

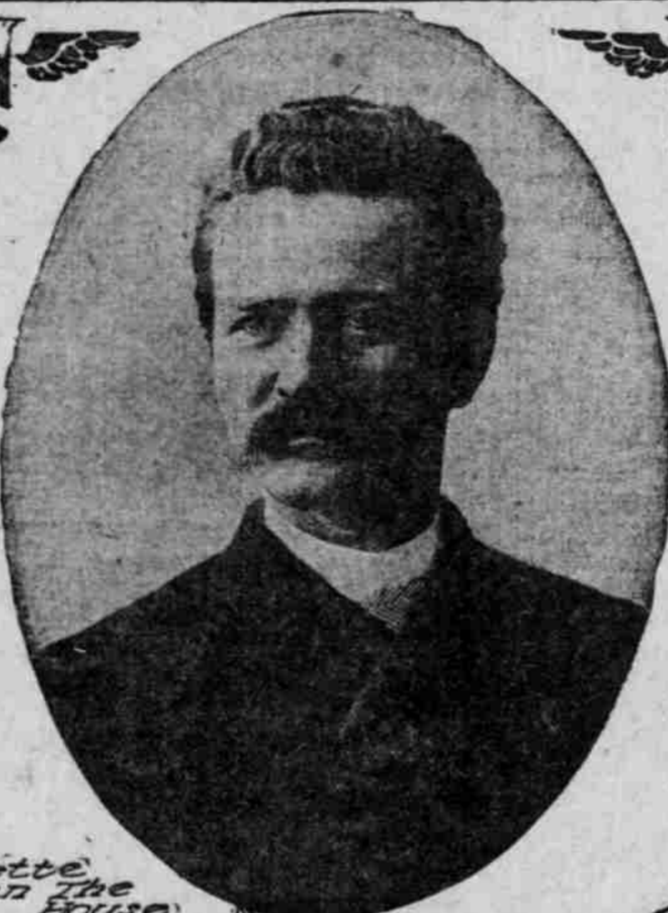
The Candidates

An Intimate and Non Partisan View of their Lives and Fortunes

Time Has Dealt Various With Them in Their Race Through the Decades—All of Them Are College Men—Wide Range of Opportunity at Beginning of Life Is Shown in Their Records.



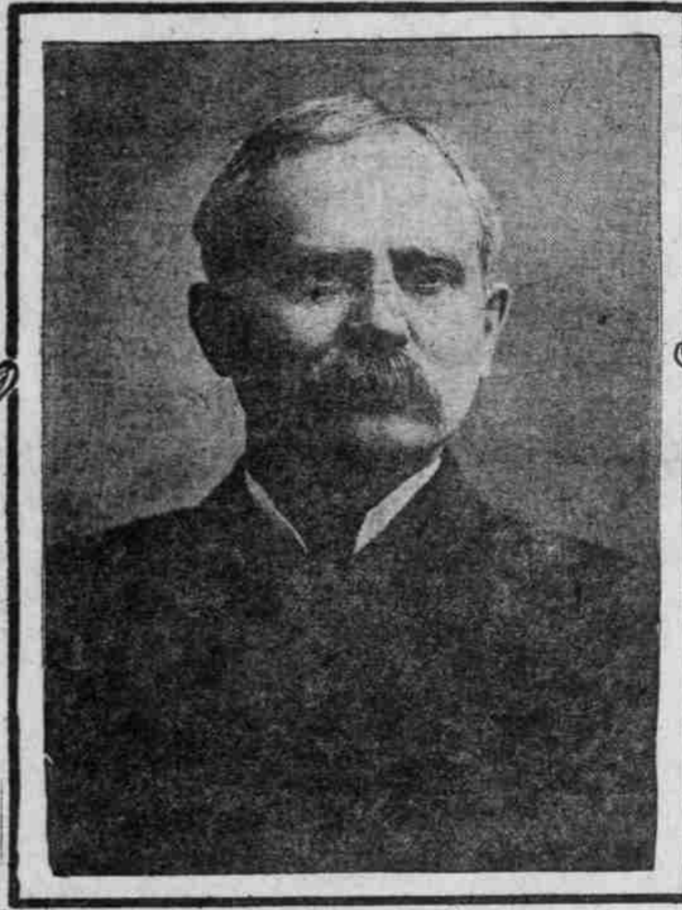
William Howard Taft.



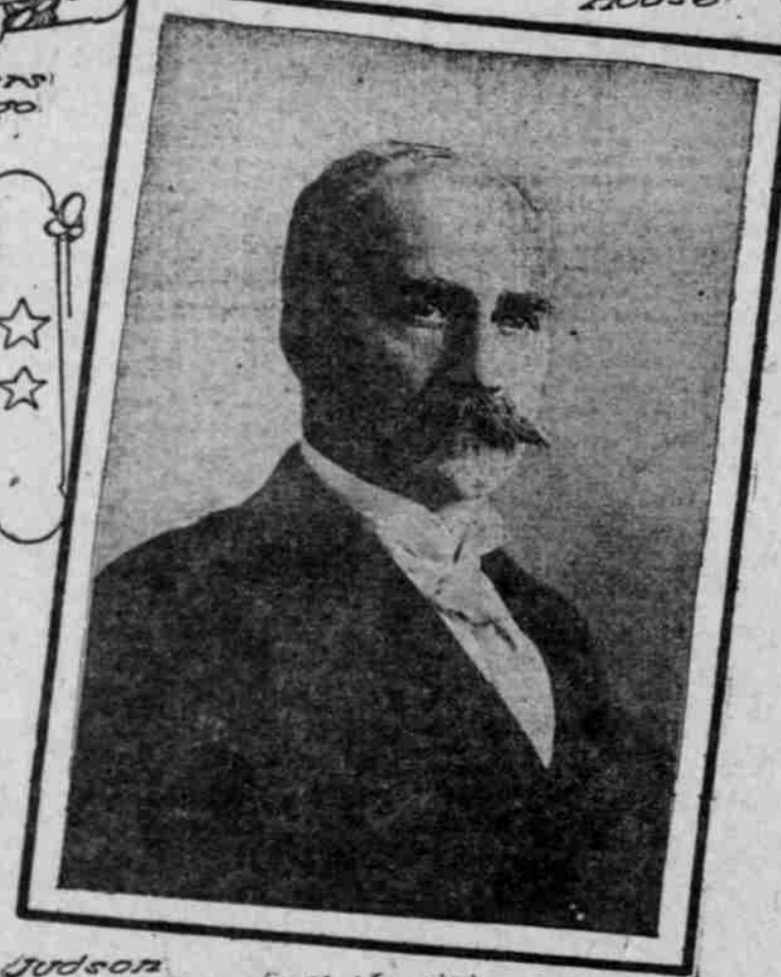
La Follette, While in House



Roosevelt As A Hunter 20 years Ago



Champ Clark, When He Entered Congress.



Judson Harmon, While in Cleveland's Cabinet



Oscar W. Underwood, As A Beginner in Congress

BY JOHN ELPRETH WATKINS.

FOR a brief half hour let us follow the candidates of both parties, as they have raced side by side through the decades. Ignoring their political theories entirely, let us see contrasts of their respective fortunes at the same periods of their careers.

The first contestant in the race was Judson Harmon, of Ohio. He was four years old when Champ Clark started running, nearly 3 1/2 years old when La Follette entered, and nearly 11 when Woodrow Wilson first became a contestant. He was 11 1/2 when Taft arrived upon the course, nearly 13 when Roosevelt joined the contest, and past 14 when little Oscar Underwood first placed his chubby foot upon the ring.

The first collective view which we can get of these contestants is during the exciting period of the Civil War. Within those four years Judson Harmon, a minister's son, entered Denison University, a Baptist institution of Granville, O., where he was to take his A. B. the year after Lee's surrender. When Sumter was fired on Clark, a poor itinerant dentist's motherless boy, was doing chores for a Kentucky farmer, that he might work out his sister's board, as well as his own, while he attended the neighboring village school; but before the war was over he had, when a lad of 14, sought a shorter road to fortune by way of a 24-a-week clerkship in the crossroads store, which mart was, however, soon to go out of business.

Underwood, born in the second year of the war, was at the close of that struggle carried from Kentucky to St. Paul, along with his invalid mother, who went part of the way on a mattress. The father of the saddened family was moving his law practice to the Minnesota city, that his faithful wife might regain her health, which she did, having lately entered the venerable category of the octogenarian.

Some Boyhood Contrasts. "Lub" Taft (for thus he was nicknamed on account of his size) was in those boyhood days principally engaged in outgrowing his clothes. Young Theodore Roosevelt was a frail lad in comparison. He suffered so painfully from asthma during this time that on summer nights his fond father would wrap him up in blankets and drive him out into the country, where the fresh, cool breeze relieved his paroxysms of sneezing. These were times when being spent by little "Woodrow" Wilson in the Southern paragonage of his father, who was a Presbyterian divine, and by little Bob La Follette in his native Wisconsin.

During the reconstruction days Harmon, after graduating at Denison University, entered the Cincinnati Law School, where Clark and Taft are later to be trained as barristers. But before he follows his Clark must continue to tread a thorny path. As a farm laborer and country schoolmaster he plods along until he can make and scrape enough money together to put him in the University of Kentucky. Our younger contestants in the race for the Presidency are during this time dividing their attentions between play and primary schools. If they did anything remarkable history has missed it thus far.

Expelled for Fighting Duels. In the '70s all were to make records. In the first year of that decade, Harmon, a lawyer of one year's practice,

married, and three years later Clark, having been expelled from the senior class of the Kentucky University for fighting a duel in the classic style, entered Botham College, a Campbellite institution of West Virginia, to gain his sheepskin, which he directly captured, taking first honors along with it. The same year he became president of Marshall College, West Virginia, at a salary of \$1400, along with which went the as yet unbroken record of being the youngest college "prexy" in America, for he was then but 22. But yearning already for political honors, he decided that the law offered a straighter path. A few years later Woodrow Wilson was to reverse the order exactly and leave the law to become a college professor.

The year 1874 saw three of our candidates in Cincinnati. Champ Clark had come here to study in the law school, Harmon, having finished at the same institution five years before, was now practicing law, and Taft, just graduated from the Woodward High School, was packing up to go to Yale. And while the future President, at New Haven, was starring, first as the arch-terror of the Yale "rushes" and later as a fiend for books as well as athletic prowess, Clark was starting his career in Missouri, first as schoolmaster, country editor and lawyer at a village called Louisiana. During the same period Harmon was making his first splash into politics by becoming Mayor of Wyoming, a suburb of Cincinnati, but the next year, that of the great centennial at Philadelphia, he was to become Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, in the neighboring city. The Underwoods now returned to their native Kentucky, settling at Louisville when Oscar was a cherub lad of 15. And this period of the '70s was wound up by Harmon's stepping up to the Superior Court in

the same year when Taft graduated second among 131 in Yale, class of '78, of which he was salutatorian and class orator. The same Autumn he entered the Cincinnati Law School, whence Harmon and Clark had departed with their sheepskins eleven and three years before, respectively. The next Spring Woodrow Wilson and La Follette graduated at Princeton and the University of Wisconsin, both, like Taft, entering immediately into the law.

Taft Licked the Editor. It was while he was finishing his first year in law school that Taft figured for the first time in the printed news of the day. In April, 1879, a sensational weekly, edited in Cincinnati, published some calumnies which the young Yale rasher construed as reflecting upon a member of his family. A published account of the calumnies' punishment states that "Mr. Will Taft, a tall, powerful, athletic young man, about 21 years of age," visited the editor forthwith. "Will Taft" this news item goes on to say, "is only a year or so out of Yale, where he developed his muscles at the manly exercises of the college, and he seems to have retained it." Then follows an account of the challenge and chastisement of the muddlinger, who "went off bleeding and pale, with his head well punched." Soon afterward this athletic defender of his family's honor began to earn his first money—\$8 a week—by doing law reporting for the Cincinnati papers.

The year 1880 may be marked as that in which all of our candidates except Harmon, the eldest, and Underwood, the youngest, were to start together in a neck-and-neck race. Roosevelt in that year graduated from Harvard and began his career without further scholastic training. Taft, La Follette and Wilson, after finishing at law school the same Summer, were admitted to

the bar, while Camp Clark moved to Bowling Green, his present home, where he at once began to practice law and make a fresh start in life. In the same year of his finishing at law school La Follette made a quick stride by becoming County Prosecutor.

Teddy Quick to Marry. But before this race could fairly begin, Dan Cupid was to have a reckoning with three of the contestants in short order. In the Autumn following his graduation, Roosevelt married his first wife, Alice Lee. He had lately inherited a snug fortune—sometimes estimated at a quarter million dollars—from his father, Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., glass importer, banker and philanthropist.

During the next year Clark and La Follette married in the same month. But Taft, who now became assistant County Prosecutor of Cincinnati, was not to take a spouse until five years later. In 1885, when Roosevelt entered upon his active political career as member of the New York Assembly, President Arthur appointed Taft Collector of Internal Revenue for the First District of Ohio, and Woodrow Wilson moved to Atlanta, Ga., to practice law for a year. About this time Underwood was earning his sheepskin at the Uni-

versity of Virginia, where Joseph W. Bailey, now Senator from Texas, was also a student.

The year of '94 was a sad one for Roosevelt. On Valentine's day his young wife died, when their daughter—the present Mrs. Longworth—was two days old, and within a few hours the future President also lost his mother, the two being buried together. A few months later the young widower was elected delegate-at-large to the convention which nominated Garfield. After the convention he put out for his ranch in North Dakota, there to remain two years. He now got out his "Trips of a Ranchman," and Woodrow Wilson, at the same time, brought forth his "Study in American Politics." In that same year, 1885, the latter—then known as Thomas Woodrow Wilson—married at Savannah, Ga., his bride being, like himself, a parson's child.

Wilson Teaches Girls' College. It was now that Wilson gave up the law and chose the course that was later to earn his title, "The schoolmaster in politics." Soon after returning from his honeymoon he accepted the chair of history and political economy at Bryn Mawr, the big woman's college near Philadelphia. The same year

Taft entered upon a two-year term as assistant County Solicitor, in Cincinnati; Clark became Prosecuting Attorney of his county, and La Follette made his Congressional debut as a member of the House committee on ways and means, now headed by Underwood. La Follette, at that time wore a small mustache, along with his pompadour.

Two of our candidates married the following year—1886. Taft led off in June by wedding Helen, the sweetheart of his youth, to whom he had been true during the year that he had been earning his own home. They went abroad on a honeymoon which took them through the garden spots of Europe. That was the Summer Roosevelt, who had tired of ranch life and returned to the metropolis, was making his unsuccessful campaign for Mayor of New York. After the election he went abroad and on December 2—nearly three years after the death of his first wife—married the present Mrs. Roosevelt in London, where she was visiting. During the succeeding year Roosevelt finished two books, and Taft, by what now appears as a coincidence, stepped into the shoes of his older rival, Harmon. The latter resigned his place on the Superior Court bench and Governor Foraker—later to quarrel with Taft and Roosevelt—appointed Taft to the vacancy.

This was the beginning of Taft's judicial career. A year later he was elected to succeed himself for five years. Wilson now left the girls' college at Bryn Mawr and became professor of history and political economy at Wesleyan University.

Meeting of Taft and Teddy.

The couple of years that followed were to see the coming together of Taft and Roosevelt in Washington and the forging of their close bond of friendship, which was to last during the next 20 years. After Harrison's inauguration Roosevelt came first as Civil Service Commissioner and Taft followed as Solicitor-General. They met frequently at the mansion of their mutual friend, Bellamy Storer, who then represented in Congress the present Cincinnati district of his kinsman, Nicholas Longworth, Roosevelt's son-in-law. La Follette was now busy helping to frame the McKinley tariff bill, and Wilson the same year shifted chairs at Wesleyan, taking that of "jurisprudence and politics." Clark was serving his second year in the Missouri Legislature. But Taft's career in Washington was to last only two years, for in 1892 Harrison elevated

him to the Federal bench, where, as Circuit Judge, he was to remain until McKinley should put him in charge of affairs in the Philippines.

In the year of the World's Fair at Chicago, Champ Clark, a giant of 43, wearing the pair of mustaches which make his accompanying photograph look far from Champish, made his debut in the House of Representatives, which La Follette had left two years before, and which Underwood was to enter two years later. Roosevelt now remained with the new Cleveland regime as Republican member of the Civil Service Commission, but left in two years to become president of the New York Police Board under Strong, the fusion Mayor. The same year Clark also left Washington life temporarily, while Harmon made his debut therein as Attorney-General of the Cleveland Cabinet. A year later, Taft and Harmon are brother professors in the Cincinnati Law School, where Taft is dean; Roosevelt finishes his "Winning of the West"; Wilson gets out his "Life of George Washington," and La Follette goes as delegate to the convention which nominates McKinley for his first campaign against Bryan.

Events Now Fall Fast.

With the coming of McKinley events for all concerned commence to fall quick and fast. After his hiatus of one term Clark returns to Congress, where Underwood is beginning his second term. Roosevelt also returns to Washington, now as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Then fall in rapid succession the explosion of the Maine, the organization of the Rough Riders by Roosevelt and Wood, the charge up San Juan hill and Roosevelt's election as Governor of New York, all in the year 1898.

How these racers have since run together is pretty clear in your memory. The same year in which Roosevelt was elected Vice-President, Taft took charge of the Philippines and La Follette was elected Governor of his state. Then followed Roosevelt's succession of McKinley, and the next year Woodrow Wilson's selection as president of Princeton and La Follette's re-election as Governor.

T. R. Picked Taft in 1906.

In the campaign year 1904 there was something stirring for all the contestants, except Harmon. Taft was made Secretary of War, Roosevelt was elected President, La Follette was made Governor for the third term, Underwood and Clark were re-elected to Congress, the latter having been chosen permanent chairman of the convention that nominated Parker, and chairman of the committee that notified that candidate of his nomination. Then La Follette in 1905 comes to the Senate; Taft, in 1906, adjusts the insurrection in Cuba and declines an appointment to the United States Supreme Court offered him by Roosevelt, who replies to his declination in a letter stating: "There are strong arguments against your taking this justness. In the first place, my belief is that of all men who have appeared so far, you are the man who is most likely to receive the Republican nomination and, who, I think, the best man to receive it." Next followed Taft's trip around the world in 1909, and his election to the Presidency in 1908, in which year Harmon was chosen Governor and Clark became minority leader of the House, thus perfecting his way for the Speakership, to which he succeeded three years later, when Underwood became chairman of the ways and means committee, with its vastly augmented powers, and Wilson became Governor of New Jersey. Thus have these seven ambitious men run side by side in the great race for power and glory. In a couple of months all will have dropped out save two—or will it be three? (Copyright 1912, by John Elfreth Watkins.)

Choice of a College.

It is my belief, after visiting more than five hundred institutions in North America, that the quality of instruction in any one of these institutions of the first grade does not vary sufficiently to render the choice of a college on the ground of educational advantages a matter of great moment. The values which the small college loses from inferior equipment are usually offset by the more direct access of the student to the personality of the teacher, and often by closer friendships with fellow-students.—Century.