



Harry H. Woodring, *right*, the Democratic governor running for reelection, did not benefit from Franklin D. Roosevelt's coattails in 1932. Roosevelt, *center*, and James N. Garner, *left*, Democratic candidates for president and vice-president, were elected by a margin of more than 74,000 votes in Kansas.

Fifty Years On: The Politics of Kansas in 1932

Donald R. McCoy

FIFTY years ago, in 1932, the nation suffered one of the most dismal years in its history. Kansas provides a good example of how bad things were. Employment was approaching its rock-bottom low. Per capita income had dropped from \$535 in 1929 to \$268. Farmers often failed to earn their cost of production, with wheat prices averaging thirty-three cents a bushel and corn twenty-seven cents.¹ Almost everyone was scrambling to keep sources of income from disappearing or, if they had vanished, to find new ones. It was a time of tremendous enterprise, but also it was a time of dismay as effort and innovation frequently failed to preserve one's economic assets.

Complaints were common, but accompanying them were signs that Kansans had abandoned neither their fortitude nor their sense of concern. Richard M. Long of the *Wichita Eagle* wrote to U.S. Sen. George S. McGill during the 1931 Christmas season, "Business is rotten in your old home town. The merchants are crabbing. They say that they had estimated a light business, but not one so light. Several merchants have told me that the bulk of purchases run a dollar or under." Publisher Rolla A. Clymer had lamented in his *El Dorado Times* the demise of the old-fashioned pant hanger. An Iola storekeeper sent him two of the hangers in January 1932, observing that "the demand has decreased, due to the fact, that while there are still as many men, the men have fewer pants. . . . If you are fortunate enough to have more than two pair of pants let me know and I'll send more hangers. Thanks to Mr. Hoover, I only have one pair, and they are getting thin in places."²

A publisher wrote Clymer in April, commenting that people had told him how much grief he had avoided by selling his newspaper. "They were right for the most part. The only thing I have to worry about now is to avoid starving. The property for which I traded my paper has turned out to be more of a liability than an asset, and I can't sell it." He was looking for work, and all he asked was "mere living expenses." Then there were those who were looking for jobs for others. L. N. Flint of the University of Kansas Department of Journalism wrote of his seniors, "Just what our boys are going to do for a living, I don't know. The same question hangs over the head of every University graduate this year." There was also the brief rage for Grohoma, a hybrid sorghum which supposedly would grow bountifully even under drought conditions. One of the sellers of its seed in Kansas complained to U. S. Sen. Arthur Capper that the Department of Agriculture was fighting this miracle crop and wanted to know why. The answer, well documented, was that Grohoma had proved a bit inferior in tests to many other sorghums. More important was that its seed price was vastly inflated, running fifty cents a pound compared to two or three cents for other sorghum seed.³

Some of the bad news took the form of exchanges. One Republican worthy wrote Clymer that he could not attend his party's national convention because "[I] am harder up than I have been for twenty years." Clymer replied, "I, too, am lower than I have been for many years in a financial way, and the heck of it is that things are getting no better fast." The Sage of Emporia, William Allen White, con-

This article was the author's presidential address before the annual meeting of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka, October 19, 1982.

1. *Kansas Statistical Abstract 1977* (Lawrence: Institute for Social and Environmental Studies, University of Kansas, 1977), p. 129; Kansas State Board of Agriculture, *Kansas Agriculture: Centennial Report* (Topeka: State Printer, 1962), pp. 517-518.

2. Richard M. Long to George S. McGill, December 21, 1931, "Richard M. Long Collection," box 3, McGill 1931-1939 file, manuscript department, Kansas State Historical Society; W. F. Seneker to Rolla A. Clymer, January 14, 1932, "Rolla A. Clymer Collection," box 9, manuscript department, Kansas State Historical Society.

3. Conard Reeves to Clymer, April 20, 1932; L. N. Flint to Clymer, May 4, 1932, "Clymer Collection"; Eva F. Miller to Arthur Capper, March 30, 1932; C. W. Warburton to Capper, April 13, 1932, "Arthur Capper Collection," box 32, manuscript department, Kansas State Historical Society.

Charles Curtis (1860-1936), *below right*, part Kansa Indian, served as vice-president under Herbert Hoover. Despite the appeal of a native son on the ticket, Kansans voted for a change in 1932. The political advertisement, *below*, appeared in the Topeka *Daily Capital* October 16, 1932.



Kansas Will Stand By Hoover and Curtis!

They are safely guiding the ship of state through the storm. Though the lighthouse of economic recovery is in sight there are still rocks ahead that may wreck us as they have several foreign nations in the same troubled sea. To change pilots now would be foolhardy, so Kansas will stand by Hoover and Curtis.



The 50 Years of Public Service of Our Own Fellow Kansan Are Not Easily Forgotten!

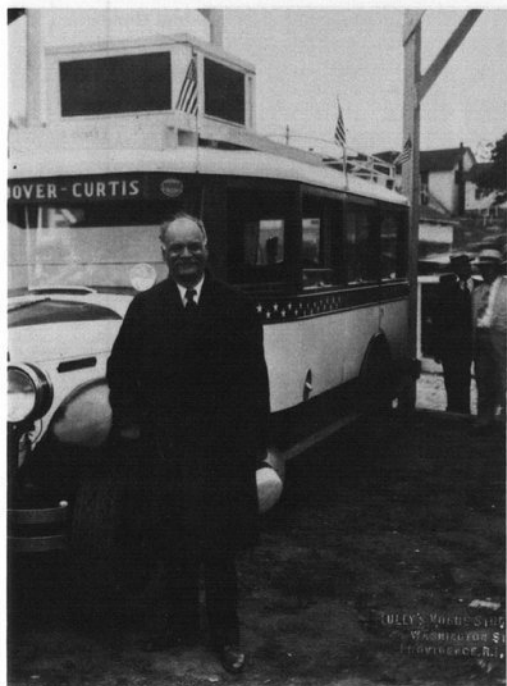
Kansas tried out Charley Curtis for more than 40 years in positions of public trust where he faithfully performed. Then the nation recognized this service and elected him to the second highest public office in the United States. A great political party again nominated him for the same position. Now, are we to repudiate this high honor that has come to Kansas? Decidedly NO! Kansas will stand by Curtis.



KANSAS IS NOT AN INGRATE



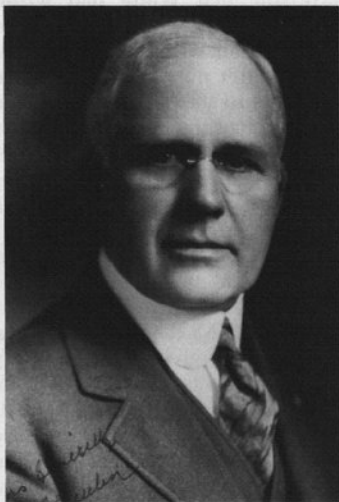
THIS AD SPONSORED BY APPRECIATIVE KANSANS OF ALL POLITICAL FAITHS



veyed his hope to Clymer "that business isn't as bad with you as it is with me." It is not surprising that White had written Senator Capper, "We are faced with a condition of starvation, not with a theory of economics. And it is a matter now of weeks or at the most of months until starvation will begin to emotionalize our politics, and hell will be popping before frost." In pressing for work for the unemployed, White warned that matters were "going to reach a breaking point . . . when the hungry and cold call in the armed gangsters and are directed by the ruthless Communists."⁴

WHAT WAS the state of politics in Kansas in 1932, given these conditions and apprehensions? For one thing, Republican leaders were often downhearted and Democratic leaders optimistic about their election chances in November. The Democrats had won the governorship with banker Harry H. Woodring and a United States senatorship with attorney George McGill in 1930. The nation's economy had deteriorated badly since then, and Pres. Herbert Hoover was being widely blamed for it, a blame that was spreading to most Republicans. In January 1932 Hugh C. Gresham of the Cheney *Sentinel* wrote that in Kansas "the 1930 campa[i]gn was unfortunute [sic] and unless there is a change in front the 1932 campaign will also be against the Republocans [sic]." William Allen White believed that Hoover would be a great handicap for whichever Kansas Republican ran for the Senate. "The President is being unjustly blamed for an economic subsidence that is world wide, cataclysmic and inevitable," but blamed he was, and one would do well not to share it with him. A great deal of criticism was aimed at Congress, and not without reason. As Republican Arthur Capper conceded in a radio speech in February, "There is a lot of confusion here in Congress. There is a lot of confusion over the country. There is a lot of tumult; a lot of shouting." Collector of Internal Revenue H. H. Motter of Wichita reported to Republican Cong. Clifford R. Hope in June that

4. Thomas E. Thompson to Clymer, July 6, 1932; Clymer to Thompson, July 7, 1932; William Allen White to Clymer, August 3, 1932. "Clymer Collection"; William Allen White to Capper, May 23, 1932, "William Allen White Correspondence," no. 683 (red), Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (microfilm ms. 48, Kansas State Historical Society).



Ben S. Paulen (1869-1961), *left*, a banker and former governor, was nominated by the Republicans to oppose the reelection bid of George McGill (1879-1963), *right*, to the U.S. Senate. The Democrat defeated Hoover's surrogate in Kansas by a margin of more than 26,000 votes.

"in the main Congress is not in the best standing among the common people." Hope replied, "It is certainly sad but true," adding that congressmen know they "are in a bad situation and are trying to figure some way out and, incidentally, some way out for themselves politically."⁵

The Democrats were clearly not worrying as much as the Republicans. Elected in 1930 to fill Vice-Pres. Charles Curtis's unexpired term, Senator McGill was facing the voters again in 1932. Richard Long wrote him in January to report that the man who had been secretary to former Gov. Ben Paulen believed his old boss did not stand a chance of election to the Senate in 1932, which reinforced McGill's optimism. As Senator McGill later

wrote to Long, "the campaign should be one against Hoover and the Hoover administration. I fail to see how Kansas could possibly go to Hoover again." Governor Woodring told his party's Washington Day banquet that "this is the Democratic year when we will overthrow the rule of the present Republican leadership and return the control of this great nation to the people." Things were moving rapidly, and in favor of the Democrats. As one Republican worker wrote in April, "I am afraid for the final election. I believe that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Republicans are going Democratic. I have had a number of them give me a cussing, when I tried to talk to them. The farmers are *Hot*, they are selling brood sows for \$2.00 and \$3.00 per head."⁶

All this was complicated by other matters.

5. Hugh C. Gresham to Clymer, January 16, 1932, "Clymer Collection"; White to Henry J. Allen, March 4, 1932; White to Milton F. Amrine, May 2, 1932, "White Correspondence," no. 663 (red); Capper speech, WIBW, Topeka, February 16, 1932, "Capper Collection," box 50; H. H. Motter to Clifford Hope, June 14, 1932; Hope to Motter, June 16, 1932, "Clifford Hope Collection," box 39, manuscript department, Kansas State Historical Society.

6. Long to George McGill, January 20, 1932; McGill to Long, March 18, 1932, "Long Collection," box 3; Woodring speech, Washington Day banquet, January 22, 1932, "Harry H. Woodring Collection," Kansas Collection, University of Kansas, Lawrence; H. R. Allen to Alfred M. Landon, April 22, 1932, "Alfred M. Landon Collection," box 138, manuscript department, Kansas State Historical Society.

Republicans in Congress often saw themselves being burdened politically by the Hoover administration even though the Democrats had organized the House of Representatives. It was the Republicans, in control of the executive branch and, barely, of the Senate, who were being blamed for America's economic tailspin. This is why Senator McGill was optimistic. Moreover, it partly explains Governor Woodring's mixed feelings, for there was the occasional fear that all incumbents might be blamed for the depression. This was true, too, because Woodring had won in 1930 partly as a result of John R. Brinkley's powerful write-in candidacy for governor. Woodring had to wonder what would happen if Brinkley ran again in 1932 or even if he did not, given the state's usual large Republican majorities. Regarding Brinkley, the governor was not alone, for the spectre of another independent candidacy also distressed Republicans.

THEN THERE was the question of oil, with Kansas ranking fourth among the nation's producing states. Not only had prices dropped disastrously since the onset of the depression, but many small producers had been threatened with being cut off from their markets. In late 1930 and throughout 1931 a prominent Independence oil man and Republican, Alfred M. Landon, had been the prime leader in pressuring the government and the major petroleum companies to bring relief to the Kansas oil fields. Governor Woodring and many other Kansas political leaders had worked smoothly with this oil crusade. During 1931 it resulted in the guarantee of a share of the market for small producers and the enactment of a state law to regulate intrastate oil pipelines and to adjust production to demand. This helped, but Kansans demanded more—no less than a tariff to restrict the flow of cheap foreign oil into the United States. They failed to achieve this in 1931. The proposal returned, however, with the opening of the Seventy-second Congress in December 1931. Yet prospects for the enactment of the tariff seemed poor a month later. As GOP Cong. Harold McGugin reported in January 1932, "It is apparent that the Republican Administration is against us. . . . The Dem-

ocratic leadership in the Congress is likewise against us."⁷

Tempers were running high in Kansas as Democrats and Republicans blamed monopolism and easterners for stymieing an oil tariff. McGugin reflected this in a letter to a New Jersey editor:

We have been sending Republican Congressmen to Washington for a good many years. We have been voting for tariffs for eastern industry. In the light of the attitude of you eastern states on the oil and copper tariffs, I am hoping to see the day when I can vote to junk the tariffs for eastern industry. If you people are not going to be fair enough to favor a tariff on our commodities, then I want to see the time when you and your industry are down in the same common mire of poverty with oil and copper.

This was not a partisan issue, for the Kansas oil crusaders especially noted that New York Democrats, including Gov. Franklin D. Roosevelt, were working against the oil tariff favored in the West. The oil tariff was defeated several times. It kept springing back, however, finally in March 1932 as an excise tax on oil imports. In April the Senate Finance Committee first approved and then killed the tax, although the House had passed it. Senators Capper and McGill fought ardently for the tax. Finally, by June Congress agreed to a twenty-one-cents-a-barrel excise tax on imported crude oil as well as levies on gasoline and other foreign oil products.⁸ This would substantially reduce petroleum imports and strengthen the political appeal of those who fought notably hard to protect small oil producers. It would be particularly important for Landon because of his political leadership in fighting the federal government and the large petroleum companies on oil issues.

WHILE the oil battle was going on, the candidates for office were emerging. The idea of Landon for governor started to appear in the state's newspapers as early as April 1931. By September the former Republican state chairman began publicly discussing the problem of wheat farmers—a sure sign of im-

7. Donald R. McCoy, *Landon of Kansas* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), pp. 67-89; Topeka *Daily Capital*, January 10, 1932; Harold McGugin to Clymer, January 9, 1932, "Clymer Collection."

8. Harold McGugin to George W. Emot, February 11, 1932, enclosed in John M. Franklin to Clymer, February 29, 1932; Marvin Lee to Clymer, March 8, 1932, "Clymer Collection"; Topeka *Daily Capital*, May 19, 21, 1932; McCoy, *Landon of Kansas*, pp. 67-90.

pending candidacy in Kansas. The *Hiawatha World* declared in January 1932 that "he is as crazy to be Governor as a mule is to eat hay." Soon Landon announced his candidacy for the Republican gubernatorial nomination. His major opponent in the primary election was Lacey Simpson, a farmer who had spent eight years in the state legislature. Although Simpson had supported progressive Republican Gov. Clyde Reed for renomination in 1930, he was now the candidate of the conservative Republicans who had defeated Reed and his manager, Landon, in a bitterly fought primary election. In 1932 both Landon and Simpson would adopt the theme of party harmony.⁹

Democratic Governor Woodring seemed a natural candidate for renomination. Yet he headed the state's executive branch in increasingly hard times, and his party was far from united. Woodring had to cope with rumors, for example, that he was at odds with Senator McGill. When one of the senator's enemies approached Woodring with this, he denied it strongly, writing, "Your assumption is incorrect—the news or press reports are not based on any facts—news stories that is all. There is no discord—nor change of close personal & political friendship." McGill would have been surprised by the governor's view of the cordiality of their relationship. Another problem was that Woodring had early endorsed Franklin D. Roosevelt's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination. This flew in the face of the sentiment of many Kansas Democrats. As Senator McGill's ally, Richard Long, wrote in May, "The average Kansan is prejudiced against a New Yorker and then there are the Tammany scandals." Indeed, former Kansas Cong. Jouett Shouse, who was chairman of the Democratic National Executive Committee, was aligned with Roosevelt's opponents. Woodring not only fought hard for Roosevelt's nomination in June, but he carried most of the Kansas delegates in voting for Roosevelt's choice for permanent chairman of the Democratic National Convention, Sen. Thomas Walsh of Montana, against Shouse for the job. This infuriated many Democrats. One Kansas newspaper, the *Lyons News*, predicted that Woodring "will not be

elected again, for Kansas will not soon forgive him for his treatment of a man who has labored for twenty years for the success of the party."¹⁰

Most of Woodring's conservative Democratic foes rallied behind state Rep. Donald Muir during the gubernatorial primary election. Muir campaigned vigorously against Woodring, but he was unable to stir up much interest. The governor largely contented himself with tending to state business and offering a radio program which daily indicated that Kansas was in good and frugal hands with Woodring. This conserved the governor's resources for the general election, although it might have kept him less visible early in the 1932 campaign than he should have been. In any case, Woodring's efforts were enough to win the nomination in August over Muir, 91,037 to 42,786.¹¹

Landon's job was tougher, for Simpson also ran as a harmony candidate for the Republican gubernatorial nomination. It was not so much a case of the issues or even Woodring dividing them. All were for federal oil restriction, assistance to farmers and the unemployed, industrial development, governmental economy, and lower taxes. The challenge was to convince the voters that one could achieve these promises. Simpson tried to discredit Landon by portraying him as the candidate of William Allen White, monied interests, and those of questionable party loyalty. Few took the issue of money seriously. Simpson had a point on party loyalty, however, given White and Landon's involvement with the Progressive party in 1912 and 1914 and the Emporia publisher's independent candidacy for governor in 1924, backed by Landon. Simpson's problem was that the more he stressed this in his campaign, the less he seemed to be a harmony candidate. Landon did not make this mistake by attacking Simpson's conservative supporters. During his campaign Landon was able to make good the Garden City *Telegram's*

10. Draft of reply written on L. A. Brotton to Governor, January 2, 1932, "Woodring Collection"; Long to McGill, January 20, 1932, May 28, 1932, "Long Collection," box 3; *Wichita Morning Eagle*, June 27, 28, 29, 1932; *Topeka Daily Capital*, July 10, 1932; *Hays Daily News*, July 4, 1932; Keith D. McFarland, *Harry H. Woodring: A Political Biography of FDR's Controversial Secretary of War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1975), pp. 59-65, 79, 108-109.

11. McFarland, *Harry H. Woodring*, pp. 68-69; Kansas Secretary of State, *Twenty-Eighth Biennial Report, 1931-1932* (Topeka: State Printer, 1932), pp. 58-61.

9. McCoy, *Landon of Kansas*, pp. 93-96.

description of him as "a plain, everyday citizen with a lot of ability, a lot of stick-to-itiveness and a vast capacity for making and holding friends by his earnestness and sincerity." Also attractive was his emphasis on "building up the state instead of tearing it down" at a time when many candidates were critical of everything that they did not espouse. Moreover, his energy in campaigning was impressive. In a year when candidates did an extraordinary amount of traveling, Landon outdid everyone, making as many as ten stops a day. It helped, too, that just before the primary election a daughter, Nancy Jo, was born to the Landons, and that on the way home for this happy event Landon stopped to help carry furniture out of a burning farm house. Whatever the reasons, Landon won the nomination, polling 160,345 votes to 101,019 for Simpson.¹²

Then there was Dr. John R. Brinkley, the state's controversial, self-proclaimed rejuvenator of male potency. In 1930, after having had his medical license revoked for fraudulent practice, he had run a powerful write-in campaign for governor against the political establishment which he blamed for his troubles. He had finished a strong third, probably higher had not so many of his votes been discarded as invalid, and he had contributed to Woodring's election over the Republican nominee, Frank Haucke. Stories soon swept Kansas that Brinkley would try again in 1932, this time on the ballot as an independent candidate. By 1931 the goat-gland doctor had sold his Kansas radio station and developed a powerful new station, XER, in Mexico; he only administered his Milford hospital. He was open to the idea of running again for governor, however, as many Kansans and astrologers advised him to do. Many Democratic and Republican leaders were concerned since the 1932 elections could be close; Brinkley might even win this time. By January 1932 he indicated he would run, and until the general elections in November he was very much on the minds of Kansans. Republican State Committee Chairman John D. M. Hamilton was worried by April about reports of Brinkley's rising strength and the pessimism of some GOP leaders about beating

him for governor. By June Brinkley had stepped up his political efforts and issued a platform crammed full of populist-style promises. There were rumors that Brinkley's supporters, not having to nominate him by ballot, might be organized to defeat Landon and Woodring in the Republican and Democratic primary contests. There is no evidence that this was tried significantly, but it was unclear what the impact of Brinkley's candidacy would be by November. As Rolla Clymer wrote to a friend, "My reason tells me that Brinkley is a fearsome factor; my instinct leads me to believe . . . that surely the star of such a charlatan must be on the wane."¹³ Clymer should have trusted his reason, as events would prove.

THE REPUBLICAN primary election for U. S. senator turned out to be less interesting than it had initially promised to be. Stories that various GOP worthies would enter the contest continued until the filing deadline in June. Veteran Cong. Homer Hoch early considered becoming a candidate based on the assumption that Vice-President Curtis and former Sen. Henry J. Allen would not be candidates. Former Gov. Clyde Reed wrote William Allen White that, out of a sense of duty, he would not refuse the nomination. Other eminences who considered running included Allen, despite what Hoch believed; former Gov. Ben Paulen; Republican State Chairman John Hamilton; and Cong. Harold McGugin. Some Kansans also believed that Curtis, if denied renomination as vice-president, and long-time Republican National Committeeman David W. Mulvane might run. President Hoover was central to everybody's thoughts in connection with the senatorial race, most believing his record would seriously handicap the Republican candidate for the Senate.

¹³ Jack D. Walker, "The Goat Gland Surgeon: The Story of the Late John R. Brinkley," *Journal of the Kansas Medical Society*, Topeka, v. 57, no. 12 (December, 1956), pp. 749-755; Gerald Carson, *The Roguish World of Doctor Brinkley* (New York: Rinehart and Co., 1960), *passim*; Stan Moore, "The Goat-Gland Election: Kansas 1930," *Historicus, a Journal of History*, Lawrence, v. 1, no. 1 (1979), pp. 124-163; Francis W. Schruben, *Kansas in Turmoil, 1930-1936* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1969), pp. 28-40, 73-84; Evangeline Adams to John R. Brinkley, March 26, April 23, June 1, 1932; Frederick White to Brinkley, March 30, April 6, April 11, 1932; "John R. Brinkley Collection," box 1, manuscript department, Kansas State Historical Society; Topeka *Daily Capital*, July 31, 1932; John Hamilton to Clymer, April 27, 1932; Clymer to A. T. Ayres, July 14, 1932; "Clymer Collection."

¹² Topeka *Daily Capital*, January 21, 24, 27; May 1, 8, 20; July 19, 25, 27, 28, 30, 1932; McCoy, *Landon of Kansas*, pp. 96-102; Kansas Secretary of State, *Twenty-Eighth Biennial Report*, pp. 58-61.

Four

THE WICHITA EAGLE, SUNDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 6, 1932

IT'S A LANDSLIDE TO WOODRING!

KANSAS VOTERS who think clearly are no longer "on the fence" as far as this Governorship fight is concerned. It is clearly evident to all, save those who will not see, that ITS EITHER WOODRING OR TWO YEARS OF CHAOS!

Thousands of Republican men and women of Kansas have laid aside their partisanship and thrown their support to Harry H. Woodring, the only candidate with a real, constructive program for the advancement of the interests of the people of Kansas. In every county in Kansas today men can be found, IN PLENTIFUL NUMBERS, who have grown old in the service of the Republican Party, who are giving their wholehearted support to Woodring. Furthermore, Kansas Democracy is organized in the 105 counties as it has never been organized before.

In spite of the claims emanating from the Landon camp that there is harmony in the Republican Party this year, the cold fact remains that the Landon forces are demoralized. Too many of the supporters of Frank "Chief" Haucke WELL REMEMBER that in the 1930 campaign Landon deserted Haucke and gave his support to Woodring. The Haucke Republicans are now saying to the Landon people, "IF WOODRING WAS GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU TWO YEARS AGO, HE'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR US NOW!"

Woodring will carry every county that he carried two years ago. He has positively won the Sixth District, and the Big Seventh, which gave him but a small vote in 1930. In addition, he has made tremendous gains in Sedgwick, Butler, Reno, Sumner, McPherson and Kingman counties (in Wichita Beacon territory) and in these six counties



GOVERNOR HARRY WOODRING

he is no less than 22,000 votes stronger than he was two years ago. He is "one-two" in EVERY county in the state, and will not run as low as third in any one of the 105 counties. He bids fair to carry Shawnee County, and is no less than 4,000 votes stronger in Wyandotte County than he was two years ago. HIS VOTE IN SEDGWICK COUNTY WILL BE IN EXCESS OF 17,000, AS OPPOSED TO 6,900 IN 1930!

Alf Landon has made a complete tour of Kansas, but his visits in most of the cities and towns went practically unnoticed. IF LANDON IS AS STRONG AS HIS CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE WOULD HAVE YOU believe, WHY did they NOT ARRANGE A

MEETING IN THE WICHITA FORUM FOR HIM? The answer is easy! THERE would NOT have been a CORPORAL'S GUARD ON HAND TO HEAR HIM!

A few days ago a handful of Landon supporters gathered together to discuss plans whereby they might revive and pump some life into his "stone-dead" campaign, and they conceived the idea of placing the "Brinkley" scare before the eyes of Kansas voters. Hence, the "Landon or Brinkley" stories that have been in circulation the past few days. They suffer with the jitters so badly that THEY HAVE PUBLICLY LENT DIGNITY TO THE BRINKLEY CAMPAIGN!

Kansas people have not forgotten that the Democratic Party increased its 1932 primary vote some 75,000 over the vote of 1930, and that many thousand more people would have voted Democratic had they not been PREVENTED from doing so by the "Branding Iron" law (which the Democratic state platform seeks to repeal). BRINKLEY PEOPLE VOTED IN THE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY, but the Landon committee seems to completely ignore or overlook this fact.

The people of Kansas are not "falling" for this eleventh hour Landon propaganda that "the race is between Landon and Brinkley." It is very plainly evident that LANDON DOES NOT HAVE THE FIGHTING ORGANIZATION THAT HAUCKE HAD IN 1930. Landon enthusiasm is entirely lacking. Exactly fifteen (15) people turned out to a Landon meeting in Caldwell last week, and no more than six (6) or seven (7) at South Haven. Woodring talks to hundreds, AND SELLS HIMSELF, wherever he goes.

IT'S NEITHER BRINKLEY NOR LANDON. KANSAS WILL WIN WITH WOODRING!

He is no less than 70,000 votes stronger than he was two years ago, and that's more than plenty. Landon will have to struggle to beat Brinkley out of second place.

LANDON OR BRINKLEY!

Cast Your Vote in the Biggest Pile—The Republican Party Is the Dominant Party in Kansas This Year—A United Party!

THE NEXT GOVERNOR OF Kansas will be either Alf M. Landon or Dr. John R. Brinkley. Past history in Kansas has shown that Democratic candidates for governor win only when the Republican party has been split by factionalism. The Republican party this year

has restored harmony. Members of all factions are united behind the candidacy of Mr. Landon.

Past history also has shown that no Democrat ever has been re-elected governor of Kansas. Glick, Lewelling, Leedy and Hodges failed of re-election. Davis failed of re-election. Woodring will fail.

The Issue Therefore Is Landon or Brinkley!

The election of Dr. J. R. Brinkley as governor of Kansas would place at the head of the state government a man utterly inexperienced in government. Until his dispute over his medical license and his radio license two years ago it is doubtful that he gave much attention to politics or government.

If Dr. John R. Brinkley is elected governor of Kansas,

it will be because the majority, who are opposed to his election, will have been so divided among his two opponents as to make it possible for him to win.

This majority believes it would be disastrous for Kansas for Brinkley to become governor; that the state's reputation for good political judgment is at stake in this campaign.

THE WAY TO BEAT BRINKLEY IS TO VOTE FOR LANDON

Woodring won in 1930 by less than 1,000 votes. Fifty thousand Republicans who voted for Woodring, are now voting in the united party for Paulen and Landon. Alfred M. Landon is a successful Kansas business man. He will make a constructive, not a destructive, governor. He will accomplish good government, sound tax

relief measures and economies not by bluster and sound and fury, but by his ability to get along with men. He can co-operate with the legislature and receive the co-operation of the legislature. He has the confidence of all elements of the Kansas population: the farmer, the business man, the laboring man, the oil producer. They know that Alf Landon can get results.

For Governor—Alf M. Landon

This Advertisement Paid for by Friends of Alf M. Landon.

THINK THIS OVER!

1932 Primary Vote	
Alf M. Landon (R)	180,000
Dr. J. R. Brinkley (D)	170,000
James L. Stealy (R)	15,000
Total Republican Pkt. vote	365,000
Harry M. Woodring (D)	10,000
Robert M. La Follette (D)	10,000
William Egan (D)	10,000
Total Democrat primary vote	30,000
Alf M. Landon (R)	180,000
August Primary vote	180,000
Mr. Governor Stealy vote	10,000
Mr. Stealy-Landon vote	10,000
Mr. Governor in primary	10,000
Total indicated Landon vote on November 8	210,000
Gov. Harry M. Woodring (D)	10,000
August primary vote	10,000
Mr. Stealy-Landon vote	10,000
Mr. Governor in primary	10,000
Total indicated Woodring vote on November 8	30,000
Alf M. Brinkley (D)	170,000
Original half of non-votes	10,000
Mr. of non-votes	10,000
August primary vote	10,000
Mr. Stealy-Landon vote	10,000
Mr. Governor in primary	10,000
Total indicated Brinkley vote on November 8	190,000
Mr. Stealy vote	10,000
One Brinkley 80% of this vote	8,000
One Brinkley 20% of this vote	2,000
Brinkley-Stealy vote	10,000
One Landon 80% of this vote	8,000
One Brinkley 20% of this vote	2,000
One Brinkley 80% of this vote	10,000
Approximate 1930 vote did not vote for Landon or Brinkley. One of the three candidates mentioned of the remaining 100,000. About 100,000 based on a vote of approximately 100,000. It is probable that we are getting to give each candidate 100,000 and so our vote will be 100,000.	

The biggest political question in Kansas in 1932 concerned the outcome of the gubernatorial election. Democratic incumbent Woodring and Alfred M. Landon, Republican candidate and former party chairman, both urged defeat for the controversial independent, Dr. John R. Brinkley. The Woodring advertisement, *left*, appeared in the *Wichita Eagle*, November 6, 1932; the Landon advertisement, *above*, in the *Salina Journal*, November 2, 1932.

Nevertheless the Kansas GOP leaders rallied behind the president, partly for lack of an acceptable alternative and partly to support Curtis for renomination as vice-president. Kansas Republicans in their district and state conventions thus elected delegates pledged to vote for Hoover and Curtis at the national convention. By March, though, after the state convention, William Allen White assessed his party's chance of winning the Senate seat at no better than forty percent. He described the front-runner, Ben Paulen, as "a dud." Indeed the former governor did not seriously think of starting his campaign until April, and it was to be leisurely even after that. No other outstanding Republican leader ran for the sena-

torial nomination, but Paulen did not lack opposition. Far from it, for six other Republicans entered the primary contest, most importantly a well-known spokesman for agricultural interests, Joseph H. Mercer. Although Paulen finished well ahead of the runner-up, Mercer, he won the nomination in August with only thirty-six percent of the votes cast.¹⁴

14. Homer Hoch to Jess C. Denious, December 4, 1931, "Jess C. Denious Collection," box 1, manuscript department, Kansas State Historical Society; Clyde Reed to White, December 16, 1931, "William Allen White Papers," manuscript division, Library of Congress; White to Milton F. Amrine, May 2, 1932; White to Henry J. Allen, March 4, March 9, May 27, 1932; White to Harold L. Ickes, March 17, 1932, "White Correspondence," nos. 675, 663, 662, 680, 669 (red); *Hays Daily News*, March 8, 1932; Ben S. Paulen to Sherman G. Elliott, April 13, 1932, "Landon Collection"; Kansas Secretary of State, *Twenty-Eighth Biennial Report*, pp. 38-42.



Calling for "national planning in agriculture," Roosevelt campaigned in Kansas with Woodring, *above*, and McGill, *below*. On September 14, 1932, the Democratic presidential nominee spoke to a crowd of ten thousand in Topeka and many thousands more on the radio.



As for Curtis, Hoover did not dump him from the national ticket. There were, however, many other Republicans who wanted to replace the seventy-three-year-old vice-president when their national convention met in the middle of June. Discussion centered on former Vice-Pres. Charles G. Dawes. When Dawes stated during the convention that he would not accept the nomination, that clinched renomination for Curtis. The convention overwhelmingly renominated Hoover for president, and Curtis won against scattered opposition. The ambivalence in Kansas about Curtis's renomination was mirrored in an editorial in the *Hays Daily News*: "An Eastern candidate and a younger man would have been of great help to the national ticket. . . . Just the same party loyalty is a fine and a necessary thing. . . ." ¹⁵ Curtis would return to Kansas to accept his nomination for vice-president and again for a spot of campaigning before election day in November. Otherwise Kansans would usually ignore their ranking political figure, Republicans because he was the lesser albatross on their national ticket, others because he seemed an antediluvian presence.

Democratic Sen. George McGill was optimistic about winning reelection, although his campaign was short of money. For one thing he had an abundant number of workers. As one young Wichita lawyer wrote McGill, "These are terribly hard times and we [young Democrats] are all broke but have much time to devote to the cause." The senator's chances were also enhanced by the increasing unpopularity of the Hoover administration. Moreover, Republicans had organized the Senate, so McGill believed that voters would not hold Democratic senators responsible for the depression. McGill's aides began planning his campaign as early as September 1931. Hoover would be their target, so the senator and his aides made every effort to criticize the president and to contrast McGill's positions to his. As for primary opposition, a conservative perennial candidate for one office or another, Chauncey B. Little, was the only person to

challenge the incumbent. McGill's strategy was to remain above party factionalism. This he did successfully, even refusing to take sides for a Democratic presidential nominee. If the senator did not make friends this way, the tactic did have the advantage of keeping him out of the intraparty fights with which Little tended to be identified. Whatever his reasons, McGill looked forward to the fall contest with the Republicans. He wrote in late May, "I am not over-confident but do not believe they could defeat me this fall at the general election." Indeed, his supporters were generally enthusiastic for his and their party's chances in November. One of them, J. F. Corder of Salina, wrote McGill in July that Hoover would lose Kansas by 50,000 votes and that the senator would probably have a weak Republican opponent. "A tremendous Democratic swing is on and will never be stopped." The August primary election results seemed to bear this out. And McGill, with very little campaigning, defeated Chauncey Little, 92,474 votes to 44,613. ¹⁶

THE GUBERNATORIAL and senatorial elections were not the only Kansas primary contests in 1932. In fact it was a year full of contests for nomination, especially among Democrats who saw their greatest chance for success at the polls since President Wilson had been elected. For example, only incumbent Republican Reps. Harold McGugin and Homer Hoch and Democrat W. A. Ayres and his GOP opponent went unopposed in the fourteen congressional primary elections. Nine Democrats sought the right to run against Republican Cong. Charles I. Sparks. Of course, the incumbents did not seek primary election contests. Republican Cong. Clifford Hope's supporters worked to dissuade Ora Dawson from running against him, for as Hope wrote, "we don't want any opposition at all if it can be helped. . . ." In this they were unsuccessful. Congressional incumbents discouraged primary contests not just to save funds and energy, but also because Congress

15. *Wichita Evening Eagle*, June 14, 16, 1932; *Topeka State Journal*, June 15, 1932; *Hays Daily News*, June 17, 1932; Marvin Ewy, "Charles Curtis of Kansas: Vice President of the United States, 1929-1933," *Emporia State Research Studies*, Emporia, v. 10, no. 2 (December, 1961), pp. 51-52.

16. George W. Earp to McGill, July 12, 1932; J. F. Corder to McGill, July 12, 1932, "McGill Collection," campaign correspondence, congratulations on nomination file; Cam Campbell to Long, September 18, 25, 1931; Long to Campbell, October 9, 1931; Long to McGill, February 29, April 23, 1932; McGill to Long, March 18, May 25, June 11, 1932, "Long Collection," box 3; Kansas Secretary of State, *Twenty-Eighth Biennial Report*, pp. 38-42.

remained in session longer than usual, which limited officeholders in campaigning. As Arthur Capper put it in July, "Congress has refused to quit and go home like a Decent Congress should have done weeks ago." It may have been that, as the Topeka *Capital* reported, there was no great public interest in the primary elections, but the politicians were absorbed in them, and many of the campaigns were spirited. Hope expressed the view of many candidates in 1932 when he said that "owing to the peculiar economic and political situation existing at this time I feel that we should not overlook anything." Apparently, he and the other congressional incumbents did not, for they all won renomination in August except for James G. Strong, who lost to fellow Republican W. P. Lambertson after their districts had been merged. The only surprising result was the nomination in the Democratic primary in the Sixth Congressional District of a woman, Kathryn O'Loughlin of Hays.¹⁷

The reactions to the Kansas primary election results confirmed many of the hopes and fears that had emerged earlier in 1932. Clifford Hope wrote from his southwest Kansas district to another Republican congressman, U. S. Guyer, that it is "hot and dry out here and everybody cussing Hoover." Guyer responded optimistically, "Our record will pull us through in November." An Oswego Democrat, J. C. Carpenter, trumpeted to Senator McGill that "it's going to be a landslide in November for the Democratic Ticket." The Hays *Daily News*, in commenting on Democrat Kathryn O'Loughlin's surprise victory over eight primary opponents, advised Republican Cong. Charles Sparks, "Watch Out, Charley!" McGill remained optimistic, but nevertheless he planned to conduct a vigorous campaign; indeed, he had already visited nine counties during the fortnight after the primary election. The senator's aides supported his cautious approach. One of them wrote that "the general situation seems to be ok for the Senator in every section of the State but one can not tell just what will happen." Not only were

McGill's funds short, but there was the question of Brinkley's influence on all Kansas elections. Another of the senator's aides feared the effect of the "state pride" vote for Vice-President Curtis.¹⁸

THE REPUBLICANS began bucking each other up soon after the August primary results were in. Congressman Hope told a Republican county leader "that there are a lot of people who will abuse Hoover right up to the last minute, and then go in and vote for him." Not long afterward he advised the head of the Republican National Committee's speakers committee that Republicans must "make a most intensive campaign." Hope reported that the state and congressional scene in Kansas was in "fair shape" but "it is going to take a tremendous amount of work to carry the state for the national ticket." Rolla Clymer thought that Alf Landon's primary triumph was impressive. He wrote the Republican gubernatorial nominee, "I think your own personality has done much toward wiping out the old bitterness. Please God, we may all forget the past—and go on to victory. . . . [I am] for you with both feet and both barrels." Part of the Republican intensiveness was reflected by Landon and Paulen informally beginning their speaking campaigns even before the Republican party council met to draft a state platform at the end of August. Landon declared in Johnson County that his party could be depended upon to bring the country out of depression; Paulen stood "squarely" on the national GOP platform.¹⁹

Of course, John R. Brinkley's candidacy for governor complicated everything. The Hays *Daily News* declared after the primary elections that Landon and Woodring "may now sit back and breathe a spell while forming plans to see what can be done about the Brinkley matter in the general election. . . ." Even

17. Hope to D. J. Wilson, June 2, 1932; Hope to H. E. Crosswhite, July 8, 1932, "Hope Collection," boxes 40, 232; Capper, WIBW boys' and girls' birthday party speech, July 14, 1932, "Capper Collection," box 65; Topeka *Daily Capital*, July 17, August 2, 1932; Kansas Secretary of State, *Twenty-Eighth Biennial Report*, pp. 43-48.

18. Hope to U. S. Guyer, August 3, 1932; Guyer to Hope, August 4, 1932, "Hope Collection," box 232; Hays *Daily News*, August 4, 1932; J. C. Carpenter to McGill, August 4, 1932; McGill to J. F. Corder, August 18, 1932; J. B. Riddle to Cam Campbell, September 2, 1932; Campbell to Riddle, September 5, 1932, "McGill Collection," campaign correspondence, congratulations on nomination and campaign 1932 files. On O'Loughlin, see Patrick G. O'Brien, "Kansas' First Congresswoman," *Kanhistique*, Ellsworth, v. 7, no. 6 (October, 1981), pp. 12-13.

19. Hope to Mamie Axline Fay, August 12, 1932; Hope to C. W. Ramseyer, August 23, 1932, "Hope Collection," boxes 39, 232; Clymer to Landon, August 17, 1932, "Clymer Collection"; Topeka *Daily Capital*, August 27, 1932, *Wichita Morning Eagle*, August 27, 1932.

Senator McGill's backers worried about Brinkley. One of them wrote that the senator could lose votes because of the goat-gland doctor, and there was no way to cope with him because McGill could not afford to fight him or to join with him. The only answer was to be very careful. It is no surprise that Governor Woodring concentrated on beating Brinkley, whose forces had long been campaigning, largely through his official newspaper, *Publicity*, over the radio, and through popular rallies. And Brinkley had drawing power. As Clifford Stratton wrote in his column in the

Topeka *Capital* in August, "The Milford doctor, with his airplanes, his 16-cylinder car, his loudspeakers, his minister of the gospel to open all political meetings with prayer, his crown of martyrdom and his perfect radio voice, is regarded as a formidable independent candidate for governor this year."²⁰

Not everybody was afraid of Brinkley. Will

20. Hays *Daily News*, August 3, 1932; J. W. Howe to Joe Riddle, September 19, 1932, "McGill Collection," campaign correspondence, campaign 1932 file; McFarland, *Harry H. Woodring*, pp. 69-70; Topeka *Daily Capital*, August 7, 1932.

The main beneficiary of Roosevelt's two brief campaign stops in western Kansas was Kathryn O'Loughlin, Democratic congressional nominee in the sixth district, who introduced him. O'Loughlin (1894-1952), *inset*, was one of three Democrats elected to Congress from the state in 1932. The photograph of Roosevelt was taken in Colby September 15, 1932.





With proceeds being donated to charity, Democratic and Republican members of the House of Representatives played each other in a baseball game June 4, 1932, in Washington, D.C. As shown in this photograph stamped "proof," Vice-pres. Charles Curtis threw out the ball to start the game.

J. French, the Republican state auditor, wrote, "Some say we have Brinkley to beat, but I say we have Harry Woodring to defeat." No doubt French was right, but Brinkley seemed the spoiler to most Republicans as well as Democrats. One reason for this was the appealing nature of Brinkley's platform, which he issued in June. This document promised among other things pensions for the aged, a lake in every county, free medical care for the needy, governmental economy, reduction of automobile tag fees to three dollars, free school textbooks, and industrial development.²¹ The Milford doctor perhaps made a mistake in announcing his platform early, however, for it gave the Democrats and Republicans ample time to formulate answers to it.

MEETING in their state council on August 30, the Democrats indicated that they would carry Kansas in November by as much as one hundred thousand votes. They stressed governmental economy, standing on Governor Woodring's accomplishments in this respect in

contrast to Brinkley's mere promise of economy. The Democratic platform promised cheap textbooks, industrial development, better utility and industrial regulation, reasonable lowering of automobile license fees, improved workmen's compensation, unemployment relief, and better taxation of banks. Clearly, the Democrats were picking up the populist elements in Brinkley's platform, but were couching them more reasonably as well as appealing to labor, especially, and farmers. The Democrats also endorsed state constitutional amendments to authorize an income tax and to limit local property taxes, amendments which Brinkley opposed.²²

The Republican State Council also met on August 30. As Woodring and his political manager, Highway Department Director Guy T. Helvering, dominated the Democratic State Council, so Landon and his campaign manager, the new Republican State Chairman Frank Carlson, dominated the sessions of its GOP counterpart. The Republicans proposed a graduated automobile tag fee starting at sixty

21. Will J. French to Hope, August 8, 1932, "Hope Collection," box 232; Topeka *Daily Capital*, June 5, 1932.

22. Wichita *Morning Eagle*, August 31, 1932; Topeka *Daily Capital*, August 28, 31, 1932; Topeka *State Journal*, August 30, 1932.

cents; the income tax amendment; local tax limitation, by legislation instead of amendment; government economy and reorganization; cheaper textbooks; industrial development; utility and other business regulation; better workmen's compensation; and an investigation of the state Highway Department. As the Democrats intruded an irrelevant issue, low tariffs, in their state platform, so the Republicans opposed the repeal of national prohibition. The Republicans vouchsafed their concern for agriculture, especially, and labor.²³ Plainly, the prime gubernatorial campaign issues would become credibility and responsibility.

The campaigns of Brinkley, Landon, and Woodring were hard fought. Brinkley's strategy was to promise the most and to damn the major party nominees. Landon's was to emphasize his responsibility and occasionally to attack his opponents. And Woodring's was to stand on his record and to condemn Brinkley more than Landon. At the formal opening of his campaign on September 16 in Abilene, Landon declared that the three main issues were taxes, political scandals in the Highway Department, and prohibition. He would lower the first, investigate and remedy the second, and uphold the third. He brushed Brinkley aside as being "responsible to no organization." Woodring answered Landon's attack by saying that the political funds collected from state employees by the Highway Department reflected forty years of practice in Kansas; he suggested that was a better way to finance campaigns than accepting corporate contributions. The Brinkley campaign exploited the issue by running advertisements condemning the corruption of "the old parties that the people are sick and tired of." Kansans were informed that Brinkley would not be a party to a sell-out.²⁴

THE GUBERNATORIAL campaign was well under way and attracting a great deal of attention by late September. At least one observer, Clifford Stratton of the *Topeka Capital*, could see absurdities in the campaign. He

pointed out that Brinkley was ahead of Landon in one respect: Landon was going to reduce expenditures \$5 million by lowering automobile license fees, while Brinkley "is going to have free textbooks, free clinics, lakes in every county—and reduce taxes anyway." As the campaign developed it became evident that the three candidates had distinctive approaches. The diamond-studded Brinkley would arrive in an airplane or a limousine. After entertainers had provided music and a preacher had introduced him, he would tell of the trickery of the two old parties, of his persecution for pursuing medical "truth," of his vision of a Kansas wonderland under his administration. He then departed hastily with scarcely a farewell. Woodring would arrive, nattily dressed, in his official limousine. He would saunter down the main street, patting people on the back and exchanging words in a hearty manner. Then the governor would expound on his administration's record of economy, the promise of his "second" term, and the weaknesses of his opponents. Often dressed in rumpled clothes, Landon would arrive in a 1928 car. He would accost friends and strangers, hear them out, tell them an appropriate campaign idea, and perhaps cadge a cigarette. At a meeting, he would talk sometimes stumbingly, but always bluntly about tax relief and efficient government.²⁵ All three struck the public as being unusually well motivated, and with good reason. Brinkley might pull off the political coup of 1932 by being elected. Woodring could pull off his own coup by being the first Democratic governor to be reelected in Kansas. Landon could be a rarity, a Republican elected to a governorship at the depth of the depression.

This suggested how the political wind was blowing in Kansas. As William Allen White reported to one of President Hoover's aides in September, "It is blowing a pretty stiff gale and it is all against the government. I cannot see how Hoover can carry anything between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains" unless farm prices rise. Democrats did not see things much differently. Senator McGill reported to Sen. Claude A. Swanson,

23. *Topeka Daily Capital*, August 31, 1932; *Topeka State Journal*, August 30, 31, 1932.

24. Landon speech, Abilene, September 16, 1932, "Landon Collection"; *Topeka Daily Capital*, September 20, 21, 1932.

25. *Topeka Daily Capital*, September 25, 1932; Schruben, *Kansas in Turmoil*, pp. 79-103; McFarland, *Harry H. Woodring*, pp. 70-75; McCoy, *Landon of Kansas*, pp. 102-110.

the chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, that "prospects for Democratic victory in Kansas are more evident than at any time in my recollection." This he ascribed to the people believing that Republican policies "have brought ruin and disaster to every line of endeavor." This was confirmed by E. J. Smiley, the secretary-treasurer of the Kansas Grain Dealers Association, who wrote Congressman Hope about what he had observed in western Kansas. "I found that a goodly number of farmers and business men were not favorable to the Administration. After talking to farmers, and knowing the conditions in the S.W. part of the state, it make[s] my heart ache to know that these people were unable to procure relief, from any source. The country is in a deplorable condition and I am afraid of the outcome."²⁶

SEPTEMBER 14 was a great day for Kansas Democrats and a depressing one for Republicans. The Democratic presidential nominee, Franklin D. Roosevelt, spoke in Topeka to a crowd of some ten thousand people and many thousands more over the radio. He called for "national planning in agriculture" and charged that President Hoover had "failed utterly" on farm relief. Roosevelt later briefly visited Colby and Goodland to point up his concern for agriculture, although the main beneficiary of these stops was Democratic congressional nominee Kathryn O'Loughlin, who introduced him. His was an effective appeal to the farmers and the women of Kansas. Even the Topeka *Capital*, Senator Capper's newspaper, conceded that the New York governor had made a good impression. By October most Democrats and many Republicans probably agreed with William Allen White that the Democratic presidential nominee was forging ahead of Hoover because "Roosevelt will represent protest."²⁷

White's views did not stop most Kansas Re-

publicans from working for Hoover, partly to help Curtis, partly out of hope and habit, and partly out of the conviction that by supporting the national ticket they would strengthen the appeal of their state and local candidates. Senator Capper told a Republican rally in Topeka in late September, "I feel sure the crisis has passed. But we are still in a precarious situation and one false step may bring on a relapse that could plunge us into chaos." It was clear to him that Americans must solve their problems "in a safe and sane way" by electing the westerner, Hoover, who had held things together. Many of the state's newspapers took a similar line. The *Salina Journal*, for example, saw the president in early October as the "firm hand in control," the man who offered "safety and security." The newspaper declared that "sentiment was rapidly changing" in Hoover's favor. Yet Republicans were privately far from optimistic. Landon saw Hoover being hurt badly by the continued decline in farm prices, although this did not stop the gubernatorial nominee from seeking a presidential visit to Kansas. Rolla Clymer wrote of Hoover to a friend, "I am afraid that the great national bellyache may defeat him in the nation, and then God help us for four years." At the end of October one county judge wrote, "I believe Hoover is climbing fast, but still I presume his final success is too much to be expected by one who does not believe very much in miracles. However here's hoping."²⁸

The presidential campaign went into a grand windup. Kansas Democratic candidates tied themselves securely to Roosevelt's coat-tails and plumped hard for his election. The flamboyant Louisiana senator, Huey Long, came into Kansas to speak for him and McGill, appealing to the populist elements in the state. The Curtis clan returned to the state, too. The vice-president's energetic sister, Dolly Gann, stumped the state for Hoover and Curtis. And Curtis, after speaking in twenty-four states, finished his campaign in Kansas. He blamed the depression on World War I, and he chided the Democrats for excelling themselves in lying. The Topeka *State Journal* made good

26. White to George Akerson, September 8, 1932, "White Correspondence," no. 693 (red); McGill to Claude A. Swanson, September 9, 1932, "McGill Collection," campaign correspondence, campaign 1932 file; E. J. Smiley to Hope, September 9, 1932, "Hope Collection," box 40.

27. *Wichita Morning Eagle*, September 15, 1932; *Hays Daily News*, September 14, 15, 1932; *Topeka Daily Capital*, September 18, 1932; White to Elmer Davis, October 8, 1932, "White Correspondence," no. 695 (red). Roosevelt was not the only presidential nominee to visit Kansas in 1932, for Socialist Norman Thomas gave some speeches. *Wichita Morning Eagle*, October 15, 16, 1932.

28. Capper speech, Topeka, September 27, 1932, "Capper Collection," box 43; *Salina Journal*, October 5, 7, 1932; Landon to Henry J. Allen, October 9, 1932, "Landon Collection," box 132; Clymer to M. T. Williams, October 24, 1932; A. T. Ayres to Clymer, October 31, 1932, "Clymer Collection."

use of his presence on the Republican national ticket, declaring that a vote for Roosevelt was a vote against the state's darling, Curtis. Not surprisingly, both Democrats and Republicans claimed victory for their presidential tickets in Kansas the day before election.²⁹

THE SENATORIAL and congressional races came in third in intensity to the gubernatorial and presidential contests. The state focused mainly on the battle between Ben Paulen and George McGill for the U. S. Senate. The Republican's campaign was the less energetic of the two, but he played the good soldier for his party and especially the president. Paulen became Hoover's surrogate in Kansas, so much so that their electoral for-

tunes in 1932 became inextricably intertwined. McGill had an advantage over his opponent, for however much he connected himself to Roosevelt, he had his own pertinent record in the Senate upon which to run. The senator's supporters worried about the entry into the Senate race of an independent candidate, George A. Brown of Wichita, a former preacher who identified himself with Brinkley. Brown's candidacy seemed, however, to confirm the wisdom of McGill portraying himself as a labor candidate, a tribune of the farmer, a full-fledged anti-Hoover man, but for prohibition. It further spurred the senator to be an industrious campaigner, and he spent almost all of his time between the primary and general elections on the road. In short, McGill was trying to be as his advertisements portrayed him, "A Kansas Senator for Kansas." It probably helped him that Paulen was not only

29. *Wichita Morning Eagle*, October 28, November 1, 8, 1932; *Hays Daily News*, November 4, 5, 1932; *Topeka State Journal*, November 5, 7, 1932; Ewy, "Charles Curtis of Kansas," p. 53.

Dolly Gann, the energetic sister of Vice-President Curtis, returned to Kansas and stumped the state for the Hoover ticket. In this proof photograph she is shown addressing a group of Republican women at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, N.Y., on October 7, 1932.





**ALF M.
LANDON**
INDEPENDENCE, KANSAS
REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE FOR
GOVERNOR
GENERAL ELECTION NOVEMBER 8

Alf Landon's record as a business man and a fighting Republican has the respect of his opponents and the affection of his friends.—*Emporia Gazette*.

We believe Alf M. Landon is eminently equipped to fill the position of governor.—*Hutchinson News*.

Mr. Landon's announcement proposes reduced expenses of government, better taxation, development of the state's natural resources, and Republican harmony. This is a good program.—*The Topeka Capital*.

Alf M. Landon is one of the big men of the state and a World War veteran.—*Howard Courant*.

His home town record is one of which every man might well be proud.—*Independence Reporter*.

Alfred M. Landon (1887-), Independence oil man, sought to unite his party and campaigned for government economy. The newspaper endorsements, above, were printed on the back of his campaign card.

a one-hundred-percent Hoover man, but also was a banker. As a Valley Falls insurance man wrote McGill, "We surely have too much banker influence in the senate now without putting a retired money lender to add to the already unholy majority the Shylocks have in the upper house." The dominant Republican press did what it could for Paulen and against McGill, but usually without enthusiasm or giving the campaign a great amount of space. The *Salina Journal* went about as far as any newspaper the week before the election, calling Paulen fair and satisfactory and McGill "more or less a stamp for Tammany Hall." By then, however, things appeared to be going McGill's way. One sure sign seemed to be an early November letter from the Republican

Shawnee County register of deeds who vowed his support for the senator, but added, "Please destroy this letter immediately as I would not care for this to be seen by any of my republican friends."³⁰

In Kansas' seven congressional districts, the election contests were unusually heated. The six Republican incumbents were confronted by very active opponents and had to fight as seldom before, and Democratic Cong. W. A. Ayres took no chances in his campaign. Indic-

³⁰ *Wichita Morning Eagle*, October 22, 25, November 6, 1932; J. B. Riddle to J. W. Howe, September 10, 1932; Riddle to G. A. Adams, September 12, 1932; Riddle to J. K. McMullen, October 12, 1932; Riddle to J. F. Corder, October 18, 1932; George Harman to McGill, October 27, 1932; Frank W. Wilson to McGill, November 3, 1932, "McGill Collection," campaign correspondence, campaign 1932 file; *Salina Journal*, November 2, 1932.

ative of what was happening, Cong. Clifford Hope in his immense thirty-two-county western Kansas district wrote on October 23, "I am getting around more and doing more speaking than I ever have before." In the First District, Cong. W. P. Lambertson suffered double jeopardy in 1932. He not only faced fellow Cong. James G. Strong in a difficult primary election, but also independent and Democratic candidates in the general election. There were also the elections for the eight state offices besides the governorship. In most of these contests, the GOP nominees trusted to the tradition that Kansans returned Republicans, regardless of other trends, as well as to their own unique campaigns, personalities, and qualifications. Attorney General Roland Boynton and Superintendent of Public Instruction George A. Allen, Jr., however, faced formidable challenges from independents identified with Brinkley as well as from Democratic nominees. Moreover, the Democrats as rarely before sought to gain control of the state Senate and House of Representatives.³¹ These legislative contests would be considerably determined by how the gubernatorial race went.

CLEARLY, the biggest political question in Kansas in 1932 concerned the outcome of the gubernatorial election. The basic outlines of the contest seemed to have been set by September in terms of substantive issues. Moreover, there were Landon's emphasis on organizing Republicans along harmony lines; Brinkley's use of unusual campaign techniques; and Woodring's standing on his record as governor. All three candidates campaigned hard, but by October Landon seemed ubiquitous, making as many campaign appearances as his two opponents put together. The Republican also had more newspaper support and advertising than either Woodring or Brinkley. As the campaign went on, there was an increasing focus on Brinkley. It was not just a question of whether the Milford doctor could throw the election to Woodring or Landon, but the possibility that he could be elected governor. A Whitewater banker feared Brinkley be-

cause he believed him to be "a man lacking all sense of honor although extremely cunning." Another Kansan, referring to the flamboyant gubernatorial candidates to the south, declared, "What a combination. Murr[ay], Ma Ferguson & Brinkley would make if they should all become Governors. It would set Okla, Tex & Kans back 40 years."³²

These fears of Brinkley had their effect. On September 20 the Republican state publicity director, W. G. West, mailed a form letter to GOP leaders, indicating that "the Independent candidate for Governor should not be overlooked. You likely know how best to treat the Brinkley stuff in your locality." Woodring declared all-out war on the goat-gland doctor. The governor's initial tactic was to attack utility magnate Henry L. Doherty, who seemed to be Brinkley's chief financial backer. On September 16, Woodring called the attention of Kansans and specifically state Attorney General Boynton to alleged violations of corporation laws by Doherty's gas companies. Three days later a gubernatorial spokesman charged that Doherty was financing the Milford doctor; Brinkley responded by declaring that Woodring was the creature of the out-of-state Kansas City *Star*. Backed by Republican purses, Topeka's pen for hire, Charles H. Trapp, spared neither imagination nor fact in attacking Brinkley in his weekly newspaper, the *Pink Rag*. For example, on September 23 Trapp informed his readers that Brinkley was a millionaire, paid no taxes, was a Klansman, had been a drunkard, is slipping politically, and had twice been divorced (although the fine print indicated that it was a case of his first wife divorcing him and he in turn divorcing her). On top of it all, Trapp asserted, "Doc is all bluff and bluster." Woodring continued his campaign against Brinkley to the end, pounding home the point that Doherty's immense wealth and allegedly shady interests were behind the doctor. The governor added that Brinkley was "the billboard man," calling attention to his large amount of outdoor advertising, and he called the doctor's well-staged campaign meetings "Punch and Judy shows." The *Wichita Eagle* in supporting Woodring

31. Hope to William E. Hutchinson, October 23, 1932, "Hope Collection," box 232; Kansas Secretary of State, *Twenty-Eighth Biennial Report*, *passim*.

32. Topeka *Daily Capital*, September 11, 25, October 2, 3, 30, 1932; J. D. Joseph to Clymer, September 9, 1932; M. T. Williams to Clymer, September 20, 1932, "Clymer Collection."



In a letter written in May 1932, Emporia editor William Allen White (1868-1944) told a correspondent that the Kansas economy was "a matter of starvation" that would "emotionalize our politics."

played up the supposed connection between Brinkley and odiferous Wall Street interests.³³

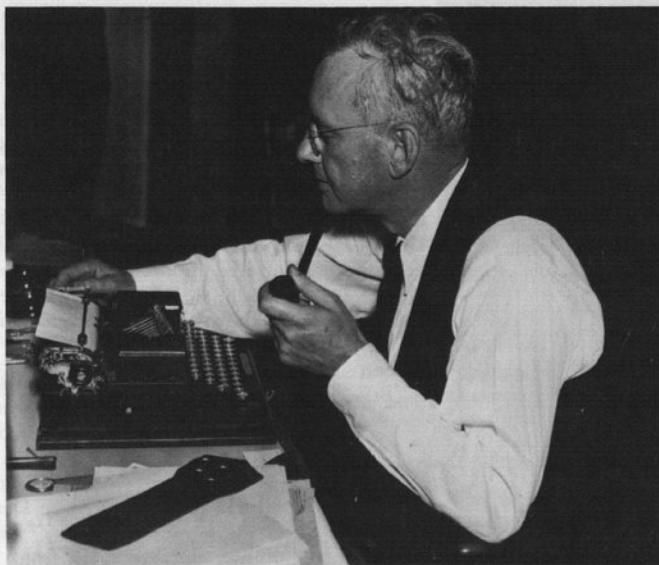
There was more to Woodring's campaign, of course, than attacks on Brinkley. Among other things, Woodring promised to reduce telephone rates as well as taxes. The Democratic governor often referred to his record, especially the fact that he had slashed the state budget by \$4 million below the figure set by the Republican legislature. Moreover, Kansas had surfaced more roads during the past year than any other state in the nation. His administration, he declared, was one of which Kansans could be proud. As Woodring emphasized in his advertisements, "He Does What Others

Promise to Do." He talked "FACTS; NOT RADIO 'HOOEY.'" ³⁴

Brinkley generally contented himself with his radio, billboard, and medicine-show approach to the public's heart. His campaign appearances drew huge audiences. People came to see the show the doctor and his supporting cast put on and to be beguiled by his promises of a utopia in Kansas, of a state government that would oust those who had persecuted him and denigrated his supporters. As for Woodring's charges that Doherty backed him, Brinkley snorted, "That's about as wild a jackass story as I ever heard of." He endorsed Landon's charges of corruption in the Highway Department. Indeed, he turned them against his Republican opponent by declaring

33. W. C. West to Clymer, September 20, 1932, "Clymer Collection"; Woodring to Roland Boynton, September 16, 1932, "Woodring Collection"; Topeka Daily Capital, September 17, 20, 1932; Pink Rag, Topeka, September 23, 1932; Wichita Morning Eagle, October 14, 21, 30, November 6, 7, 1932; McFarland, Harry H. Woodring, pp. 71-74.

34. Topeka Daily Capital, September 20, October 12, November 7, 1932; Wichita Morning Eagle, September 25, October 23, 1932.



In contrast with the diamond-studded Brinkley and the nattily-dressed Woodring, Landon traveled the state in rumpled clothes driving an old car. He made as many campaign appearances as his two opponents combined.

that Landon, too, had assessed state employees for political contributions when he had been the GOP state chairman. It was all part of Brinkley's repeated charge that the two old parties of wealth and corruption were up to their old tricks and would stop at nothing to prevent the voters from electing a government for the people.³⁵

WHILE Woodring and Brinkley concentrated on attacking each other and trumpeting their virtues, Landon stressed telling what he could do. His chief issue was governmental economy, which he indicated would be impossible with Brinkley and had left much to be desired under Woodring. Wearing often rumpled clothes and driving around in an old car he made the point that he practiced what he preached. As he said, "If you don't need it, don't buy it; if you can't afford it, don't buy it; if you do buy it, get your money's worth." He usually left attacks on Woodring

and Brinkley to others until toward the end of the campaign. Republican State Chairman Frank Carlson accused Woodring of being against prohibition and with wasting state revenues in the administration of the Highway Department; Brinkley had no practical program. Chairman Jess Greenleaf of the Public Service Commission added that the governor was bungling utility rate reductions. Landon's campaign forces emphasized that no Democrat had ever been reelected governor in Kansas; that Woodring was with the "ins" and thus was responsible for the state's problems; and that there was a rising tide of voters for Landon. Plainly, the objective was to scare independents from Woodring to Landon in order to beat Brinkley.³⁶

The last two weeks of the gubernatorial campaign became a free-for-all. The Landon campaign was spurred to greater efforts by reports that the Republican nominee's election was in doubt. Landon began paying more

35. *Topeka Daily Capital*, October 7, 15, 21, 1932; Schruben, *Kansas in Turmoil*, pp. 88-100.

36. *Topeka Daily Capital*, October 7, 9, 16, 21, 23, 24, 1932; W. G. West to Clymer, October 26, 1932, "Clymer Collection."

attention to his opponents, calling Brinkley the "great promiser" and Woodring "the greatest little claimer Kansas has had in a long time." Moreover, Landon charged that under Woodring state tax reductions had been negligible, the number of public employees had increased, and the governor had indulged in personalities in his feud with Brinkley. There were also surprise developments. The Kansas City *Star* endorsed Woodring; former Democratic Gov. Jonathan Davis announced for Brinkley; and former Republican Gov. Clyde Reed refused to come out for Landon. This did not stop Landon's advertisements from declaring that the election was a choice between "LANDON or BRINKLEY" because the "Republican party is the dominant party in Kansas this year—a United party. . . . The way to beat Brinkley is vote for Landon." William Allen White backed this up with his widely reprinted statement that "every patriotic voter who fears the domination of Brinkleyism must play safe, cast his vote in the largest pile and vote for Landon." White conceded that Woodring had been a "good governor," but he asserted that "every vote for Harry Woodring exposes Kansas to the menace of John R. Brinkley as governor of Kansas."³⁷ It was an effective combination of the bandwagon and bogeyman appeals.

Brinkley hewed to his line of marvelous promises, and he usually refused to be put on the defensive. The Democrats took on Landon, however, and continued as well to attack Brinkley and Doherty. Woodring accused Landon of spreading "half-truths and distortions" on tax figures, but the Republicans pressed the issue that the governor was unfairly taking credit for county and local tax reductions. The governor's late campaign advertisements declared that "IT'S A LANDSLIDE TO WOODRING! . . . IT'S NEITHER BRINKLEY NOR LANDON. KANSAS WILL WIN WITH WOODRING!" Word circulated that Landon was supporting Woodring in order to defeat Brinkley, that Brinkley would be counted out by election judges, and that anti-Woodring Democrats were backing Brinkley, as supporters of each

of the three candidates tried to create psychological backfires that would benefit them at the ballot box. The press, radio, and billboards were cluttered with appeals for or against Brinkley, Landon, or Woodring as everyone involved seemed to get increasingly desperate during the week before election. As A. L. "Dutch" Schultz observed in his newspaper column, "Everyone has in the back of his mind the feeling that someone is about to do the Cause some Great Dirt. So the various party bombing squads are out for reprisals and no one knows whose shanty is going to be dynamited before sundown."³⁸

COMING down to the finish line, predictions of the election results varied. A Democratic State Committee official told the chairman of Senator McGill's campaign that "things generally look very good and I feel confident of victory for the Democratic ticket from the top to the bottom." Republican State Committee Chairman Frank Carlson predicted a 6,500-vote plurality for Landon and victory for the Hoover-Curtis ticket. Clifford Stratton of the Topeka *Capital* wrote that Brinkley, Landon, and Woodring were so close together that each had a chance for victory. The gubernatorial candidates apparently agreed with Stratton, for their campaigns continued unabated right down to election day.³⁹

The November election results showed conflicting patterns, indicating that ticket splitting was widespread. Franklin D. Roosevelt's appeal was transcendent as the Democratic presidential ticket defeated Hoover and Curtis by 424,204 to 349,498 votes, with the Socialists attracting only 18,276 ballots. McGill beat Paulen for the U. S. Senate 328,992 to 302,809, with independent candidate George A. Brown polling 65,583 votes. The gubernatorial campaign was as close as Stratton predicted. In a record turnout of Kansas voters, Landon won with 278,581 votes to 272,944 for Woodring and 244,607 for Brinkley. Democratic Cong. W. A. Ayres won reelection by an impressive margin of almost three to one, and he was joined by two other

37. Topeka *Daily Capital*, October 9, 27, 30; November 2, 5, 1932; Clymer to Lacy Haynes, October 26, 1932; Clymer to M. T. Williams, October 24, 1932, "Clymer Collection"; Topeka *State Journal*, November 2, 4, 1932.

38. Topeka *Daily Capital*, November 5, 1932; Wichita *Morning Eagle*, November 6, 1932; Hays *Daily News*, November 8, 1932; Topeka *State Journal*, November 4, 1932.

39. Paul C. Aiken to H. D. Baker, November 2, 1932, "McGill Collection," campaign correspondence, campaign 1932 file; Topeka *Daily Capital*, November 6, 7, 8, 1932.

John R. Brinkley (1885-1942), the infamous "goat-gland" doctor, was on the ballot as an independent candidate for governor in 1932. He had been narrowly defeated as a write-in candidate in 1930.



Democrats as Kathryn O'Loughlin defeated Rep. Charles Sparks by a decent margin and Randolph Carpenter edged veteran Cong. Homer Hoch by only 625 votes. The four other Republican incumbents won reelection, Lambertson handily, Hope and McGugin by comfortable majorities, and Guyer by only some 4,000 votes. The Republicans won all other state-wide offices. Their victory margins were comfortable, ranging from 47,000 votes for insurance commissioner to 23,000 for secretary of state, except in the case of Charles W. Thompson, who won the lieutenant governorship by less than 5,000 votes. The independent candidates for attorney general and superintendent of public instruction, Burt

Comer and Ella S. Burton, respectively, ran strongly, polling some 157,000 and 130,000 votes. The Republicans barely carried a majority of the races for the state House of Representatives and Senate. The voters approved the income tax amendment, but they defeated the local tax limitation amendment, leaving it to legislative action as Landon had suggested.⁴⁰

40. Kansas Secretary of State, *Twenty-Eighth Biennial Report*, pp. 118-165. It should be noted that reports of campaign expenditures are incomplete. Those which were filed are rarely helpful. For example, Brinkley reported expenditures of \$216, Landon of \$500, and Woodring nothing. The Socialist nominee for governor, H. M. Perkins, reported spending fifty cents for a rubber stamp and thirty-six cents for streetcar fare.—Reports of election campaign expenditures, 1932, *passim*, "Records of the Secretary of State," archives department, Kansas State Historical Society.

HOW DID leaders of sentiment view the election results? The *Wichita Eagle* declared that Herbert Hoover "was in 1928 the chief recipient of a rich materialistic harvest; so in 1932 he became the victim of its inevitable counter-balancing dearth." The *Salina Journal* contented itself with saying "the voters wanted a change." It did, however, have the grace to congratulate Kathryn O'Loughlin on her election, which it thought fairly won. The *Topeka State Journal* opined that there were many causes for the Democratic victories, chief among them "the resentment against hard times." William Allen White wrote Henry J. Allen, "Aren't you glad you were not carrying the banner. . . . the state was dead set and sour on the national Republican party. . . . Alf won because state issues were distinct and the fear of Brinkley was in the hearts of Republicans." White thought it possible that the party would not recover in his lifetime, in which prediction he was correct. Rolla Clymer asserted that "the Republican party in Kansas should take its licking much in the same fashion that an ailing man takes castor oil. We have

been riding for a fall as a party, not only in Kansas but in the nation." As for the country's problems, the *El Dorado* publisher believed that miracles were needed, but he doubted that they would be found. Senator Capper announced to a radio audience that "With all of us it should be country above party. And I trust that Republicans and Democrats alike, in congress . . . , will lay aside their partisanship and all work together for the common good. . . . I am not so much concerned about who gets credit; what I want is results." Congressman Hope agreed, writing to a supporter that Roosevelt was entitled to everybody's help, that there must be a cooperative spirit in this crisis. Yet this did not mean that many Kansas Republicans had given up hope for their party's future, however glum things looked. Hope told another backer that "we ought to start right in and re-build from the ground up."⁴¹

41. *Wichita Morning Eagle*, November 10, 1932; *Salina Journal*, November 9, 11, 1932; *Topeka State Journal*, November 9, 1932; White to Henry J. Allen, November 9, 1932, "White Correspondence," no. 700 (red); Clymer to M. T. Williams, November 16, 1932, "Clymer Collection"; Capper speech, WIBW, Topeka, November 15, 1932, "Capper Collection," box 50; Hope to J. L. Horlacher, November 17, 1932; Hope to Mamie Axline Fay, November 18, 1932, "Hope Collection," box 39.

Brinkley's "Ammunition Train" carried his medicine show and populist-style promises to the voters in 1932. It was equipped with microphones, talking picture equipment, and a speaking platform which let down from one side.





Commenting on Landon's election in 1932, William Allen White wrote: "Alf won because state issues were distinct and the fear of Brinkley was in the hearts of Republicans." This photograph of White, Landon, and Gifford Pinchot, conservationist and governor of Pennsylvania (1923-1927, 1931-1935), was taken in 1936 at the Kansas executive mansion.

In a sense, this process had already begun in Kansas. Landon's harmony campaign had brought the state's Republican leaders together as perhaps never before, and the threat of Brinkleyism had gotten them to work with unusual zeal. They would not forget the need for unity and hard work during Landon's governorship. Moreover, the death of National Republican Committeeman David Mulvane the day after the election symbolized the passing of the old guard and led to Landon's selection of John Hamilton to replace him. Hamilton was quite as conservative as Mulvane, but he was young, energetic, and better aware of the need for party harmony. He had worked hard for his erstwhile foe, Landon, and he asked the governor-elect to repay him by not acting factionally in his management of the state and the party. "Let your policies and your patronage be directed with a broader vision." On this basis, the party could reelect Landon "and even send you further." Landon had laid a good foundation for following Hamilton's advice. As a Topeka publisher's

representative wrote in November, he had opposed Landon in the 1932 primary election because he believed him to be a factional candidate. "How stupid I was. . . . I didn't recognize his initiative, his independence, his courage or his party loyalty. . . . Through him and his efforts we now have a party of solidarity so far as Kansas matters. . . ." ⁴²

Landon would build on the accomplishment of 1932. He distributed his patronage broadly. He was evenhanded in dealing with factions in the legislature and in state, county, and local governments; he even got along reasonably well with many Democrats. He had shifted from being a progressive Republican to being a moderate, and the change paid off for him and his party. It would lead Landon to reelection in 1934 and to the Republican

42. McCoy, *Landon of Kansas*, *passim*; Topeka *Daily Capital*, November 10, 1932; John Hamilton to Landon, November 8, 1932, "Landon Collection"; Emmett D. George to Brinkerhoff, November 16, 1932, "Fred W. Brinkerhoff Collection," box 2, manuscript department, Kansas State Historical Society.

presidential nomination in 1936. Although the Republicans would lose control of the governorship in the Democratic tidal wave of 1936, the bases were there for them to reclaim the office in 1938 and to retain it until 1956, when it became subject to two-party contests. Only rarely after 1936 would the Republicans lose control of other state offices, the legislature, or seats in the national House of Representatives, and never a U. S. senatorship. Of course, there were other people like Clifford Hope who contributed to this and who rebuilt in their own constituencies, and like Arthur Capper and Frank Carlson who moderated between the extreme wings of their party.

WHAT OF the Democrats? Woodring used his high standing with Roosevelt to become assistant secretary of war and later secretary of war. Neither he nor Walter Huxman, who was elected governor in 1936, was able, however, to develop his party so that it could replace the Republicans as the major party in Kansas. McGill slowly gained influence in Washington, but he was unable to become the leader of his party in Kansas or to be reelected in 1938 or the other three times he ran for the Senate after that. Congresswoman O'Loughlin was unable to win reelection to the House in 1934; in fact, none of the Democratic congressmen elected from Kansas during the 1930s survived beyond 1942. Later neither the times nor the leadership emerged that could bring about a repetition of the level of Democratic success of the 1930s. When Democrats did succeed it was usually when they convinced the voters that they could run Republicanism right, as Gov. George Docking did

during the late 1950s. Of course, there was a great deal more involved in terms of issues, personalities, and campaign resources. But one factor that should not be overlooked was the great lesson of 1932: a candidate could do better the broader one's appeal to party elements and the public and the closer in touch one was with currents of opinion among constituents.

Yet there was another lesson. The Republicans had been preponderant in Kansas politics from the beginning of statehood.⁴³ This was a traditional edge that paid off for them even in the 1930s when the Democrats could, despite depression and Brinkleyism, do no better than temporarily achieve equal footing. When or whether the Democrats will tip the balance in their favor depends on so many things—not least of all the ability of their own and Republican leadership—that only a fool or a charlatan would make a prediction. Let the historian stick to the past and be content to say with respect to today's topic that 1932 was an exciting year for politics, a depressing year for economics, and finally a year that was an overture to our times, even though the politicians and the people knew not what lay ahead of them. The changes would be painful for some, though less dire than many anticipated. Whatever happened, the politics of 1932 confirmed much about the traditional relationships between Republicans and Democrats in Kansas.

43. For an interesting analysis of voting trends in Kansas during the first third of the twentieth century, see Charles H. Titus, "Voting in Kansas, 1900-1932," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, Topeka, v. 4, no. 3 (August, 1935), pp. 291-316.