

Sen. Samuel M. Ralston

Samuel M. Ralston was born on a farm in Tascara county, Ohio, Dec. 1, 1857. At the age of eight he moved with his parents to Owen county, Indiana.

Ralston attended the rural schools in Owen county, walking to and from school in winter months. His summers were spent as a hand on his father's farm.

Largely through his own efforts he fitted himself for teaching and at the age of eighteen he was granted a license.

The next seven years were spent teaching country schools in Owen county. He carefully laid aside funds from his skimpy salary to secure a higher education.

Ralston attended the Central Normal college at Danville, Ind., and was graduated at the age of 27. Returning to Owen county, he read law in the office of a friend and was admitted to the bar.

During his law studies a friend gave him free board and he saved room rent by sleeping on a sofa of the law office.

Ralston made an effort to establish himself as a lawyer at Frankfort, but the attorney to whom he offered his services refused to hire him for merely enough pay to pay his board and laundry.

Almost penniless, Ralston returned to Spencer and a friend advised him to go to Lebanon. There he established himself in the community and became active in Democratic politics.

Ralston the lawyer became the leading citizen of Lebanon through his honesty, uprightness and ability. Ralston was known to every citizen in the county and though changes of venue which brought cases to Boone county from Marion county, he became well acquainted with prominent members of the Indianapolis bar.

In 1912 the Democratic state convention picked him by acclamation as the party's candidate for governor. He made a thorough campaign of the state and was elected in the fall.

During his four year administration as governor he gave the state a business administration, paid the state debt, promoted the first state park and gave needed aid to the state state schools and universities.

He was deeply interested in good roads and called a meeting of the governors of several states which instituted the building of the Dixie highway. The tenth anniversary of the establishment of the highway has just been celebrated.

One of the outstanding incidents of his administration as governor was his amicable settlement of the street railway strike in Indianapolis in 1913, one of the most bitter labor disputes in the state in many years.

Upon his retirement from the governor's office, Ralston entered an Indianapolis law firm and for five years practiced law before he was again called on to take up his party's standard.

He was literally drafted by party leaders in 1922 to make the race for the United States senate as the only man who had a chance to beat Albert J. Beveridge, the Republican candidate.

Ralston again rolled up his sleeves and went into a strenuous campaign, emerging victorious over Beveridge by a plurality of 30,000.

On election night as the returns were rolling in "Ralston for President" boom was born. When Ralston took his seat in the senate in March, 1923, his friends were already actively laying fences to place his name before the next national convention of the Democratic party as a presidential candidate.

Seldom does it come to man's lot to refuse the nomination for the presidency of the United States. Yet this is exactly what happened in the case of Senator Ralston at the convention in 1924.

Ralston's name was placed in nomination by the Indiana delegation, which stood staunchly by him through the historic deadlock between Gov-

ernor Al Smith and William G. McAdoo.

Time after time outside aid was offered the Ralston boom by delegates from other states, but Tom Taggart, the veteran Indiana leader, bided his time until the Smith and McAdoo forces had worn themselves out through nearly 100 fruitless ballots.

Once Ralston telegraphed Taggart to withdraw his name and Taggart complied, the Indiana delegation giving its vote to other candidates. Ralston's withdrawal was made in the interest of party harmony.

But instead of ruining his chances, his unselfish act strengthened his position and paved the way for a drift to him later in the convention.

All through the day of July 8 the Ralston vote grew steadily and on the ninety-sixth ballot reached the high mark of 195 3-4. Meantime the Smith and McAdoo forces were broken and their strength was fading fast.

When the convention adjourned that night it was generally conceded that Ralston's nomination was matter of but a few more ballots.

Taggart was sure of 471 votes on the first ballot of the next session for the Indiana senator. Then came the bombshell. Ralston telephoned Taggart from Indianapolis that he was definitely and finally out of the race.

Broken-hearted after his long fight, Taggart withdrew Ralston's name and the strength that would have been his went to John W. Davis, who was nominated.

There was much speculation among politicians and the public generally as to why Ralston declined the honor of being his party's candidate for the presidency.

His intimate friends, however, knew his withdrawal was on advice of his physicians, who told him his physical condition was such that the strain of a long campaign would be fatal.

In some quarters Ralston was criticized for not heading the party's call.

in an hour of great need. It was felt that his reputation throughout the middlewest would have done much to heal the wounds caused by the national convention.

The senator felt it would be better to decline the responsibility of the presidential candidacy than to collapse under the burden of it.

Ralston returned quietly to Washington the following winter and occupied his seat in the senate, though his health was failing even then.

Last spring he came back to Indianapolis, greatly weakened by a complication of heart and kidney disorders. His physicians prescribed absolute rest and his condition improved, but on September fifth he was ordered to bed.

Ralston's political philosophy was summed up in these words uttered at one of the last meetings of Indiana Democrats he attended:

"The salvation of the people and the success of popular government rests absolutely on the honesty and efficiency of the public servants. Without honesty, without integrity and economy in public expenditures, no political party deserves the public confidence. All other issues are secondary."

Ralston's parents were John and Sarah Scott Ralston, both of whom died many years ago.

He was twice married. In December, 1883, he married Mary Josephine Backous, of Connersville, Ind. She died the following year.

In 1889 he married Jennie Cravens

of Danville, Ind., who, with two sons, survive him.

Airplane Stunting For Deafness Called A Fad

Benefits of airplane nose diving in cases of deafness usually are greatly exaggerated, according to the opinion expressed in the latest bulletin issued today by the Publicity Bureau of the Indiana State Medical Association.

"The craze of airplane stunting as a cure for deafness is merely one of the many fads which people are so apt to grab up wherever health questions arise," continues the Bulletin.

"Lately airplane riding as a cure for deafness has become a common occurrence in Indiana and several weeks ago newspapers carried accounts almost every day of some person who had been taken up in an airplane and put through a series of nose dives, loops, spins and barrel rolls to cure deafness. Often when the plane was landed the deaf person said he could hear better than before the ride. As a result readers are wondering to what extent nose diving will cure deafness and what reasons the believers in scientific medicine give for this apparent phenomena.

"Hylegia, the magazine issued for the Public by the American Medical Association discusses the subject of nose diving and airplane thrills to relieve deafness, as follows: "Sometime during the World War a man suffering with hysterical deafness went up in an airplane, received the shock of his

life, came down quite able to hear. The result was duly acclaimed by the press. During the same war a story was told of a British private who suffered unduly with hiccups. He stood in his trench with shells bursting all about him and said to his buddy: "Scare me, Alf, I've got the 'icups.'"

"Physicians have long known of cases of loss of voice, loss of hearing, loss of sight, loss of motion of the limbs, resulting wholly from mental unwillingness to have the organs perform their usual functions. Such patients frequently believed of their disbelief by suggestions accompanied by some powerful stimulus. To this category, no doubt, belong the cases of deafness that have been relieved by airplane flights. C. E. Lane of Indianapolis, age 69, dropped 15,000 feet in, not from, an airplane, in an attempt to cure deafness. He thinks the experience helped the noises in his head. A little girl, deaf from birth, from a type of nerve affection that physicians know is incurable, tried the same experience and with no success.

"So the medical profession of Indiana wishes to warn the people of Indiana that too extravagant claims should not be made by airplane riding as a cure for real deafness."

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