky tradition of political horse-trading.

But the "whiskey ring" also had every reason to want to get even with, and put an end to, the political career of Beckham, even if there was not a deal. Whether or not Thatcher and the Republicans reached some sort of bargain with the "whiskey ring," both sides got what they wanted.

The Republicans celebrated a great victory. Thatcher had pulled off a remarkable feat, the second such election of a Republican by a Democratic legislature. Bradley rode to Louisville that night on a special train which "tooted all the way." He had much to be thankful for and described his campaign manager as "able, tireless and fearless."\textsuperscript{47} The Senator-elect vowed to find a suitable reward for his friend as soon as time would allow.

\textsuperscript{46} Louisville Herald, March 6, 1903.
\textsuperscript{47} Louisville Times, May 1, 1903.
With Bradley installed as Senator, Thatcher shifted back to the Fairbanks for President effort in Kentucky. One newspaper referred to him as "the recognized Fairbanks leader in Kentucky," and his job as State Inspector in the Wilson administration would have to wait. As the Fairbanks organizer in the state, Thatcher was assisted by Senator Bradley. But a new convert to their cause was the Senator's former enemy, John Yerkes, the man whom Roosevelt had replaced as patronage boss in Kentucky.

Both sides set about organizing delegate states in each of Kentucky's eleven congressional districts pledged to their candidates. Thatcher called a meeting for Fairbanks supporters for March 23 and letters were sent out statewide. Bradley had many personal friends and political debts to cash in on behalf of the Vice President. He also had a candidate from Indiana, a state dear to the hearts of Kentucky Republicans for protecting Taylor. But Ernst, Bullitt and their lieutenants had all of the political weight of federal patronage to bring to bear on delegates. They also had, in Taft, a candidate who was the handpicked successor of the President of the United States. Thatcher and Bradley did not have an easy task.

In only a few of the congressional districts in

48. Ibid., February 8, 1908.

Kentucky were the Fairbanks forces able to make headway in electing delegates. At the state convention on May 6, 1908, at Liedenkrantz Hall in Louisville, their prospects of electing at large delegates to the national convention did not appear bright. The only hope was for Bradley to exert his own prestige as a former governor and newly elected United States Senator and get himself and at least a token number of prominent Fairbanks supporters elected as delegates. However, the Taft forces were not in a generous mood. Bradley could not even get himself elected as a delegate, being defeated for the third at large delegate position by William Marshall Bullitt.

Bradley would soon follow the Kentucky delegation on to Chicago and the national convention in order to challenge several of the congressional district delegations. But the challenges got nowhere. By convention time the Fairbanks campaign had fizzled out and Taft was the overwhelming choice. Their effort had been a fruitless and embarrassing one, but it cemented the relationship between Bradley and Thatcher even closer.

With Ernst and Bullitt in charge of the fall campaign, the Bradley forces had little cause for enthusiasm. Thatcher returned full time to his state job and stayed out of politics during the fall. The job of State In-

50. *Louisville Times*, May 1, 1908.
52. *Frankfort State Journal*, June 2, 1908.
spector was the third political patronage position to be held by Thatcher. The job itself was created by the legislature in 1898 after one of the more memorable political scandals in Kentucky history.

Kentucky's State Treasurer, Richard "Honest Dick" Tate, had served in that office since 1869. With no hint of impropriety, he had been re-elected each time by overwhelming margins. However, during the administration of Governor Simon Bolivar Buckner, the Republican legislative minority began to talk of scandal in the treasurer's office and call for a thorough audit. Finally, when the Governor succumbed to the pressure for an investigation, Tate fled the state, never to be heard from again. An audit showed that $247,000 was missing from the state's accounts. It was also revealed that Buckner and others had frequently accepted personal loans from Tate. Republican howled for reforms and the impeachment of the long time Democratic State Auditor, who had failed to detect the shortages in Tate's office and had even taken loans from him.

Several reforms were carried out in direct response to the Tate scandal. The most memorable were contained in the new constitution, which was adopted in 1891. Among other things, it changed the method of electing statewide candidates for constitutional offices. An

53. James C. Klotter and Hamblen Tapp, Kentucky: Decades of Discord, 1865-1900 (Frankfort, 1977), 244.
office holder could no longer succeed himself in successive terms in an office, as Tate had. Another, more immediate, reform measure was the creation of a position known as State Examiner and Inspector. The Inspector's duties were to oversee state contracts and the expenditure of state monies to insure that public funds were being cared for and spent prudently. This was Thatcher's job from March of 1908 until February of 1910, and it was a job in which he distinguished himself.

The job allowed Thatcher to roam the state and oversee any endeavor in which state government was involved. In the almost two years that he held the job, he was responsible for turning back more money to the state treasury than all of his predecessors combined.54

One of the more noteworthy investigations conducted by Thatcher was his thorough review of the Kentucky prison system. A March 4, 1910 article in the Louisville Evening Post looked at Thatcher's work to abolish much of the prisons' cruelty and abuse. The article referred to the "barbarous conditions" which existed, the hard work and excessive punishment, and of Thatcher's efforts to abolish lashings. In the previous nine years there had been 33,000 cases of lashings being administered to prisoners.

Thatcher also had a political charge to make with regard to the prison system. The prisons, he said, had been used as sources of campaign funds by Democratic

54. Morgantown Green River Republican, May 9, 1910.
administrations. Persons doing business with and providing services to them had been overpaid and made kickbacks to the Democrats. But Thatcher fell short of blaming this on the Democrat who was still in charge of the system, Jack "Dink Knife" Chinn. Chinn, a chief advisor to the late William Goebel, had been appointed to the job by Governor Beckham and had managed to hold on to it, even with a Republican governor in Frankfort.

While Thatcher labored at his job in state government, his friend Senator Bradley had not forgotten his promise to find a suitable reward for him. Though he had vehemently opposed Taft's nomination for the presidency, the Senator had made peace with the good-natured occupant of the White House and would later support him against the comeback attempt by Roosevelt in 1912. The Kentucky Senator had become a popular member of the Republican majority in the Senate and had regained control of federal patronage for Kentucky. So, it was hardly a surprise on March 29, 1910, when President Taft announced the appointment of Maurice Hudson Thatcher as a member of the Isthmian Canal Commission in Panama.\footnote{55. Ibid.}

Thatcher's new job meant that he would have to move to Panama and assume a position on the commission that would make him head of civil administration. Unofficially known as Civil Governor, the position paid $14,000 per year, a not inconsiderable sum in that day. Ironically,
Thatcher was to replace another Kentuckian on the commission, who had resigned due to political pressure. Former United States Senator J. C. S. Blackburn had been appointed to the commission by President Roosevelt, even though he was a Democrat.

Soon after Thatcher resigned his job in state government and prepared to leave for Panama, a farewell dinner was held in Louisville in his honor. The dinner, at the Calt House on May 2, 1910, was attended by over 300 persons. Attestig to his popularity, the guest list was a who's who among Kentucky Republicans, including Senator Bradley and Governor Willson, who presided. The menu and program indicate an elaborate farewell with remarks by Bradley and Willson and with a poem by Thatcher entitled, "Kentucky—A Tribute." This is the first record of his poetic efforts, which were to become more prolific following his retirement from politics.

Thatcher also bade farewell to his other friends in Frankfort by writing a letter to the editor of the State Journal there. In it he indicated his eagerness for his new challenge in Panama and his interest in that country's geography and history. He was especially interested in the famous pirate, Henry Morgan, who had raided the Caribbean coast of Panama, sinking Spanish ships and, as legend

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* For some examples of Thatcher's poetry see Appendix.
held, burying treasure along it. Thatcher also stated that he had never had a "moment of sadness" in Frankfort and said goodbye to all who had befriended him. Obviously, he looked forward to his new job with uncontrolled enthusiasm.

But another and more important adventure awaited Thatcher before he was to board an ocean liner for Panama from New York on May 10. That was his marriage, at age 39, to Anne Bell Chinn, the eldest of four daughters of Captain Frank Chinn. Chinn was a prominent Frankfort attorney who had served as a captain with General John Hunt Morgan's Confederate cavalry during the Civil War. The family was as decidedly Democratic as Thatcher's was Republican and descendants still remember "Aunt Anna Bell" as the one who married the Republican. 59

Surrounded by family, a few friends, and the flowers for which Mrs. Thatcher was famous, the couple were married at 7:30 a.m. on May 4, 1910 at the Chinn home on Wapping Street in Frankfort. After a breakfast there, they boarded a 10:00 a.m. train for New York. 59 Their first married home would be in Panama.

58. Interview with Colonel George Chinn, January 22, 1978.

III. GOVERNOR THATCHER AND THE PANAMA CANAL

Ann Bell and Maurice Thatcher, accompanied by a butler and a cook, sailed from New York on May, 1910, on board the S.S. Panama. Mrs. Thatcher, a bride of only three days, spent time on the ship studying Spanish, a language she soon mastered. On board with them were hundreds of tourists, a small portion of the thousands who by that time were swarming over the Zone to observe the "big ditch" as it neared completion. Newspapers and books sensationalized life there and eager visitors were very much in evidence in the cities of Colon and Panama. There they took excursions on the Panama Railway, observed the digging on the Culebra Cut and dined at the world famous Tivoli hotel. Ships owned by the Panama Railway and Steamship Company left New York for Cristobal every two weeks; the United Fruit Company provided weekly service from New Orleans and New York; and the French line brought in workers from the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique.

All of this was new to the new Civil Governor and his party when they landed at Cristobal on the Caribbean

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60. Sara Wright, "Maurice Thatcher, Round Up With the Canal."
coast and boarded a train at Colon for the trip across the Isthmus to Ancon, near Balboa and the primary seat of government. The train moved along the new rail line, skirting what would soon be a manmade lake, and passed the huge excavation projects for the Culebra and Mira-flores locks. The trip was the Thatchers' first sight of the lush undergrowth, the tropical birds and the thousands of workers near their scoops and dredges. It was their new home and a new way of life which was far from the political battlegrounds of Kentucky that had gotten them there.

United States involvement with the ship canal at Panama was in its final stages when Thatcher arrived for his new job. The Canal was originally begun as a French effort in 1884 under the renowned builder of the Suez Canal, Ferdinand de Lesseps. There was resentment in the United States at French involvement in Latin America, and when the French effort failed there was widespread clamor for an American takeover of the canal digging. Thousands of French investors had lost money on the failure of the Canal Company and looked to the United States and its new President, Theodore Roosevelt, as possible buyers. They were not to be disappointed.

In 1899 the first Isthmian Canal Commission was appointed. After studying the matter, it recommended that a canal be built across Nicaragua. But after intense lobbying for a continuance of the French effort, the decision was reversed in 1902 and all French equipment
and rights to the Panama Canal were purchased for $40 million by the United States Government. The American canal would be entirely a government project with the Isthmian Canal Commission placed under the jurisdiction of the War Department.

By Thatcher's arrival in 1910, work on the Canal was nearing its most intense stage. In 1917, according to a detailed census carried out by him, over 40,000 workers were employed in the Zone by the Commission. 61 This number, along with native Panamanians, gave the Zone a population of more than 70,000 persons. The workers themselves came from almost every section of the globe. Chinese, Italians, Germans and Irish were prominent, but large numbers of blacks from the West Indies and Latins were responsible for most of the hard labor. Americans took most of the technical and supervisory jobs and never numbered more than 6,000. 62

The employees were segregated into two classes called Gold and Silver respectively, in reference to the currency with which they were paid. Unskilled workers were paid in silver, and skilled or supervisory personnel were paid in gold. Both were segregated as to where they slept, ate and at which commissary stores they could buy.

Thatcher's job as head of Civil Administration was


the latest in a series of reorganizations of Zone govern-
ment. The first Isthmian Canal Commission had only been
a study group. The second Commission, appointed in 1904,
consisted of a Governor of the Zone, a Chairman of the
Commission and a Chief Engineer. All were separate pos-
itons with overlapping responsibilities and answerable
only to President Roosevelt, who meddled constantly in
Commission affairs. As one well known Canal figure,
John F. Stevens, would say, "Nobody was working but the
ants and the typists."63

By 1907 the Zone's government was ready for a per-
manent reorganization that would ensure a smooth working
order for the task of constructing the Canal. The prepa-
ration stage was nearing an end and all of the equipment
and manpower were in place to complete the digging.

In the President's executive order of January 6,
1908, which provided for the reorganization of Zone gov-
ernment, the position of Governor was abolished. The
positions of Chief Engineer and Commission Chairman were
consolidated in one man, Major George W. Goethals. The
power and responsibility of the commission itself were
reduced, and it would meet infrequently in the coming
years. There was little doubt that Goethals was in charge,
alleged with the military. Majors David Caillard and Wil-
liam Sibert, Lieutenant Colonels William Corgas and W. H.
Smith and former Admiral Harry Rousseau were appointed

63. Ibid., 117.
as department heads.

The executive order also created a new department in Zone government, that of Civil Administration. As the numbers of workers in Panama increased, the duties of administration had taken on the magnitude of a large county or city in the United States. Such routine civil functions as police work, road maintenance and fire protection were a burden to Goethals who needed to concentrate on the building of the Canal itself. The new department assumed this responsibility; and although Goethals kept close tabs on what took place, Thatcher would later remark of his term as department head that he did as he pleased and was seldom interfered with.64

As the first head of the new department, Roosevelt appointed a Kentucky Democrat, Senator Joe C. S. Blackburn. Blackburn arrived in Panama soon after the reorganization and took up his duties which included: supervision of post offices; customs and revenues; police and prisons; fire; public works; inspection of steam vessels; schools; and auditing of government functions. The head of the department was known officially as Civil Commissioner and unofficially as Civil Governor or just Governor. He also became the only civilian member of the Isthmian Canal Commission, and represented it in all dealings with Panama and other governments.65

64. Interview with Walter E. Barton, June 28, 1978.
65. House Doc., 63 Cong., 1 Sess., No. 12, 58.
Blackburn's appointment had been somewhat unusual in that he was a Democrat appointed by a Republican president. He had obtained the job because of friendship and loyalty to Roosevelt, but the election of 1908 put another Republican in the White House. President Taft had no obligation to keep the position of Civil Governor of the Canal Zone in the hands of a Democrat, but nine months passed between his inauguration and the request for Blackburn's resignation. The former Senator officially left the job on December 4, 1909 and returned to his home in Versailles, Kentucky.66

Senator Bradley's return as patronage chief for Kentucky during the Taft administration meant that he could finally make good his promise to find a job for Thatcher, his loyal friend and engineer of his election to the Senate. Bradley approached Thatcher with the idea of replacing Blackburn in Panama and he agreed. And so on April 12, 1910 the White House announced the appointment of Thatcher as a member of the Isthmian Canal Commission and as head of the Department of Civil Administration.

The Thatchers took up residence at the official home of the Civil Governor on Fourth of July Avenue in Ancon. The city was on the Pacific side of Panama and near Balboa, the seat of Zone government. The home itself

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was three-storied with large verandas completely enclosed by screens, and in the style that came to be known as "cosmission" because Gold employees were housed in identical dwellings. Mrs. Thatcher turned the verandas into a veritable jungle of tropical plants and flowers. Especially prominent were orchids for which she developed a life-long passion. It would be a comfortable, colonial style of life for the couple, with servants, dinner parties and white linen suits with black string ties for Governor Thatcher.

Thatcher's office was within walking distance of their home. Just down the hall from him was the office of Colonel William Gorgas, who was in charge of sanitation, and who was probably the most famous of the Canal Zone pioneers for his work in conquering yellow fever and malaria. The two men became good friends and worked closely together, since Thatcher's responsibilities overlapped those of the Sanitation Department.

Regulation and administration of a government for 72,000 Zone inhabitants and thousands of transients, with the accompanying problems and headaches, was the job of the Civil Governor. Historians and other writers have glamorized the American experience in Panama, especially

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67. Willis Abbott, Panama and the Canal in Picture and Prose (New York, 1913), 389.

68. Sara Wright, "Maurice Thatcher, Bound Up With the Canal."

69. Ibid.
the role of the men who built the Canal. But they have not been as eager to chronicle the order maintained in the Zone while the building was going on and the work done to support the actual builders of the "big ditch." However, as Thatcher said years later, "without law and order, the canal could not have been built." 70

By the time Thatcher replaced Blackburn the problems and challenges of the job were reaching an acute stage. Never before or since would so many workers be in the Zone or would so much work be done. The new system of government inaugurated by the executive order of January 1903 had been tested and was now expected to perform. Thatcher proved himself as more than just a caretaker or political appointee. He applied himself to his task and developed a genuine love for his work in the Zone that is evident in the poetry that he would write about it. Canal Zone historians view his term as remarkable for the number of innovations he carried out in almost every facet of his responsibilities.

One of the first areas of responsibility which commanded the new Civil Governor's attention was that of prisons and law enforcement. In the early days of Zone government, justice had been administered in summary manner by the governor. But by 1910 there were civil and criminal courts with an appellate division and a Supreme Court at Ancon. There was also a colorful Zone police

70. Ibid.
force under Thatcher's department. The force, dressed in uniforms similar to those worn by the U.S. Cavalry, developed a good reputation for its efficiency in enforcing all laws, including the strict liquor and gambling statutes.

Drunkenness and gambling were the principal crimes of Zone inhabitants. Gambling of any kind was forbidden, even to the exclusion of card games. The police arrested approximately 100 persons per month of which five or so ended up in jail. Thatcher's reforms in penal methods were one of his most noteworthy accomplishments and were studied by Panama and other Latin American governments.71

Thatcher's first contribution to the penal system was in closing down the overcrowded and run down stockade, which was located in the hot and steamy interior of the country on the Mandingo river. The newly constructed stockade, with its cleaner and much more spacious quarters, was located adjoining the Casbo Bridge near Colon and the Carribbean coast where it was cooled by ocean breezes.72 Governor Thatcher also abolished flogging as he had done in Kentucky prisons and set up a system of rewards for good behavior with shorter sentences and


better treatment afforded prisoners who cooperated.\textsuperscript{73}
Model prisoners also assisted in another Thatcher responsibility, public works. In return for shorter sentences, they supplemented commission employees in building roads, schools and in various maintenance projects.\textsuperscript{74}

The issue of liquor in the Zone was an important one, and, keeping in mind the puritan, self-disciplinary nature of Roosevelt, Goethals and Thatcher, it is not surprising that it was strictly regulated by the Isthmian Canal Commission. Gold employees were allowed to buy spirits in stores operated by the Commission, but they could not buy it in any of the restaurants and hotels. Nor were they allowed to frequent any of the forty-nine saloons which were licensed to operate in 1910.\textsuperscript{75} These were solely the territory of the silver employees.

The sale of licenses for the saloons and taxes on liquor produced in the Zone's four distilleries were good sources of income for the Commission and Thatcher was charged with collecting them. But he wasted little time in advocating to Goethals at commission meetings that the sale of alcoholic beverages be banned entirely.\textsuperscript{76} Goethals at first rejected this idea since he regarded the saloons as an escape for the workers from the pres-

\textsuperscript{73} DuVal, "Maurice Thatcher: Dedicated, Universal Man," $15016.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75} Abbott, Panama and the Canal, 347.
\textsuperscript{76} Louisville \emph{Courier-Journal}, January 10, 1911.
sures and frustrations of their jobs. And one thing that
the Colonel did not need was labor trouble. But Thatcher
was persistent, and with arrests for drunkenness still
averaging 100 per month in 1913, the Commission voted
to ban the sale of alcohol.77

Another problem that Thatcher had to deal with was
prostitution. Previous to his term, the houses had run
openly in the Republic of Panama and, to a great degree,
in the Zone itself. To combat prostitution, Thatcher
enforced the Mann Act, which prohibited the transportation
of women across the Canal Zone border for immoral
purposes. This action helped him to combat the problem in the
Zone, but houses of prostitution continued to be a nuisance just across the border in Panama. As the official
representative of the Commission to the Panamanian govern-
ment, Thatcher enlisted the support of President Manuel
Anadó to close the houses located in Colon and Panama
City and kept in business largely due to the patronage of Canal employees.78

The administration of criminal justice was the most
taxing and time consuming of Thatcher's responsibilities.
His efficiency, humanity and innovative approach to the
tasks he encountered did as much to mark his tenure with


success as anything he did while in Panama. Though his views may have seemed puritanical with regard to liquor laws, they were in keeping with the times and represented his way of solving the problem of alcoholism among workers. Thatcher was actually quite progressive in his views on the penal system. Inmates wearing striped suits and working on roads and buildings may not seem humanitarian by later standards, but the practice was highly preferable to their languishing in dimly lit and poorly ventilated cells and being flogged for minor rule infractions. That Thatcher was quite conservative in his viewpoints on many issues is without question, but he was also an innovator and more than just a caretaker in the job that politics had brought him.

The Civil Governor was the only political appointee and the only member of the Commission whom Chairman Goethals had no hand in picking. The relationship between the two seems to have been a professional one, but there is little doubt that Thatcher felt a certain coolness toward the chairman--partly because of the openly strained relationship between Goethals and Colonel Gorgas, probably the Kentuckian's closest friend in Panama.

Goethals is remembered by historians as the man who was primarily responsible for getting the Canal built. Yet he had a somewhat strained relationship with many of his co-workers, including Gorgas. The root of the problem was probably jealousy over the publicity that Gorgas received as the man who had engineered the demise of
yellow fever and made it possible for the Canal work to go on. The newspapers brand of "yellow fever journalism" had made it seem as though the only reason that the French effort had failed was because of the stegomiya mosquito and the fever that it caused. Likewise, so the story went, when Gorgas stamped out the fever, the American effort went on toward a successful conclusion. In his yearly testimony before congressional committees, Geethals was often bitter in his criticism of Gorgas and what he regarded as extravagance in the administration of the Sanitation Department and the Zone's hospitals. 79 He also traded herbs with William Sibert, chief engineer of the Atlantic division.

An indication of Thatcher's true feelings is the fact that almost every Canal pioneer, including Sibert, Gorgas, Stevens and President Amador were the subjects of his poetry. Yet nowhere in any of the poems that he wrote about the Canal is mention made of the man who probably did more than anyone to make the construction such a success--Colonel George H. Geethals.

Thatcher and Gorgas became friends because they not only shared offices on the same floor but because the responsibilities of their departments overlapped in two areas. Gorgas was head of the Department of Sanitation which was charged with the responsibility of administering

79. N. F. DuVal, And the Mountains Will Move; The Story of the Building of the Panama Canal (New York, 1947), 310.
ing hospitals and medical care and with the special responsibility of keeping tropical yellow fever and malaria at bay.

The need for the constant vigilance against yellow fever was quite evident in the French experience in Panama. Thousands had died from every strata of the work force with no one knowing that the cause of the disease was the bite of a particular kind of mosquito, the stegomyia. The newspapers were filled with stories during the 1890's of entire crews of French workers being wiped out by the disease, and its contribution to the collapse of their venture is undeniable. But it is likely that the Canal could have been built, yellow fever not withstanding, except for miscalculations on construction and the failure of investors and the French government to come to the aid of the company.30

The cause of yellow fever was discovered in occupied Cuba at the turn of the century by Army Major Walter Reed. Even though the cause and a cure were at hand, an epidemic was not prevented from breaking out among the Americans in Panama in 1905 and 1906. The American press wildly printed stories about "yellow jack" that caused a crisis atmosphere across the country and certainly in Panama itself. John Wallace, the new chief engineer appointed in 1904, even went as far as to bring coffins along for himself and his wife in case tragedy should

30. Ibid., 311.
befall them while on the Isthmus. The epidemic caused an understandable fear among Zone personnel, much greater than the 246 cases reported in five years warranted.

The exploits of Gorgas have sometimes been overblown, but most of the exaggeration was not his fault. However, the job done by the Sanitation Department in controlling the disease was one of the greatest triumphs to come from the Canal Zone. And Thatcher and his public works employees and prison laborers did much to assist Gorgas in the hard work that went with his task.

In order to keep the number of cases of yellow fever at a minimum, it was necessary to find and destroy the mosquitoes and their eggs. The eggs were laid along the banks of small streams and anywhere that water could accumulate in stagnant pools. The work teams used kerosene which covered the pools of water with a thin film and destroyed the larvae when they hatched and came to the surface. No pools of water such as uncovered rain barrels were allowed, and the teams also fumigated houses in the Zone at regular intervals, as well as buildings in the cities of Colon and Panama.

The Gorgas sanitation teams literally cleaned up the two Panamanian cities, constructed proper street drainage systems, and inspected gutters and other places where

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82. DuVal, And the Mountains Will Move, 311.
the larvae could hatch. The continuing work that they did was the real story of how yellow fever was kept in check, and Thatcher's public works laborers assisted them.

The responsibilities of the Civil Governor also coincided with those of Gorgas in the area of relations with the Republic of Panama. Thatcher smoothed over a great many potential causes of friction between the United States and that country, and no better example of this exists than the possible conflict over the work of the Sanitation Department.

Panamanian citizens had so long been exposed to the stegomyia that they were all but immune from the fever that it spread. So it was not surprising that they vehemently complained to their government about the regular fumigation of their houses by American sanitation workers. The Americans had been given almost a blank check in Panama, however, by the treaty signed at the time of Panamanian independence. The treaty gave the United States the right to do as it pleased, even to the point of sanctioning the use of force. But Thatcher persuaded President Amador and Panamanian officials that if efforts to combat yellow fever were to be successful, a nationwide effort would have to be maintained.33 Once again, a spirit of cooperation characterized relations between the two countries.

Thatcher carried out all relations with Panama from

a position of respect and genuine affection for his counterparts in their government. This respect and affection was apparently mutual since he later received the highest civilian decorations awarded by Panama and several other Latin American governments. The Zone's weekly newspaper, the Canal Record, detailed many potential causes of conflict between the Isthmian Canal Commission and the host country in the months that Thatcher served there. Considering the uncompromising attitude of Chairman Goethals, it is a tribute to the Civil Governor that the relationship was a harmonious one. Truly, the Canal was made possible not only by the order maintained among its workers, but also by the cooperative spirit that existed with the Republic of Panama.

Life in the Zone for the Thatchers was not all work and devotion to duty. Within the American community, particularly among the Gold employees, a social structure developed. Socialites were part of that structure and "Anna Bell" Thatcher became one. A contemporary book about the Canal published in 1913 states that Mrs. Thatcher and the wife of former Admiral Harry Rousseau were the Zone's two most charming hostesses. The ladies not only had each other and their families to entertain, but there was a never ending stream of Congressmen, cabinet officials and foreign dignitaries passing through Panama. On November 14, 1910 President Taft visited the Zone, and

84. Abbott, Panama and the Canal, 382.
after being accompanied on inspection tours by Goethals and Thatcher he was entertained at the Thatcher home.

Mrs. Thatcher also had the rather well organized Canal Zone Women's Club to occupy her time. The club was started in 1907 with branches in all of the larger communities such as Ancon, Colabra, Gorgona, Empire and Colon. Of all the various clubs formed for both men and women, the women's club was probably the most successful and most beneficial to the members and to their tropical homeland. The women sponsored plays and did volunteer work for such endeavors as beautification projects for small Panamanian towns. They also promoted lectures, literary circles, decorated for important visitors and volunteered for school projects. The club undoubtedly made life more bearable not only for its members but for all Commission employees and the locals as well.

With Mrs. Thatcher's time occupied by supervising their home and with various women's club projects, Governor Thatcher could devote his time fully to his job. In later life he would describe his devotion to that job as that of a workaholic. Almost every day he made inspection trips to customs houses, schools, fire stations and sanitation and public works details. In his white linen suits, white straw hats and with his tall, thin frame, Thatcher was a common sight on the cars of the Canal Railway Company. Though he was

85. Casberry, "Lawyer at 99 - May Turn Poet."
devoted to his multifaceted job, he still found time for such diversions as tennis and studies of the history and archaeology of Panama. As he stated before his departure from Frankfort, in a letter to the editor of the State Journal, Thatcher was interested in the pirates who had ravaged Spanish gold shipments along Panama's coast and he looked forward to digging for treasure and for artifacts. He was not to be disappointed, because the finding of pieces of eight and of cannonballs and anchors was a fairly common occurrence among the workers.

By late 1912, work on the Canal was nearing completion. The Gatun and Miraflores dams were completed, the lakes on both sides of the Canal were filling up according to plan, and the locks on the lower sides of the lakes leading to the two oceans were ready. Landslides continued to plague the excavation on the Culebra cut, but on September 26, 1913 the first ship sailed into Gatun Lake.

The year 1913 was Thatcher's last year in Panama. Theodore Roosevelt's Bull Moose effort for the Presidency in 1912 had, in all probability, deprived Taft of re-election. And so the election had been won by Democrat Woodrow Wilson. Thatcher survived in his politically sensitive position for five months after Wilson took office in March. This was a period in which work was already slackening off. Thousands of laborers were being given termination notices as their
tasks were completed. Churches also closed, and several villages became ghost towns. The Canal Zone band gave its last concert and the women's club disbanded and burned its records.

The time had come to search for a permanent plan for Canal Zone government and for the operation of the Canal itself. To study and make recommendations for this new permanent government, Goethals appointed a special committee made up of commission members. On the committee were Chairman Goethals and Gaillard, Sibert, Gorgas and Thatcher. 86

The study group worked all during the summer of 1913 in Gaillard's office. It made its recommendations in August, and they became the basis of the Panama Canal Act of 1913 which Congress soon passed. But by the end of the commission's important work, Civil Governor Thatcher had already resigned.

Thatcher knew that it was only a matter of time before he would be forced to resign in much the same process that his predecessor Blackburn had experienced. In March, Kentucky Democratic Senator Ollie James had openly demanded that Wilson appoint a Kentucky Democrat to replace Thatcher. 87 James wished to make the holding of the Civil Governor's position a Kentucky tradition as it had already become. However, Wilson

86. DuVal, And the Mountains Will Move, 324.

and the new Secretary of War, Lindley Garrison, were not sure what to do as the Department of Civil Administration was to be abolished under the new plan of Canal government. Finally, Wilson decided to wait on the abolishment of the Department, and Thatcher resigned on August 18, 1913 after spending his accumulated leave time in the Zone.

The Thatchers used the leave time in Panama to tour the country and to say goodbye to their friends. On June 14, 1913 they sailed for New York on board the S.S. Colon. On their arrival they boarded a train for home, and, after a brief stopover in Washington, they continued on to Frankfort along the same route they had taken on their departure two years and three months before. Newspapers in Kentucky noted the return of Maurice Thatcher and many speculated that he would soon run for governor or United States Senator.

Back in Panama, Thatcher's replacement had arrived. The new Democratic Civil Governor and head of the same department was Richard Lee Metcalfe, editor of The Governor, the Nebraska hometown newspaper of Wilson's new Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan. Metcalfe continued the dismantling of the department and the transfer of its functions to the new government.

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88. Ibid.
89. Ancon, Canal Zone Canal Record, June 11, 1913.
90. Louisville Courier-Journal, June 26, 1913.
Thatcher's term as head of the Department of Civil Administration in Panama had been a remarkable one. Captain Miles F. DuVal, not only a close friend but probably the Canal's foremost historian, has stated that Thatcher's term was noteworthy for the number of firsts that he was able to accomplish there. Included in DuVal's list of firsts are: the abolishment of flogging in the Zone; institution of a system of rewards and denials for prisoners, which resulted in a reduction of infractions by fifty percent; the introduction of the teaching of Spanish in Zone schools; the drafting of a comprehensive vehicular code; strong measures to end prostitution; and the abolishment of saloons.91

Thatcher had risen above the stigma which accompanied him as a partisan political appointee. He had proven himself a true public servant who enjoyed his contributions to his job and was not solely interested in personal advancement or gratification. His brief tenure in Panama would be the highlight of his career, the ten years that he spent in Congress notwithstanding. Though the Canal was behind him for the remainder of his life, it was ever foremost in his thoughts. And service to the Canal, to the Zone, to Panama, and to the employees of the Isthmian Canal

Commission, was always his first priority. Service in Panama left an indelible mark on Thatcher and he left his mark on it as well.
IV. CONGRESSMAN THATCHER

Thatcher's arrival back in Louisville marked the beginning of the longest period in his life when he would actively practice law, though politics remained a pastime. For the next nine years "Governor" Thatcher would be a prominent member of the Louisville bar. He began those years as a partner of United States Senator William O. Bradley in the law firm of Bradley, Thatcher and Dearing.

From a purely political standpoint, Thatcher needed to form some new relationships. His old friend, former GovernorMillson, had retired from politics. And Bradley, his mentor and law partner, would die in May of 1914, shortly after announcing that he would not seek re-election.

The name of Chesley Searcy then entered Thatcher's life, and his relationship with Searcy would culminate in his being elected to Congress in 1923. The two men had first met in 1896 when both had come to Frankfort, Thatcher as an assistant in the auditor's office and Searcy as a page in the legislature. The friendship continued when Searcy returned to Louisville to study law and became Assistant County Attorney in 1908; Thatcher was, at the time, Assistant United States
Attorney.

While Thatcher was in Panama, Searcy became associated with two other young men, Matt Chilton and Robert Lucas. Together "Chee, Matt and Bob" set out to challenge the Democratic machine of Charles Cronan and to make Louisville a Republican city. When Thatcher returned he helped them by serving on campaign committees, recruiting candidates, making speeches and raising money.

Each year the new Republican organization did slightly better and in 1915 Cronan was only able to carry the city by a small margin for winning gubernatorial candidate, A. O. Stanley. Though Searcy, Thatcher and the others were heartbroken at Edwin P. Morrow's loss in the race by less than a thousand votes, they immediately set their sights on 1917 and the race for mayor. The Republicans had catalogued the abuses of the Cronan machine from kickbacks on city contracts to Democratic aldermen to voting irregularities.92 Thatcher served on the campaign committee of George Smith, the Republican candidate, and was one of the strategists of his victory.93 Searcy finally had his victory, and in the next few years Louisville and Jefferson County became a stronghold for Republican can-

93. Morgantown Green River Republican, June 17, 1926.
candidates.

Having won their long sought victory in the mayor's race, Ches, Matt and Bob set about clearing out the last vestiges of the Cronen machine. In 1918 Democratic Congressman Swager Sherley was up for re-election, and the Republicans nominated a transplanted Hoosier, attorney Charles F. Ogden, to run against him.94 Capitalizing on the national Republican mood and the strength of the Searcy organization, Ogden defeated Sherley by a narrow margin.

Thatcher meanwhile had maintained an active law practice, in spite of his political involvements. In 1918 he received his first political reward from Smith by being named a member of the Board of Public Safety. In 1919 he was named Deputy Counsel for the City, a post he retained until 1921.95 In the part time job he represented the city in such actions as land purchases and lawsuits.

In 1922, after two terms representing Louisville's Fifth Congressional District in Washington, Congressman Ogden announced that he would not run for re-election. Whoever got the Republican nomination was almost assured of victory. Cracks had begun to appear in the Searcy reputation in the form of some minor scandals in the

95. Ibid., 1700.
Smith administration but were not yet problematic. Thatcher was the unanimous choice of the Republican Executive Committee and was unopposed on the August 5 primary ballot. Nominated to oppose him in the fall was Democrat Kendrick Lewis.

In the fall campaigns of 1919 and 1920, Republicans had been elected governor and United States Senator, respectively, in spirited contests. But there were no statewide races in 1922 and the Courier-Journal would complain about the "dull" campaign.96 As was customary, the fall efforts did not officially begin until the middle of October when Congressman Alben Barkley officially opened the Lewis campaign at a Democratic rally in Louisville. The Republicans were to open on October 19 with Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover present, but when he cancelled, Governor Morrow and Senator Richard Ernst spoke for Thatcher.97

Both candidates spoke at meetings and rallies around the city and made radio addresses. The campaign was marked by few issues in the days of "Republican prosperity" and before the Harding scandals. Thatcher reported spending only $91 on the race and the results reflected the strength of the Republican organization, which gave him a 2,000 vote edge in a low turnout.98

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96. Louisville Courier-Journal, November 5, 1922.
97. Ibid., October 20, 1922.
98. Ibid., November 8, 1922.
The term of the 68th Congress began on March 4, 1923 when members were sworn in. However, floor action did not begin until December 3, when the first session officially convened. The Thatchers took up residence at the Argonne Hotel in Washington, and Mrs. Thatcher served as the Congressman's secretary. The freshman was able to replace Ogden on the prestigious Appropriations Committee and served on the Post Office and Public Buildings subcommittee.

The Appropriations Committee of the House was becoming more prominent in 1923. Previously, it had voted individually on presidential requests and the spending requests of individual members of Congress. But in 1923 President Harding inaugurated a new process with creation of a Bureau of the Budget. Under the new system a complete budget for the operation of all federal programs was submitted to each biennial session of Congress. This made the management of expenditures clearer and more manageable. Thatcher's committee perused each of these budgets, and by 1933 he could brag that his committee had cut over $1 billion from the budgets of the four presidents under whom he had served.99

Aside from the trimming of presidential budgets, Thatcher also devoted his years on the committee to the furtherance of a number of causes and projects in which

he was interested. The bills for the establishment of these projects might also be called "pork barrel" and his legislative activity throughout his years in Congress was characterized by them.

These Thatcher "pork barrel" projects included a number of interests but always foremost in his mind was a desire to benefit Kentucky and the city of Louisville. Also, the Panama Canal and the welfare of Zone employees were frequent beneficiaries of Congressional goodwill through Thatcher, and several national park projects were brought to fruition by him.

On Kentucky issues such as protection of tobacco and liquor interests, Thatcher would frequently go along with measures to assist them though he was personally opposed to both smoking and drinking. Despite his sponsorship of some bills beneficial to Kentucky liquor interests, he favored the Eighteenth Amendment and prohibition. He was one of the few Kentucky politicians to maintain a consistent record on the issue throughout the 1920's and early 1930's.

On June 4, 1924 the new Congressman spoke on his first major piece of legislation when he proposed the creation of a commission to study the causes of crime and what, if anything, government could do to prevent it. Thatcher's speech was an eloquent one in which he traced his own involvement as a prosecutor and in corrections in Kentucky and the Canal Zone. The legis-
lation was defeated, then and in subsequent Congresses, but the speech was later adapted for an article in a national crime magazine. Child labor, a frequent issue of the 1920's, also brought Thatcher to the floor during the 68th Congress, and this time his eloquence and experience on the issue helped in the passage of significant child labor legislation.

The year 1924 was a significant one in Kentucky politics with not only a presidential but also a United States Senate race. The Louisville Republican machine was eight years old and charges of corruption and signs of factionalism had begun to manifest themselves. In 1923 the entire slate of Republican aldermen had been forced from office by the Kentucky Court of Appeals due to election irregularities attributed to the Searcy machine. 100 Though court decisions in that period were often based on partisan politics, the debacle caused open warfare between Searcy and Republican Mayor Huston Quin. The first charges of "Searcy-ism" began to appear, and Thatcher, the Republican organization candidate, found himself with a primary opponent.

The Congressman's opponent in the August primary was Harvey White, who ran an aggressive campaign against "machine politics." White did not attack Thatcher personally and the incumbent hardly campaigned at all. In

the end, Searcy's precinct captains proved that they could still produce votes as Thatcher defeated White by a resounding margin of 13,460 votes to 240. 101

The margin was undoubtedly made larger by the presence on the ballot of Louisville Republican Frederic H. Sackett who was running in the Republican primary for the United States Senate.

The fall campaign pitted Thatcher against a young Democratic attorney, Sam H. McLean. The race was not a strenuous one, and Republicans succeeded in winning the state for President Coolidge and in picking up the other Senate seat with the victory of Sackett over Senator A. C. Stanley. Thatcher defeated McLean by a margin of over 10,000 votes. 102

By the convening of the first session of the 69th Congress in December of 1925, Thatcher had learned his way around Congress and his committees, and had emerged as one of the most effective legislators that Kentucky has sent to Washington in this century.

Several proposals by Thatcher during this session merit notice, but probably the most notable achievement was his work to establish the Mammoth Cave National Park. In 1925 a study by the Department of the Interior recommended that new national parks be created in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia and in the Great Smokey Moun-

101. Louisville Courier-Journal, August 2, 1924.
102. Ibid., November 5, 1924.
tain of Tennessee. Thatcher had succeeded in getting the study to include Mammoth Cave, but Interior Secretary Hubert Work was against a park there. Critics claimed that the area lacked the scenic and historical significance to merit a national park, and that tourists had damaged the cave with soot black from torches and had broken off many of the rock formations.

Almost single-handedly Thatcher persuaded Work to change his mind by pointing out that the area was near a major north-south thoroughfare and thus accessible to large numbers of tourists, that the damage was confined to only a small part of the cave system, and that an opportunity to purchase most of the land at a bargain price existed if the government acted quickly. Work agreed to include Mammoth Cave in his recommendation, but Thatcher still had to convince Congress. There the legislation was presented along with the creation of all three parks in one bill. Critics assaulted Thatcher in his committee and on the floor, but the bill passed and Kentucky had its first national park.

Some of Thatcher's pork barrel bills for the "improvement" of Louisville were not successful. But his first, providing $10,000 for the upgrading of the graves of former President and Mrs. Zachary Taylor, was approved in 1926. In a later session of

103 Cong. Record, 69 Cong., 1 Sess., H9452 (May 14, 1926).
Congress he succeeded in getting the cemetery around
the Taylor Mausoleum named a national cemetery.

On another matter, Thatcher was successful in
helping Louisville businessmen. He persuaded Secre-
tary of Commerce Hoover to create five branch offices
of the Department's Bureau of Foreign and Domestic
Commerce. One of the branch offices was located
in Louisville, and it assisted local businesses in
getting foreign markets for their products.

In March of 1926 Thatcher successfully sponsored
the George Rogers Clark Bridge Authorization bill.
The bill authorized construction of a new bridge across
the Ohio River at Louisville. Though there were no
federal funds involved and Congress needed only to
authorize its building, Thatcher did make a signif-
icant contribution to the manner in which the construc-
tion of the bridge was funded. Previously states and
localities had to appropriate monies to build bridges.
But Thatcher came up with the novel idea of allowing
bridges to be built with funds derived from the sale
of government bonds which were to be paid off by col-
lecting tolls until such time as the bonds were re-
tired. The George Rogers Clark bridge was the
first to be funded in this manner; and since federal
authorization was necessary for the building of bridges

104. Ibid., H12828 (July 2, 1926).
105. DuVal, "W. H. Thatcher: Benefactor of Ken-
tucky and Panama," 21.
across state borders, the Thatcher-Barkley Bridge Act of 1930 made this procedure acceptable.

Aside from the significant legislation that he proposed during the session, Congressman and Mrs. Thatcher also made their first inspection tour at government expense since coming to Washington. The trip took them to Pearl Harbor and to the Philippines to inspect American bases and installations. The trip from the military's point of view was a successful one since Thatcher came back full of proposals to upgrade facilities at Pearl and Manila Bay, and also to make Camp Knox in Kentucky a permanent base and federal gold depository. From a foreign policy stance, the trip hardened Thatcher's views that United States' possessions such as the Philippines were vital to national interests and thus should not be given independence. This colonial point of view remained with him for the rest of his life, and in later years he would speak vociferously against attempts to cede the Canal Zone back to Panama.

In 1926, after only one and one-half sessions in Congress, Thatcher could run on an enviable record of successful legislation, including a recent act creating a $1.2 million Veterans Hospital in Lexington. It was fortunate for him that he had begun to develop his own political constituency because Louisville

106. Louisville Times, February 11, 1927.
Republicans were openly divided over support of Thatcher's friend, Chesley Searcy.

In 1925, Searcy's candidate to succeed Mayor Huston Quin withdrew, and as a compromise between Searcy and the Mayor, Arthur A. Will, President of the Board of Aldermen, was chosen as the candidate. The Democrats nominated William Baker, but when Searcy revealed that Baker had been a Ku Klux Klan member, he withdrew and Joseph T. O'Neal replaced him. The campaign remained a bitter one, and Thatcher spoke for Will, charging that there were three bootleggers on the Democratic ticket. 107 Will was narrowly elected, but in 1926 the Court of Appeals ruled the election invalid, and Governor William J. Fields appointed the entire Democratic ticket to serve out the term.

And so for Thatcher. Identification with Searcy in 1926 posed potential political problems although these problems had not yet manifested themselves in the eyes of the electorate.

Two Republican opponents filed against Thatcher for the August 8, 1926 primary. Felix Dumas and J. Stanley Briel both campaigned against Thatcher as the machine's candidate. Briel even hired a sound truck and drove it through Louisville streets pleading with Republicans to, "Vote for Briel and against Searcyism"

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107. Louisville Courier-Journal, October 20, 1925.
and dishonest elections. But Briel and Damas did not attack Thatcher personally, and on election day he received 10,957 votes to 215 for Damas and 180 for Briel. 

Despite visible campaigns by the two challengers, and help from anti-Searcy Republicans, the machine, aided by Thatcher's personal popularity, proved that it could still control a Republican primary.

In the fall Thatcher was unopposed, but in the United States Senate race Republicans lost one of the seats when Congressman Alben Barkley defeated Senator Ernst. The results were close, but the Republicans carried Louisville after a campaign which was highlighted by a joint appearance by Ernst, Thatcher and Secretary Hoover.

Back in Congress, Thatcher devoted himself to other worthwhile projects for his state and also to various national issues of the period. He voted with conservative Republican leaders such as House Speaker Frederick Gillett of Massachusetts and against more progressive Republicans like Nicholas Longworth of Ohio. On farm issues, he opposed the legislative proposals of Populist Democrats and supported the traditional Republican philosophy of a high protective tariff. He repeatedly voted against price sup-

108. Ibid., August 7, 1926.
109. Ibid., August 9, 1926.
ports for farm products, including those for Kentucky tobacco. With farm markets across the country glutted with over-produced commodities and with lower prices hitting farmers in his home state especially hard, Thatcher continued to oppose government intervention. He voted against the 1929 Agricultural Marketing Act which was passed by farm belt Democrats and progressive Republicans.

On veterans' issues, his campaign literature prominently advertised his fight for the Veterans Hospital in Lexington; but, like Presidents Coolidge, Hoover and Roosevelt, Thatcher opposed the repeated attempts for a Veterans Bonus Bill.

The prohibition issue was strongly felt by him; and when Kentucky politicians such as Barkley and J. C. "Wheel" Beckhaus changed their positions to suit political trends, Thatcher remained a consistent champion of the Volstead Act. When he was first elected to Congress, prohibition had been a popular cause, albeit not quite as popular in Louisville as in the rest of Kentucky. But as the twenties progressed, the issue became less popular to the point where Alben Barkley, a national leader of the prohibition movement in 1920, had moved to the position of a neo-


111. Ibid.
tral by 1926, and by 1932 was an outspoken foe.\textsuperscript{112} When enforcement proved unworkable in the late 1920's and Congress began to talk of repeal, Thatcher opposed it and even proposed a constitutional amendment in the 72nd Congress to allow a national referendum to decide the fate of prohibition.

Like many Congressmen, Thurlow Thatcher could compromise his personal feelings enough to support legislation to benefit his state. He was vehemently opposed to both drinking and smoking, yet opposed legislation imposing an increase in federal taxes on cigarettes and proposed a measure to refund a portion of the tax on legal whiskey to the distilleries. The fact that Thatcher could make these contradictions, between his support for lower taxes and budget trimming and his endless pork barrel bills, was what characterized his legislative career and made him the effective Congressman that he was.

The year 1927 was another election year in Kentucky. Thatcher did not face re-election, but it was the year in which he would break openly with Ches Searcy over moral issues in politics. Two factions dominated state Republican politics that year. The mountain faction, led by Congressman John N. Robsion of Barbourville, supported Appeals Court Judge Flem Sampson for governor.

They were supported by a bi-partisan combine, the Jockey Club, centered in Louisville but with strong branches in Lexington and Covington. This group was formed from prominent business and political leaders to oppose any attempts by Christian fundamentalist groups to control or abolish pari-mutual betting or horse racing. The Jockey Club monopolized completely every state horse track and blocked any attempts to tax or regulate them.

The club was officially only interested in racing interests, but since some of its members were distillery executives, the fundamentalists associated it with liquor and as a force for evil in the state. The reputation was probably undeserved, but they were willing to support anyone who met their issue requirements regardless of political party. In 1923 the club had supported and helped elect a Democratic governor, but in 1927, along with Robsion and Sampson, it sought to elect a Republican. Along with support from the Jockey Club, Sampson secured support from Ches Searcy and his faction in the party organization in Louisville.

Sampson's primary opponent was Robert Lucas, Searcy's and Thatcher's old friend and a member of the original "Chess, Hatt and Bob" group that had helped build the Republican party in Jefferson County. Lucas's principal supporter was United States Senator Fred

113. Ibid., 145.
Sackett. The lines were drawn for a primary bloodbath between two former allies with Lucas and Sackett on one side and Searcy and Sampson on the other. Lucas campaigned against Sampson as if he were the devil incarnate and attracted the support of such fundamentalist groups as the Anti-Saloon League and the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Sampson hardly mentioned the Jockey Club and his opponent by name, and Searcy characterized Sackett and Lucas as members of the "stuffed shirt" faction. 114

Thatcher was thus forced to choose between his principles, that included high moral character and opposition to gambling and drinking, and his friend Searcy, to whom he owed his Congressional career. The decision must have been a painful one for him, but Thatcher agreed to serve on Lucas's campaign committee. However, he failed to make a single public appearance for him and stayed in Washington for the duration of the campaign. 115 In the end, Sampson won the primary and almost carried Louisville and Jefferson County over hometown candidate Lucas. Sampson was elected governor in the fall over J. C. W. Beckham, but Searcy lost out in local politics until 1932 when he staged a comeback.

By 1928 Thatcher had already proposed a number of


measures concerning the Panama Canal, and his expertise on Canal matters was used on other Congressmen's bills since the Zone government was under the jurisdiction of another committee. Many of the private bills for the relief of individual citizens that Thatcher sponsored had to do with persons who had worked on the Canal or for the Isthmian Canal Commission. Hardly a month went by while Congress was in session when the former Civil Governor did not sponsor a bill to award someone a pension for work in the Zone or to increase the stipend to someone such as the widow of the late Colonel William Gorgas. When Canal legislation came to the House floor for consideration, Thatcher was usually present and had something to say to urge its passage. The Canal was regarded with a great deal of patriotic pride by members of Congress, and on more than one occasion the remarks of Thatcher or of others concerning Canal bills received applause from the members.

Probably the most significant piece of Canal legislation proposed by Thatcher was his bill for the creation of the Gorgas Memorial laboratory for the Study of Tropical Diseases. The Gorgas Memorial Association already existed in the United States, and physicians were able to carry on some research through private donations. But what was essential to that

study was the establishment of a laboratory in the tropics with full time personnel to staff it.

The Thatcher proposal was that the United States contribute $50,000 per year to the lab. Panama had already contributed a parcel of land with a building and some equipment.\textsuperscript{117} Some South American countries had also agreed to make an annual contribution, but more money was needed. Thatcher painstakingly set about convincing members of the concerned committees that the Gorgas Association was legitimate, and that no other body in the world existed which was devoted to the study of tropical disease.

When Congressman Louis Cramton (R.-Mich.) objected on the House floor to the first reading of the bill, and had its consideration postponed, Thatcher set about to change Cramton's mind. Within days telegrams and letters poured into the Michigan Congressman's office from his home district, urging him to support Thatcher's bill and reminding him of the noble cause that the Canal building had been, and of the patriotism of the late Colonel Gorgas.\textsuperscript{118} The Thatcher "propaganda" campaign, as Cramton called it, had been successfully used earlier when the Kentuckian was lobbying for more funds for braille books and for the American Printing House for the Blind in Louisville.

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., 84994 (March 19, 1922).
On second consideration, Cranston did not object and the Gorges Laboratory bill passed. But the Michigan Congressman was angry at the attempt to apply pressure on him and was to be a thorn in Thatcher's side whenever any piece of his legislation made it to the House floor for consideration.

For his 1928 campaign brochure Thatcher could boast of two more important accomplishments for his city: the establishment of a new Coast Guard station and the construction of a new federal office building. The old federal building at Fourth and Chestnut was too small for the post office, courts and other offices that it housed. Thatcher proposed its sale and the construction of a new and larger building at Fifth and Broadway. The old building eventually sold for $3 million and the new building cost $2.8 million, so Thatcher could even boast that he had made money for the government. 119

The year 1928 showed all signs of being a good one at the ballot box for Kentucky Republicans. The Democratic nominee for President was Al Smith of New York, a wet and a Catholic, two things that most Kentuckians were not. The very moral crusading fundamentalists who had backed Beckham's losing effort in the gubernatorial effort the year before were now with the Republicans. With them, and with the support

119. Ibid., H10861 (May 29, 1928).
of the normally Democratic Ku Klux Klan, the party's effort seemed assured of success.

Thatcher was elected by his colleagues to serve on the National Republican Congressional Committee and was prominent in the fall campaign in Kentucky. As a member of the Republican Speakers Bureau he made speeches all over the state, and as a well-known dry he was welcome in rural Kentucky. He had no primary opponent in 1928, but his fall opponent was seventy-four year old former Governor of Puerto Rico, Arthur Yager.

As usual, national issues prevailed in the Congressional race and Thatcher coasted to a 40,000 vote victory on Republican prosperity and the angry reaction to the wet-dry issue.120 Thatcher even ran ahead of Herbert Hoover in the Fifth District, and Kentucky gave Hoover his largest margin in the south over Smith. In all, Kentucky sent eight Republicans in its eleven member House delegation to the 71st Congress, and Thatcher had helped most of their campaigns.

When Thatcher returned to Washington for the lame duck session of the 70th Congress, his nemesis was waiting for him. When he proposed that medals be struck in order to raise funds for the Mammoth Cave National Park, Creighton objected. He stated that the money raising scheme was proof that Mammoth Cave was

120. Louisville Courier-Journal, November 7, 1928.
not utilized enough to be deserving of National Park status. The bill was never again brought to the floor.

In February of 1929 when Thatcher proposed a bill to provide funds to upgrade the Abraham Lincoln memorial near Hodgenville, Crexton again objected. He stated to the Kentucky Congressman that, "There is no one in the House who spends more time getting money out of the treasury and less time keeping it in than the gentleman from Kentucky." Amid laughter and applause, the ever serious Thatcher rallied his Kentucky colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, and the measure passed with only twenty-one no votes.

In March 1930, Thatcher proposed the second most significant piece of Canal legislation for which he would receive credit, the Thatcher-Ferry Bill. In the rush to complete the construction of the Canal, the builders had neglected to provide for any bridges or ferries across it. What existed were numerous part time ferries which ran sporadically at several points along the waterway. Thatcher's bill established a permanent ferry on the Pacific end of the Canal at the point of juncture with the Pan-American highway. The ferry required a modest expenditure by the United

121. Cong. Record, 70 Cong., 2 Sess., H758 (December 17, 1928).
122. Ibid., H2792 (February 4, 1929).
123. Ibid.
States, but in 1962 the ferry site saw the establishment of a $20 million bridge named the Thatcher-Ferry Bridge in the Congressman's honor.\textsuperscript{124}

Before the 1930 election Thatcher could boast of yet another accomplishment on behalf of the city of Louisville. Upon learning that the Navy was to commission eleven new cruisers, Thatcher got to work. He persuaded the Secretary of the Navy to name the eleventh one the \textit{U.S.S. Louisville}. Both Louisville newspapers, the \textit{Courier-Journal} and the \textit{Herald-Post}, called it a great honor, and the Congressman and his wife traveled to Bremerton, Washington, to christen the ship at an appropriate time, just before Thatcher opened his fall re-election effort.\textsuperscript{125}

The Fifth District congressional race was hardly a race at all since the Democrats decided not to nominate a candidate and to concentrate their Jefferson County efforts on the United States Senate race. The struggle was a bitter one and would be the first statewide campaign since the stock market crash of 1929. It would also be an ominous lesson for Republicans and for Thatcher, who would make a statewide race for the Senate two years later.

In 1929 with a potentially bitter primary race shaping up between Senator Sackett and Congressman

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{124} \textit{Louisville Courier-Journal}, December 2, 1962.
\item \textsuperscript{125} \textit{Ibid.}, October 21, 1930.
\end{itemize}
Robson, President Hoover intervened. In order to head off a primary and the danger of a splintered Republican party losing the seat to the Democrats, Sackett was appointed Ambassador to the Weimar government in Germany. This vacancy left the seat open, and to fill it Governor Flem Sampson appointed his friend, Congressman Robson, who immediately announced that he would run for the full term in 1930. To oppose him the Democrats united around Appeals Court Judge Marvel Mills Logan of Bowling Green.

Thatcher's only opponent was Socialist Labor nominee Charles Harrett, and this lack of effective opposition enabled him to make many campaign appearances around the state with Robson. Senator Barkley likewise spoke on numerous occasions for Logan.

Republican speakers explained the economic troubles as a temporary setback due to gambling on the stock market and urged voters to stand by the president. Democrats railed against the Hoover depression and characterized Senator Robson as an ignorant and illiterate demagogue. 126

The depression by 1930 had hardly touched Louisville where Republican Mayor William B. Harrison worked with the Courier-Journal and a bi-partisan group of businessmen to find jobs for the unemployed. But depression had reached the Kentucky mountains long

126. Ibid., October 9, 1930.
before the stock market crashed, and in 1930 the once solid Republican mountains began to move into the Democratic column.

Robeson ran a vigorous campaign based upon the support of veterans' groups and the United Mine Workers, but lost to Logan by over 30,000 votes. Though he and Thatcher both received good majorities in Louisville, the Republican vote fell off in other urban areas and in eastern Kentucky.127 Of the eight Republicans elected to Congress from Kentucky in 1928, only two, Thatcher and Charles Finley of Williamsburg, returned in 1930. The mountainous Eleventh Congressional District sent a Democrat to Congress for the first time in history when Congressman Katherine Langley was defeated.

Back in Washington Thatcher bade farewell to the Kentuckians who were leaving Congress due to retirement or to defeat. Democrats controlled the new Congress, and the age of Republican dominance in national politics was over. Though Hoover still had two more years to serve on his term, it was the end of an era. The causes that Thatcher had championed, such as high tariffs, balanced budgets and tax reduction, were no longer in fashion. Soon to be gone also were the old fashioned ideas of a free market economy and the gold standard. Another idea that

was on its way out was prohibition, but Thatcher and others who believed in it were not to give up without a fight.

The mood of public opinion among more moderate elements had begun to swing away from prohibition when it proved to be unenforceable. The national news media were filled with stories about bathtub gin, speakeasies and mobsters who made money selling the forbidden substance. Moves to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment gained increasing strength in the late twenties and early thirties, especially when the Democrats took control of Congress.

Groups such as the Anti-Saloon League were fearful that if the repeal amendment was successful in Congress it would also be ratified in the states. Their answer to this problem was a constitutional amendment of their own.

The so-called Beck-Lithium Amendment proposed another method of amending. Instead of submitting an amendment to the legislatures or to conventions for ratification, there would be a direct national referendum. 128 It was felt that this would make the power of fundamentalist groups more keenly felt, and a prohibition repeal amendment less likely to pass. Thatcher was one of the principal leaders in the Beck-Lithium movement. He proposed its adoption numerous

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128. Cong. Record, 72 Cong., 1 Sess., H6046 (March 17, 1932).
times, but it never reached the floor for a vote. His views were clearly out of fashion by 1932 when the Democratic platform called for repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, and even the Republican platform took a neutral position.

The year 1932 began with Thatcher's full intention of running for a sixth term. However, several factors intervened which caused him to decline his nomination for Congress and accept the impossible task of unseating Senator Barkley.

The heyday of the Searcy machine was gone by 1932, and successive Republican mayors had created a new organization with its own point of view. With Searcy gone, Thatcher must have seemed a more vulnerable target, especially because of his views on prohibition which were decidedly unpopular in larger cities like Louisville. And, in spite of national and state Democratic trends, Jefferson County still retained a healthy Republican edge in voter registration and was easily carried by Mayor Harrison in his losing 1931 race for governor.

The two factions in Louisville Republican politics in 1932 were Mayor Harrison's faction and the Petty-Byans faction led by Sheriff Hubbard Petty. Petty had attempted to get Thatcher to oppose Harrison for governor the previous year, but in 1932 both sides had candidates against the Congressman. Frank Russell, an associate of the Mayor, filed and so did
Joett Ross Todd from the Sheriff's group. The race showed signs that it would be a bitter one. The incumbent was attacked as a dry, and the first personal charge ever made against him in a campaign was heard—that being nepotism for his hiring of Mrs. Thatcher as his secretary.

But the Federal District Court and the Kentucky Court of Appeals changed everything when they rejected the General Assembly's re-districting plan based on the 1930 census figures. Federal law stated that Congressional districts should be as equal in population as possible within a state's boundaries. But the legislature's plan had placed more voters in the mountainous Republican districts than in the Democratic districts of western Kentucky. It had also reduced the delegation to nine by eliminating districts of two dry incumbents, Democrats Ralph Gilbert of Shelbyville and John Moore of Morgantown. The challengers succeeded in getting the plan thrown out but, since a new re-districting plan could not be ready by fall, a state at large election would have to be held. Candidates from both parties were forced to run statewide instead of by district, with the nine biggest vote getters being elected in the November election.129

The courts' decisions made the election of a Republican to the House almost an impossibility.

Even in districts with Republican registration majorities, the Republican candidates could not hope to stem the Democratic tide of votes from the other districts. Faced with statewide races, both Russell and Todd withdrew, and Thatcher went on to lead the field of Republicans in the at large primary. But his chances to retain his seat in the fall were negligible.

The nominees for the Senate seemed decided a year before the campaign began. In July of 1931 former Republican Governor Edwin P. Morrow announced that he would run against Senator Barkley the following year. Morrow used the fall 1931 race between Harrison and Ruby Laffoon as a forum to attack the Senator. Newspapers of the period show almost as many charges between Barkley and Morrow as between the two gubernatorial hopefuls.

Barkley took the popular former governor seriously and, since Morrow was a vet, he saw an opportunity to defuse the issue. Previously he had gone from a strong proponent of prohibition to a neutral position in his 1926 race with Ernst. But in order to head off a vet primary challenge and Morrow, Barkley took the opportunity of his keynote address to the Democratic National Convention to come out for repeal. The Senator told his startled listeners that he was convinced that prohibition was unenforceable and reluctantly

130. Ibid.
had changed his position.¹³¹

By the summer of 1932 Barkley had taken away
Morrow's most potent issue, and the worsening state of
the economy made any Republican challenge look impos-
sible. Morrow withdrew from the race one year after
he had entered it, stating that he had failed to re-
cover properly from an operation and thus would be un-
able to campaign strenuously.¹³² The Republicans were
without a candidate since no one had filed for the
primary and the State Central Committee waited until
September to name its nominee.

With Barkley a newly christened vet, the Repub-
licans felt that their only chance was to nominate a
dry. Thatcher's name and that of former Senator Rob-
sion were touted, but when Rosbion showed no interest,
Chairman D. W. Hunter asked Thatcher to accept. Faced
with an unwinnable statewide Congressional race anyway,
he accepted his party's call. At the State Central
Committee's September meeting, Thatcher was nominated
by his old friend Chesley Searcy who had just rejoined
the committee.¹³³ After the nominee was chosen unan-
imously and made his acceptance speech, the group lis-
tened to an hour long address by Morrow, who seemingly
had recovered from his operation.

Barkley was by 1932 a well established member of the national Democratic hierarchy, and his friendship with Roosevelt was rewarded by his selection as National Convention keynote. With national issues foremost in the voters' minds, and with Hoover running for re-election in the third year of a depression, the Democratic campaign in Kentucky was assured of victory.

Republicans hoped to make the wet-dry issue, and Barkley's inconsistencies on it, the central part of their campaign. This strategy was to be combined with defense of President Hoover and the job that he was doing in America to combat the "global depression." 134

Democrats opened their campaign at Lewisburg and served the traditional burgoo to 8,000 persons. 135 The crowd listened to Barkley heap criticism upon, and direct political barbs at Hoover and the Republican party in general. The Senator called for a balanced budget, stable currency and relief projects for the unemployed. Absent was any mention of the prohibition issue.

In contrast, the Republican campaign opened at London with Governor Sampson stating that the party had always been dry and always would be. Thatcher reminded listeners of his opponent's flip-flop on

134. Ibid., October 16, 1932.

prohibition and his changing of positions with every political wind. 136

National speakers poured into the state for Barkley, lambasting the Hoover depression; and the wet-dry issue, so potent for Republicans in previous years, never got off the ground. The Republicans were so unsuccessful in their tactic that the Women’s Christian Temperance Union even endorsed the Democrat because of the paramount issue of the economy, and since Barkley was sure to win anyway. 137

Thatcher hired a sound truck and traveled up the Big Sandy River Valley in eastern Kentucky, trying to boost the sagging Republican fortunes in the depressed coal fields. 138 When the wet-dry issue did not catch on, Thatcher and others fell back to defending Hoover and urging voters not to desert the president in time of national emergency.

On November 5, Thatcher officially ended the statewide portion of his campaign in Morgantown where his political career had begun exactly forty years before. The crowd in the staunchly Republican county seat town was huge, and bands played around the town square. An overflow crowd in the courthouse listened, and after an introduction by Mrs. Thatcher, the Congressman re-

iterated his charges that Roosevelt and Barkley wished to turn the country back over to the liquor interests. In defense of Hoover, Thatcher stated that it was as unfair to blame the Republicans for the depression as it was to blame the Democrats for World War One.139

After a train trip back to Louisville, Thatcher attended a rally with over 30,000 persons at the Jefferson County Armory.140 President Hoover attended, along with the nine Republican nominees for the at large Congressional seats. On election eve, Hoover and Thatcher made radio addresses on WMAS radio, as did Barkley.

The election had never been in doubt, but the margin was nonetheless shocking. Nationally, Hoover carried only two states, and in Kentucky Roosevelt's margin was over 185,000 votes.141 Barkley defeated Thatcher by a margin of 179,784 votes. The Fifth Congressional District had even gone against its Congressman by a 4,800 vote margin.142

Eastern Kentucky, which had been sliding away from the Republicans in 1930 and 1931, went solidly Democratic as did western Kentucky where sentiment was still in favor of prohibition. In the statewide

139. Louisville Courier-Journal, November 6, 1932.
140. Louisville Herald-Post, November 7, 1932.
141. Louisville Courier-Journal, November 9, 1932.
142. Ibid.
Congressional races, Democrats had swept all nine. Thatcher was defeated by a margin larger than any statewide Republican candidate had ever been, and Barkley became the first Kentucky Senator re-elected in over thirty years. It was a humiliating defeat for one who had served Kentucky and the nation as well.

The lame duck session of Congress began in December of 1932 with nearly 100 Republicans present who had lost their seats, including Thatcher. The Kentuckian proposed still more legislation, including some private pension bills and the first anti-kidnap measure for the District of Columbia. He also voted against a measure to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment.

On March 3, 1933, the final day of the 72nd Congress, Thatcher made his last address on the floor. In his "Statement of Stewardship" he reviewed his ten years in Congress and his stands on such national issues as agriculture, veterans' affairs, the economy and prohibition. He also included an exhaustive list of his legislative accomplishments and of the projects that he had worked on in behalf of Kentucky, the city of Louisville and the Panama Canal. Among the things mentioned were hospitals in Louisville, Fort Knox and Lexington, a new federal building in Louisville, the George Rogers Clark bridge and the Zachary Taylor National Cemetery. Also noted were the Mammoth Cave National Park, improvements on the
Abraham Lincoln Memorial and other parks, the Louisville Coast Guard station and the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. The naming of the U.S.S. Louisville was also included, as were flood relief projects for eastern Kentucky. Among the Panama projects cited were the Gorgas Memorial Laboratory, the Thatcher Ferry at Ancon and the Madden Dam, a flood control project in the Zone. He also mentioned his work to establish the air mail service, of which he had been one of the primary sponsors in Congress.

In defense of the seeming contradiction between his sponsorship of so many pork barrel projects and his work in trimming budgets and supporting tax reduction, Thatcher made an eloquent statement. He stated that in the past Kentucky and other southern states had been neglected in the number of federal projects given out, and his desire had been to help redress that imbalance.143 In light of Kentucky's and the South's history of support for the Democratic party and the reality of national Republican rule, seldom broken since the Civil War, this defense was quite plausible.

In conclusion, Thatcher bade farewell to his Democratic and Republican colleagues on the Appropriations Committee and mentioned their work which had trimmed almost $1 billion from presidential budgets.

143. Ibid.
since he had been in Congress. Clarence Cannon, a Democratic member of the committee and later its chairman, paid a fitting tribute to Thatcher, stating that in all his years in Congress he had served with no abler man.

Thatcher had left Congress at the end of an era for Republicans in national politics as well as that of Kentucky. From 1895, when he went to Frankfort to serve with Attorney General Taylor, until his defeat for the Senate in 1932, Kentucky Republicans had elected five governors and sent five men to the United States Senate. In the almost fifty years since 1932, Republicans have elected only two governors and three senators, although two of the senators managed to get re-elected.

At age sixty-two, Thatcher's career in elective politics was over, but not his career in public service. He would maintain his legal residence at the Brown Hotel in Louisville, but his remaining years were spent in Washington because, as he told a reporter in 1936, "I can stay here and do more good for Kentucky and the Panama Canal than by going back."

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145. Ibid., 91 Cong., 1 Sess., H7318 (August 12, 1969).

At a stage in a political career when men frequently go home to retire or remain in Washington and devote themselves to making money, Thatcher began a new phase. This last phase of his career in public service ended when he died forty-one years later in his 102nd year.
V. THE LATER YEARS

For five years after leaving Congress the Thatchers resided at the Washington Inn, but in 1938 they took an apartment at 1801 16th Street Northwest. Here they lived out the remainder of their lives. The location was near his law office and across the street from the Scottish Rite Temple in which Thatcher was an active member, having been given the honor of Thirty-Third Degree Mason.

The former Congressman practiced law at his office in the Investment Building on K Street. A colleague from a nearby office remembers Thatcher as doing some deeds and wills and preparing taxes for a few clients, but that activity was only a part time occupation for him at best. 147

Mrs. Thatcher filled their home with tropical plants for which she had developed a passion, and she briefly taught Spanish to high school students when World War Two caused a shortage of teachers. 148 Hudson, as friends called him, remained a vegetarian, a non-smoker and non-drinker, and refused even to take

147. Interview with Walter E. Barton, June 25, 1972.
medicine. He often attended services at a nearby Christian Science Church with Mrs. Thatcher, but he remained an agnostic and often stated that his religion was Masonry. His poetry reveals a man firmly convinced that God existed and had created the world, but as to the meaning of life and the possibility of life after death, he frequently expressed skepticism. This skepticism about Christianity was an interesting position for a man in politics from a rural Kentucky community who had such high standards of conduct and morality.

With so little of his time devoted to practicing law, Thatcher could spend his time lobbying Congress and traveling. Aside from yearly trips back to Kentucky to attend meetings of the Mammoth Cave Park Association, the couple made numerous trips abroad and visited Latin America, the Caribbean, Hawaii, Guam, the Philippines, China, Japan, Europe, Turkey, Greece and the Holy Land.

Much of his time was also devoted to his interest in the Panama Canal and the Panama Canal Society, which he helped found in 1936. He also founded and was president of the National Park to Park Highway Association which furthered a cause that he had already begun in Congress. The Mayflower Society was another pastime of both Thatchers, and they each became national of-

169. Conv. Record, 90 Cong., 1 Sess., H459 (Aug-
ficers in the group at different times. In Congress it had been Thatcher who sponsored legislation that made Plymouth Rock a national shrine. Time was also found for involvement in the Sons of the American Revolution and the Kentucky Society of Washington.

It was as a lobbyist on Capitol Hill that Thatcher would make his most significant contributions to the causes and organizations in which he had become involved. On numerous occasions he lobbied for increases in medical and retirement benefits for present and past employees of the Isthmian Canal Commission. As late as 1970 at age 100, Thatcher appeared before a House committee in behalf of H.R. 7517 "which gave "alien" employees, mostly West Indies blacks, the same benefits as other employees."150 Said Thatcher to a newspaper reporter, "I have always been anxious to serve the underdogs, men and women who through no fault of their own are driven into want and need."151

From 1939 until 1969 Thatcher served as unpaid General Counsel to the Gorgas Memorial Institute and saw it grow into the most prestigious center in the world for the study of tropical diseases. On several occasions he lobbied to increase the annual contribution of the United States until at his death the

151. Ibid.
amount totaled $500,000 annually.

In 1962 a bridge was completed across the Panama Canal at the site where the Thatcher Ferry had been. Panamanian authorities hoped to name the bridge for a Latin and the controversy sparked riots, but Congress felt otherwise and the $20 million bridge was officially named the Thatcher Ferry Bridge. Clarence Cannon insisted that the bridge be named for his friend because "it placed honor where honor is due." Thaddeus Thatcher journeyed to Panama for the opening ceremonies, and on another trip to Panama he purchased and donated a children's park to his favorite town, Armijan. On the way home he was honored at a testimonial dinner by 1,500 members of the Panama Canal Society of Florida and was presented the Golden Key to the Locks award. Thatcher also wrote an article for the society's magazine in which he warned against any move to cede the Canal Zone back to Panama.

The second most prominent cause to which Thatcher devoted his lobbying efforts was in behalf of his National Park to Park Highway Association. While in Congress he had succeeded in getting 2,000 miles of highway designated as the National Park Highway System. The route started at Front Royal, Virginia and proceeded along Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Moun-

tains, across the Smokies and up through Cumberland Gap to Hodgenville, Kentucky and the Lincoln Memorial. From there it headed south to Mammoth Cave and, by way of the old Natchez Trace, it ended in Natchez, Mississippi.

The original system consisted of various federal and state highways which were simply designated as part of the system. But Thatcher had a more permanent and worthwhile project in mind. His goal was a 1,400 mile system of federally built super highways constructed between the major points of the original route.

Thatcher lobbied Kentucky Congressman Gene Siler and Senator John Sherman Cooper for help in getting a feasibility study done. In 1962 before the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs he stated that the parkway, "...would give us approximately 1,400 miles of continuous parkway without trucks and without hot dog stands and billboards anywhere along the right of way."154 A feasibility study was completed in 1967 but nothing was done due to Vietnam war budget cuts.155

In September of 1960, at age ninety, Thatcher drove himself and Mrs. Thatcher to Plymouth, Massachusetts

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for the annual meeting of the Congress of Mayflower Descendants of which he was parliamentarian. One night after a meeting there was a power failure at their motel due to Hurricane Diana, and Anne Bell Thatcher fell and fractured her elbow. After an ambulance trip back to Washington and three weeks of recuperation in a hospital, she returned to their apartment. The elbow was slow to heal and on October 19, 1960 she died suddenly at age eighty-four. Burial was at the Frankfort Cemetery in Kentucky, and she was interred on a hill overlooking the state capitol and her girlhood home. Mr. Thatcher continued to live at the apartment and tended his wife's Sosnales and Philodendrons. A visitor in 1968 called the apartment; "good taste of an earlier era."

Thatcher's interest in poetry writing never waned, and even with his other activities he managed to find more time for it after leaving Congress. An article in an August 1969 issue of The Washington Post was headlined, "Lawyer at 93-May Turn Poet." By that time he estimated that he had written over 1,000 verses in classic quatrains and in sonnet form. Thatcher indicated a desire to publish a volume of his verse but stated that since so much of his time was given to his "public duties of official nature " that any fame he

achieved in poetry would have to be posthumous in nature. Provision for publication of a collection of his poetry was made a part of his will, and in 1974 Walter E. Barton, the executor of his estate and a close friend, collected and had printed a volume for private distribution entitled Maurice H. Thatcher: An Autobiography in Poetry.

Each year Thatcher wrote a Christmas poem, many of which were printed in such publications as the Congressional Record, the National Park Courier, The Pilson Club History Quarterly and the Panama Canal Society's Canal Record. His poetry included such subjects as Kentucky history and each of the National Parks, the Panama Canal and the men who built it, Masonry and other subjects of a patriotic nature. Since he did write about his life and the subjects that influenced and which influenced him, the title chosen by Mr. Barton, Autobiography in Poetry, was an apt one.

In the last ten years of his life Thatcher began to collect his papers and mementos and hired an archivist, Mr. Charles Havlena, to put them in order. Havlena labored for three years at Thatcher's law office collating and cataloguing the newspapers that had been saved. What resulted were seventy-eight volumes of scrapbooks covering all aspects of Thatch-

ar's career. Other items in the collection were books, pictures, medals, awards, and a number of walking canes, including one presented by President Truman. In 1962 Thatcher made a special trip to Kentucky looking for a suitable place at which to leave them.\textsuperscript{158} He visited the University of Kentucky, the Kentucky Historical Society and The Filson Club in Louisville. In the end, however, he decided to bequeath what became the Thatcher Collection to the Scottish Rite Temple in Washington, and two-thirds of his modest estate was left for its maintenance.\textsuperscript{159}

In the last few years of his life Thatcher had attained some notoriety in Washington among members of Congress who had been lobbied by him, among Panama Canal buffs who recognized the contributions he had made to their cause, and among conservationists whose ideas he had supported. There had also been several news articles about him, and all were amazed at his longevity.

In 1970, on his 100th birthday, a testimonial dinner was held for him at the Cosmos Club. Two hundred persons heard the Marine Band and a musical adaptation of one of his poems, "O Come Ye Back to Panama,"

\textsuperscript{159} Interview with Walter E. Barton, June 20, 1978.
done by his cousin, Howard Thatcher, a Baltimore composer. 160 Three speakers spoke on different aspects of their distinguished friend's life and a representative of the Governor of the Canal Zone presented him with the First Order of the Panama Canal Service Order, and made him the first Honorary Governor of the Zone. He could add the medal to an already impressive collection that included the highest civilian orders from Panama, Ecuador and Venezuela.

At age 101 Thatcher gave up his law practice and his office. A broken leg suffered on a trip to Europe years earlier forced him to walk with a cane, but visitors were still impressed with his clarity of mind and his booming voice.

From his apartment he continued to write poetry, supervise the collection of his papers and to receive frequent visitors. In 1972, accompanied by his secretary, Mrs. Jackie Norman, Thatcher attended the inauguration of President Nixon and was presented to the president at a White House reception. The inauguration was the sixth one that he had attended since Taft's in 1909. Nixon would also be the last president from whom Thatcher would receive a customary pen from a bill signing ceremony, an indication that he had been instrumental in the passage of the legislation.

and he possessed fifteen in all.

His poem of Christmas of 1972 expressed doubts as to how long his life would continue, and he wondered aloud how long it would be before life's mysteries would be unveiled to him. At his age and because of his frailty of body, death could come suddenly, and the poem was to be his last one. Soon after, he suffered a fall at his apartment and at 10:15 a.m. on January 6, 1973 he died.\footnote{161}

At his death he was the oldest living former member of Congress and the only surviving member of the Isthmian Canal Commission who had actually supervised the construction of the Canal. His only surviving relatives were his aging cousin, Howard Thatcher of Baltimore, and a niece by marriage, Mrs. Franklin C. Mason of Frankfort.\footnote{162} The funeral was at the Lee Funeral Home in Washington and burial was at the Frankfort cemetery next to his wife and near the graves of William C. Bradley and Daniel Boone.\footnote{163}

On the occasion of his ninety-ninth birthday Thatcher told a newspaper interviewer, “I don't lay any claims to a great career, but I've done some useful things. I tried to be useful wherever I was and

\footnote{161. \textit{Louisville Courier-Journal}, January 7, 1973.}
\footnote{162. ibid.}
\footnote{163. ibid.}
and whatever I did. I've lived a busy and useful life. 

APPENDIX

KENTUCKY: A TRIBUTE

(The original poem was read by E.H. Thatcher at the banquet given him by Kentucky friends, at the Galt House, in Louisville, Kentucky on the evening of May 2, 1910, on the eve of his departure for Panama. In 1943 some revision of the poem was made, and a few verses added.)

Kentucky, O Kentucky,
Thy fame hath traveled far!
In all the mighty civic sky
There is no brighter star.

A primal wedge, they Founders
Moved West from Eastern Bound
To win and hold vast realms, and rich,-
New commonwealths we found.

The wars have wrought their ravage;
Red has thou run with gore;
Yet virtue springs from struggle's soil,
And blesseth evermore.

Thou wert the bond and border
Betwixt the sections, twin,
When pulsed the tides of civil strife
To deluge thy domain.

One Son thou sent: Southward;
To North, another Son,-
The fisticfidal hosts to lead
Till War's grim work was done;

And a reunited people,
Bearing a single name,-
Came forth to march beneath one flag,
And share a common fate.

Thy bands of skill and valor,
In Buckskin, Blue and Gray,
And Nicki, live eternally;
Their strength be ours, we pray.
Thine epic past we treasure;
Thy future must be great;
Our prayers and tears, our sacred blood,
To thee we consecrate.

We love thee for thy Lincoln,
George Rogers Clark, and Clay;
For Boone, and all the master folk
Who made thine early day.

And for thy noble daughters,
Who, from the first, have played
Their matchless roles, we're thankful that
Thou mad'st them unafraid.

The cross and shame thou knowest,
And dark Sodom'sane;
Thou, too, has known transfigured heights,
Where God consumed thy thee.

Thou has no pallid virtues
To sap thy sturdy soul;
Thy faults are those of worths, untamed,
And needeth but control.

Thy force, O learn to curb it,
And guide with easy rein;
Thenceforth the days and years may be
Devoid of scar and stain.

The golden urn of his'try
Is filled with precious dust
Of those who died for thee and thine,
In causes hallowed, just.

Kentucky, O Kentucky,
Thy children hold thee dear!
Pour out the ointments of thy love
On all who labor here!

Almighty Spirit, Father,
We kneel and pray to Thee;
Bless this, Thy State, and Thine, Thine Own,
And keep them strong and free.

H.I.T., December 3, 1942
GREEN RIVER
(Inscribed to All Those of Kentucky's Green River Section, Wherever They May Be.)

Roll onward, ever onward, O rare and lovely stream,
Past sheering cliff and canyon, thru "Egypt's" valley land;
Cleave thou the forest spaces, and pluck the sun's own beam.
To wear it in thy bosom—a precious rainbow strand;
Ever deep and full thy current; and gentle is thy flow,
Save when the tides, at freshest, arise and overleap
The strong and high embankments, and in wide circles go
To bring the jutting landscapes into thy onward sweep.

The cottonwood and willow, the elm and sycamore,
Attend thee on thy journey, as friends along the way;
They sway in salutation, from ever-winding shore;
In mired tones thou speakest, their greetings to repay.
From primal sources spinning, thru cave-lands vondrous vast,
(Rich tributaries swell thy onward-stretching wave);
Past Nolin and the Barren, thru doubline lands, at last.
Thy thread of beauty endeth where broader currents flow.

Thine is the proud distinction—it's thine, and thine alone,
"Long streams of navigation upon the earthly ball,
To pierce and serve a region, a recreation zone,
Established in a nation to bless the needs of all.
The hidden Seventh-Wonder—within this noble park—
Well known to ev'ry country as peerless and sublime,
Fours forth its rivered waters from depths of caverned dark,
To join thee in thy currents, as endless as is time.

In Butler's sacred precincts I've known thee long and well;
"Twas there that thou didst teach me things elemental to share;
By day and night, the twelve-month, I've lived within thy spell;
And recollections, treasured, oft bring themselves to bear.
I've seen the lakes and rivers in lands remote and strange,
In tropic realms, and tempests—on Jordan's holy tide;
And when I gazed upon them my inward eye did range
To find thy verdant image—and straight I thrilled with pride.

But years have wrought obstruction to ancient usefulness;
The steamboat age, so gracious, seems now forever gone;
Inventions, many, banish what once did please and bless;
Us marvel if the present be afterglow or dawn.
Thine elder charms may linger, the much hath passed from view—
For works of man have marred thee and all thy native worth:
The modern generation o'er seeks to find the new,
And thus the order alters in e'ry part of earth.
They count themselves thy children, all those that hold thee dear.

There or they are for distance but girds the constant heart;
There is no keener vision than that which doth appear
In men's eyes quickened by the light which thought of old impart.

And so I pay this tribute, as one of those, thy son;
And however halting such reeling lines may be,-
The kind, discerning reader will not what spirit runs,
Thru all their length, and pardon this song of love for thee.

M.H.T., April 3, 1936

GORGAS

God's own Samaritan, intrepid, true;
With Christly sympathy and love for all,
And wisely skilled, he wrote Health's page anew,
And lifted from the earth its foulest pall.
Where pestilence and plague took direst toll,
His magic touch brought life and strength and joy;
In Tastrian realms, where rival oceans roll,
His blessed arts; for good he did employ.

And lo! the link that joins the water twins
(The way to Ind, thru all the ages hid!) Grow into form, and stretched from main to main,
By reason of the deathless work he did.-
And more than this— the wondrous deeds he wrought,
The tent-s became whereby the world is taught!

M.H.T., October 14, 1936

GAILLARD

His soul illumined at Duty's altar-glow;
Efficient, tireless in his giant's task;
By trials taxed more than the world could know,-
He met his toils just as his heart would ask.
Unto a work the greatest known to face,-
His all he gave; of life he was bereft
(O martyr of the Ditch!) And now his name
Decrees and honors Tastria's mighty cliff,
Each ship that sails from sea to haunted sea,
Is witness of his worth and usefulness.
His monument is there, and e'er shall be;
To mark the price at which was bought success.
The earth's his debtor: its due it cannot pay,-
But never shall his glory pass away.

M.H.T., December 23, 1936
INSCRIBED TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Our national parks are bits of Paradise,
Created by the hand of God, to be
that man, at length has come to realize
As Nature's richest realms, untamed and free,
And full-designed to serve his need and pleasure;
And therefore set apart. The terrains vast,
Of awesome majesty in matchless measure,
Are vested with a beauty unsurpassed.
These mountains, hills, streams, lakes, and sea-washed zone;
These mighty chasms and buttes, all iris-hued;
These boundless, sculptured caverns, deep and long;
Woods, groves, and monarachs with deathless life endued;
Cooming into a wondrous, magic whole
Of healing for the body, mind, and soul.

M.H.T.

LARGEST CAVES OF KENTUCKY

Caverns immense, wrought thru the endless ages?
What lessons for the human soul and mind?
The great Lord God, in these arresting pages,
 Hath wri't a matchless story for mankind;
A story of His purpose, never-failing—
However slow unto its end it moves.
Here, in the sable bushes, e'er-prevailing,
The skill and power of His law We prove.
Thus water's urge this realm of rock was hollowed;
By drop and drip these decorations grew;
From simplest process largest segments followed,
Until, at last, they came to mortal view.
Yet nothing here is finished, and may not be
Till bounds be fixed for Time's eternity!

M.H.T., December 25, 1909

A CONGRESSMAN'S LOT

A Congressman's lot! Who can portray it?
Inters and with all-revealing art?
Hold up the scales in evenness to weigh it?
Or read the soils of which it is a part?
Deemed is the Congressman for doing; for tock;
He's double-damned. So, he must learn to thrive
On curses vile, however much they tax
His fortitude; else, he cannot survive.
Mesenger for all, his calloused feet may know
Their rest within the grave, but scarce before.
Tireless purveyor, unless his skill can show
Miracles of "loaves and fishes," how poor,
To many, seen his toils; and when life's done
A line-a name misspelled-oblivion!

M.H.T., June 14, 1935

STATESMISHIP

O consecrate thy life unto the public weal;
Oh, ever, ever roll to serve a people's hope;
With greed and need and hate, O do thou ever care.
And live so close to men that they heart shall always feel
The moving strength and thrill of humanity's appeal.

O never in the caves of selfish interest grope,
But do thou climb unto the high and sunny slope
Whose templed top is Truth, where Christ and Lincoln kneel:
A nobler task than this no mortal will can find.

O do thou strive for eye which quickened mind and heart;
To lead, by certain law, all that is cruel, blind;
To loose by certain law bonds holding men apart.

To serve the State is priesthood. A part of heaven's plan,
That men, thus work for men, shall serve the cause of MAN.

M.H.T., Christmas, 1907

THE LAST MILESTONE

Twelve months and more beyond my hundredth year-
And I survive! I seek to carry on
The many tasks I have, with mind yet clear
And heart still warm, and thought of soul aglow-
So far as I can note. Kind friends assurance make
That these dear attributes with me remain
With undiminished force. Meanwhile I take
Some liberties with Nature's role to gain
The goals that I have set for usefulness,
Which till and dedication may achieve.
My hope has been that modest deeds might bless
Some most in need, and worthy to receive.
Thus have I strived, and I have sought to know
How best to serve a world of care and use.

M.H.T. Inscribed to the Builders, Operators and
Defenders of the Panama Canal and Guest at Panama
Canal Society's Luncheon, October 10, 1971.
CHRISTMAS 1967

My last was not, in truth, my last, despite Expectancy and what computers say—
For oftentimes skilled Nature takes delight In adding to long lease a lengthened day,
Life's like a lottery where Chances bestrate The prizes and the blanks with unconcern A few may win; the losing masses those Who, from the drawings, empty-handed, turn.
By judgment is, and still remain, the same As heretofore on this recurrent date.
Mankind is steeped in bitterness and shame—
In ratio to its failure to equate With Galilean ethics of the past,
Which, deathless are, and must be—first and last.

M.H.T.

1972

First day, first month of nineteen seventy-two.
The year ahead unclear for chance and choice! Whether we live or die, we cannot view What may emerge to cause us to rejoice,
Or else, launt. 'Tis best for none to know
The future's scroll, and all its mystery.
The laws whereby we come, and live and go, Where planned and fashioned, as they had to be.
And every human creature, while in life,
Should learn and heed the lessons of the past;
The ancient texts apply to modern strife—
They were bestrung; thus timeless they last.
All those who fail to choose the proven path.
Must bear, persevere, the cross and crown of worth!

M.H.T.
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