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A Congressman and His Constituents: Jerry Simpson and the Big Seventh

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Fort Hays Kansas State College

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A CONGRESSMAN AND HIS CONSTITUENTS
JERRY SIMPSON AND THE BIG SEVENTH

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science

by

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Approved

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ABSTRACT

Jerry Simpson, Medicine Lodge, Kansas, was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1890, 1892, and 1896; he was defeated in races in 1894 and 1898. Allegedly his first election resulted from his exposure of a naked foot during a campaign speech in which he claimed to be too poor to buy socks.

This report traces the life history of Jerry Simpson, emphasizing particularly his relationships with his constituents. The 1890 election campaign is dealt with in some detail, the apocryphal "sockless" story being relegated to a footnote.

The writer believes abnormal economic conditions caused the election of Jerry Simpson as a protest; returning prosperity resulted in his defeat. A new economic issue caused his comeback in 1896: new prosperity and an outbreak of nationalism retired him in 1898. His career illustrates that a democracy can discover and develop leaders who truly represent the majority of their people and discard them when they have served their purpose.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer is deeply appreciative for the patience, advice, constructive criticism, and encouragement of Dr. Raymond Welty. He also wishes to acknowledge the assistance of his graduate committee members whose careful attention to matters of detail in the manuscript improved the final product.

The project could not have been completed without the assistance of the staffs of libraries and newspapers: Forsyth Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College; Kansas State Historical Society; Great Bend Daily Tribune, Wichita Eagle. Other library staffs or organizations contributing importantly were Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois; Iowa University, Iowa City, Iowa; Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg; Kansas University; Wichita University; Washburn University; city libraries in Smith Center, Larned, Hoisington and Topeka; Smith County Pioneer, Smith Center; Salina Journal; Larned Tiller and Toiler; Registers of Deeds at Holton and Medicine Lodge.

The writer also wishes to thank his parents and Don C. Staab and Donald F. Rowland of Topeka for their immense personal assistance and encouragement. Roy Watkins, Hoisington and Bill Cuthebert, William Jewell College, Liberty Missouri, were personally helpful with many suggestions.
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INTRODUCTION

"Normally Kansas is what Kansas is traditionally," Jerry Simpson said to Victor Murdock.1 The aging Populist radical was telling the young Republican progressive that the people of the district which sent Simpson, Chester I. Long, and Murdock to Congress were normally Republican conservatives. The aging Murdock wrote of Simpson:

He knew that which so few reformers ever recognized — that inertia fought on the other side, and that in politics ultimately inertia always wins. He knew that tradition, the right of possession, convention in law, business and publicity, and confirmed social usages which thread civilization through and through and bind it together would gather at last around the static standard of society and hold the field for things as they are. You could attack them, bewilder them, temporarily confuse them; you could not permanently overcome them.2

Farmers are capitalists; they identify themselves with capitalism, a fact which many leaders in various times and places have learned from sad experience (notably Joseph Stalin). Abnormal conditions may produce agrarian radicalism, but a return to normalcy will bring about a return of conservatism.

This report examines an abnormality. The research was begun three years ago as an exploration of a personality, on the erroneous assumption that a dynamic individual had shattered the pattern of politics in southwest Kansas. Secondary reports (including Murdock's) and memories

2Ibid., 102.
(including those of the caretakers of a Wichita cemetery) indicated that Jerry Simpson became a member of the House of Representatives because of a dramatic incident: he allegedly exposed a naked foot and said he was too poor to buy socks.

This frequently repeated story does an injustice to the people and to the Congressman. The voters of four other Kansas districts also elected Populists in 1890. Abnormal economic conditions caused the protest vote; a return to normalcy resulted in a return to traditional political expression. When the people were restless Jerry Simpson was astute and available.

The writer has always been opposed to the school of history that teaches that history is a collection of the lives of Great Men, and he embarked upon the project of a biographical thesis with grave misgivings and only because of a personal curiosity about the subject. Investigation serves to confirm that the office of Greatness seeks the man; if the man also seeks the office that is coincidental.

Documentary material and letters relating to the subject are meager or not significant. The biography of Jerry Simpson authorized by his widow (Annie L. Diggs, The Story of Jerry Simpson [Wichita: Jane Simpson, 1908]) was done from memory. The present writer has no serious dispute with this book, but the account had to be filled in with dates and details from contemporary press accounts.

Therefore this report is partially a study in propaganda: a collection of written words — usually highly partisan, frequently hostile — about a man who was adept with the spoken word but
uncomfortable when writing. Some of the vitriolic journalism is significant to the relationship between Simpson and his constituents and is included for that reason; otherwise the writer attempted to select the portions of each account which confirmed other information and ignore the purely partisan propaganda.

There is no attempt in this report to detail the impact of Jerry Simpson upon the nation. That has already been done: Charles Keith Franks, "Jerry Simpson — A Kansas Populist" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, 1940). Events outside the southwest Kansas district are introduced only when they have significance to the Congressman's relationship with his constituents. Nor is this report an investigation of the economic plight of the voters which caused their abnormal political behavior. Although some comments are offered on this subject in passing no statistical proof has been systematically collected.

NOTE

The footnotes have been written with two objectives:

1. The elimination of *ibid.*, *op. cit.*, and *loc. cit.* wherever practical by the use of short titles. The full citation is given the first time a source is used in each chapter; short titles are used only for frequently cited materials.

2. The word "Kansas" has been eliminated as a part of the location of all towns in citations. All other places of publication are identified as to state or territory; Kansas never is. The writer believes this is the least confusing consistent method of dealing with the materials.

An Appendix discussing the Simpson land transfers in Barber county follows the text on page 233.
CHAPTER I

THE WITCHCRAFT IN A SEED

Queen Victoria gained a new subject March 31, 1842. A boy was born to the family of Jeremiah Simpson, Westmorland county, New Brunswick. The father was a sailor and sawmill operator of Scottish ancestry; the mother was of Welsh and English parentage. The boy, one of several children, was called Jerry. He was educated largely at home. His father read broadly and passed the habit on to his son; Jerry attended the public schools after the family moved to Oneida county, New York, in 1848.


It is not certain that the name of the father was Jeremiah; Hill P. Wilson, A Biographical History of Eminent Men of Kansas (Topeka: The Hall Lithographing Company, 1901), 609, gives the father's name as Joseph. Very little is known of him; he may have lived his later years in Indiana, see Raymond C. Miller, Dictionary of American Biography, ed. Dumas Malone (New York, New York: Charles Scribners and Sons, 1935), XVII, 179-180.

The name Jerry may or may not have been a nickname, see Medicine Lodge Cresset, December 18, 1891, February 26, 1892 (hereinafter Cresset). He was also referred to as Jeremiah, Jerre, J. A., and Gerry; the writer has chosen to use the name Jerry because, apparently, it was the favorite of the subject. It is the name he signed to three letters in the Archives of the Kansas Historical Society. Jerry is the name used on the stone erected by his wife in Maple Grove cemetery, Wichita.

2Diggs, Story, 15-18; biography in Medicine Lodge Barber County Index, July 30, 1890 (hereinafter Index); Biographical Directory, 1815; obituary in Eagle, October 24, 1905.
At the age of fourteen the boy left home to become a cook on a lake steamer. He worked on the lakes until April 17, 1861, when the nineteen year old youth enlisted as a private in Company A, 12th Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry in Chicago. The unit was mustered into federal service May 21 and moved to Cairo, Illinois, where Jerry Simpson was discharged August 1, 1861, when the entire regiment was released. Simpson had contracted chronic diarrheah while in camp. He returned to lake sailing and advanced to become a mate of one of the large lake sailing vessels at the age of twenty-two. In 1864 he cast his first vote, for Abraham Lincoln.

1. A Fresh Water Sailor Becomes a Dry Land Farmer

One night in the winter of 1869, at Jackson Center, Indiana, Jerry Simpson attended a spelling match at the schoolhouse. He attracted the attention of eighteen year old Jane Cape. She was a small girl who had been born in Cumberlandshire, England. She

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3Diggs, Story, 16; obituary in Eagle, October 24, 1905; Biographical Directory, 1815; Index, July 30, 1890.

4Letter from Joseph D. Vance, Adjutant General of Illinois, published in Cresset, September 26, 1890; biography in Index, see also Great Bend Barton County Democrat, August 14, 1890; Eagle, October 24, 1905; Biographical Directory, 1815; Diggs, Story, 52.

5Biography in Index, July 30, 1890; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, August 14, 1890; Diggs, Story, 16, 21.

6Diggs, Story, 53.
contrived to have him chosen next to her in line. He went down the first round, she the second. The contest lasted late into the night, and the sailor, seven years her senior, escorted the girl home.7

Less than a year later, October 12, 1870, they were married in Buffalo, New York. The couple honeymooned on the Summer Cloud, Jerry as first mate, Jane as cook.8 The young bride settled on land, near Chicago; and September 2, 1873, a daughter, Hallie, was born to the couple. The little girl learned to walk on sea legs aboard her father's ship. When Hallie was three Jerry Simpson won his promotion to a captaincy. While he was busy outfitting the large new ship Hallie fell ill with scarlet fever. For two weeks the father commuted every night, walking the last eleven miles from the railroad, to be with his daughter. A son, Jarold Lester was born in 1878.9

In 1878 the J. H. Rutter, Jerry Simpson, master, was in tow of a steam barge on Lake Michigan. A lake storm tore the vessels apart, and the steering gear of the Rutter became useless. After a night of peril the ship ran aground of Ludington, Michigan. Captain

7Diggs, Story, 7-10.
8Diggs, Story, 21-23.
9Diggs, Story, 33-36. Jackson County Township Census, 1880, Franklin Township, 47, would date the birth of Hallie in 1874 or 1875, but other items in this census are inaccurate. The tombstone erected by Jane Simpson at Maple Grove cemetery, Wichita, is engraved: "Hally M. Dau. of J. & J. Simpson/Sept. 2, 1873 - Oct. 21, 1881".
Simpson enlisted the aid of forty landsmen to unload the cargo. The wind struck again when the job was half completed and Jerry and his brother James worked valiantly to save the lives of crew and laborers. All those on board were rescued. Jerry Simpson expected to lose his rank and job, but the owners offered him a larger, better vessel.

However the sailor son of a sailor father was weary of life afloat. He had a few thousand dollars, savings of twenty-three years, and in the winter of 1878 he sold his interest in a Porter county, Indiana, farm owned jointly with his brother and journeyed west. In 1876 Simpson had been impressed by the Kansas exhibit at the centennial celebration at Philadelphia.

On the twenty-third of January, 1878, Jerry Simpson visited the office of the Holton Recorder. He had been in Jackson County, Kansas, a week and was so well pleased with the country that he purchased a

10Diggs, Story, 27-29, 33; T. A. McNeal, When Kansas Was Young (Topeka: Capper Publications, Inc., 1940), 200 (hereinafter McNeal, When Kansas Was Young); obituary in Eagle, October 24, 1905; biography in Index, July 30, 1890 (which dates the loss of the Rutter in 1877); Topeka Daily Herald, July 31, 1905, gives the date of the shipwreck as October 31, 1878. Issues of the Chicago, Illinois, Weekly Inter-Ocean for 1878 which might contain the story of the Rutter are missing from the Kansas Historical Society files.

Hill P. Wilson, A Biographical History of Eminent Men of Kansas (Topeka: The Hall Lithographing Company, 1901), 609, says an impromptu meeting in the Ludington, Michigan, town hall on this occasion marked the first public speech made by Jerry Simpson.

11Diggs, Story, 36; Index, July 30, 1890.

12Wichita Kansas Commoner, October 26, 1905; Kansas City (Missouri) Journal, October 24, 1905.
quarter section of unimproved land for $1,000. He took back with him to Indiana a sample of Kansas corn with the intention of making a favorable report on the country to his Eastern neighbors.\(^{13}\)

He moved to Jackson county later in 1878 and immediately set about improving the rolling, wooded, rocky land, which adjoined the Pottawatomie reserve. Jerry built a home, which still stands beside US 75 five miles south of Holton; he also set himself up to follow the alternate occupation of his father. He had given up the life of a sailor but began the operation of a sawmill.\(^{14}\)

One day little Hallie Simpson set out from the house to walk home with her papa from the mill. New hands were unloading a log, and the little girl stepped into its path just as it started to roll down the skids. She saw the danger but tripped and fell as she started to run. Not a word or scream escaped her lips as the heavy log rolled over her. The horrified father witnessed the tragedy, helped lift the log from the lifeless little body, and carried his daughter back to the house, where he lay prone on the floor for hours resisting all efforts to take the child from him. Jerry Simpson could not bear the torture of having any stranger speak well meaning words of comfort.

\(^{13}\)Holton Recorder, January 24, 1878; Jackson County Numerical Index, VII, 447.

\(^{14}\)Diggs, Story, 36; Holton Recorder, October 27, 1881; Holton Signal, October 26, 1881; interview with Will T. Beck, Holton, August 7, 1957. Beck says that some of the lumber for the Simpson house was cut in the sawmill.
and there was no minister at the funeral the following day in Holton cemetery. The father spoke a few words, saying, among other things, that he did not believe that his child was better off dead than living. 15

While he was in Jackson county he interested himself mildly in Greenback political activity and spoke against the financial mismanagement of the Republican party. 16 January 2, 1884, Jerry and Jane Simpson sold their 170 acres of Jackson county land to James Cooney for $5,380, Cooney assuming a $1,500 mortgage. 17 The Recorder estimated that,

15 Diggs, Story, 36-38; Holton Recorder, October 27, 1881; Holton Signal, October 26, 1881; interview with Will T. Beck, Holton, August 7, 1957. Diggs and the Holton Signal agree that the death of Hallie had a profound affect upon Jerry Simpson. The writer received the impression (Diggs, Story, 42) that the tragedy caused the move to Barber county. Although it may have been an influencing factor, Simpson remained on the Jackson county farm three more years, buying another ten acres of land in 1883, Jackson County Deed Record, XXXII, 407.

The incident and the attitude expressed at this time may be significant in view of the controversy about atheism which arose in 1890, see pages 71, 202, and page 208, below. May 19, 1906, Jane Simpson had the body of Hallie moved to Wichita to lie in the plot with Jerry Simpson, records of Maple Grove cemetery, Wichita.


17 Jackson County Deed Record, XXXII, 619. Jerry Simpson had mortgaged 80 acres in November, 1883, shortly before he purchased the additional ten acres (Ibid., 407). The mortgage was held by the First National Bank of Boston, Massachusetts; and the interest rate was 7%; it was paid off in 1888; Jackson County Mortgage Record, XIV, 194.
disregarding the improvements made, Simpson had doubled his money. The paper felt that this was a contradiction of all the speeches he had made about the financial burden of the farmer and the effect of Republican party policies upon agriculture.  

By mid-January he had purchased land in Barber county, Kansas; and sometime in the spring of 1884 Simpson and his family moved to the new ranch.

During the following year the ranch did reasonably well, but in 1885 Simpson traded land and his small herd of domestic cattle for several hundred Arkansas "dogies". The great blizzard almost ruined him; he and Jane worked long hours skinning their frozen cattle.

2. A Political Neophyte Receives his Initiation

Politics were simple when Jerry Simpson arrived in Barber county in 1884. T. A. McNeal, lawyer, ran the Medicine Lodge Cresset and the Republican party. E. P. Caruthers ran the Barber County Index and the Democratic party. A majority of the people voted Republican.

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18 Holton Recorder, January 10, 1884. Eagle, October 24, 1905, says Simpson lost money in Jackson county; but the Eagle also gave the impression he lost money in Barber county, which does not agree with other reliable information, see footnote 1, page 26 below.

19 Cresset, January 17, 1884; Holton Recorder, February 7, 1884; Sharon News, July 22, 1884.

A brother, J. T. Simpson was in the hardware business in Holton at this time, Holton Recorder, February 7, 1884; interview with Will T. Beck, Holton, August 7, 1957.

20 T. A. McNeal in Topeka Mail and Breeze, November 4, 1905; Cresset, October 21, 1886; November 10, 1905; Diggs, Story, 42-43; McNeal, When Kansas Was Young, 201.
In 1884 McNeal was running for the Legislature. A minor diversion occurred when another Republican, William Garrison of Sharon, offered himself for the House seat because McNeal did not take a sufficiently strong prohibition stand. McNeal came out squarely against booze, and Garrison withdrew. 21

June 26, 1886, a new newspaper was born, making ten in Barber county. 22 The Medicine Lodge Chief frankly supported the Knights of Labor and greenback inflation. Garrison told the Chief he was through with the G. O. P. 23

B. E. Kies, shoe salesman of Medicine Lodge, was determined that the masses of the county should organize. With others he issued a call for a meeting Saturday, July 24, 1886. On the appointed day flood conditions hurt attendance, but a considerable number appeared at the Medicine Lodge skating rink. Jerry Simpson was chosen chairman, Kies secretary. The chair appointed a resolutions committee, which produced a set of declarations full of general socialist ideas, upholding squatters rights, blasting national banks, calling for greenbacks and prohibition, and speaking equivocally about supporting political candidates. 24

21 Sharon News, August-November, 1884; Cresset, August-November, 1884; Index, August-November, 1884. See page 81 below.

22 Index, September 10, 1884.

23 Medicine Lodge Chief, June 26, July 17, et passim, 1886 (hereinafter Chief).

24 Chief, July 3, 31, 1886.
By September Kies and Garrison were fanning radical political flames. The *Index* noted that the "greenbackers" wanted to run Jerry Simpson for the Legislature. It developed that the radicals were willing to have his name appear on a major party ticket. There was a real effort made to have him nominated by the Barber Democracy. Medicine Lodge divided, but Kiowa stood firm and secured the nomination of their townsman and physician, Dr. T. R. Hoover, 24-15. The Republicans renominated McNeal by acclamation.

Kies went ahead with plans for a mass convention in the Opera Block hall above the Post Office on October 2. The convention elected Garrison chairman and Kies secretary. Kies was chairman of the resolutions committee and Jerry Simpson on the committee on order of business. The resolutions equated the Republican party with saloons, demanded more equitable assessments, and joined the Democrats in asking for an audit of the county books. The *Cresset* reported that futile negotiations continued during the convention with the Democratic central committee, in session nearby. The Independents did not give up their efforts at

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26 *Index*, September 10, 1886.

27 *Index*, September 24, 31, 1886; see also *Chief*, September 25, 1886; *Cresset*, September 23, 1886. The *Chief*, reported the vote as Hoover - 24, Simpson - 14, not voting - 3; but the *Index* story is more extensive and probably more accurate; its editor was chairman of the convention. Letter, B. E. Kies to *Kansas Commoner*, October 30, 1905, published in Wichita *Kansas Commoner*, November 2, 1905, gives an account of the convention maneuvering.
fusion (i.e. combination of two parties). Simpson proposed endorsing the Democratic candidate for Clerk of District Court. A delegate, just returned for the Democratic council, rose and protested that he had asked Caruthers for bread and had been given a stone. The convention proceeded, nevertheless, to endorse the Democratic District Clerk and Coroner nominees, and the Republican incumbent Probate Judge, but put up their own candidates for county Superintendent and Representative. They sent Jerry Simpson into the three way race for the Legislature.\(^28\)

The *Cresset* remarked that they had "only one man fit for office and put him up for Representative."\(^29\)

The first speech by the candidate was at a night meeting in the school house at Elm Mills on the Medicine river. Simpson drove his team and spring wagon. Many times during the campaign Kies and Simpson returned home after midnight, Simpson telling stories *endlessly* to take their minds off the howling of coyotes and the rawness of the air.\(^30\)

\(^{28}\) *Chief*, October 9, 1886; *Index*, October 6, 1886; *Cresset*, October 7, 1886.

In the light of continuing attempts at fusion the order of business committee was of more than usual importance. The two offices for which Democrats were endorsed were dealt with first, state Representative last.

The editor of the *Chief* was among those opposing the endorsement of major party candidates, *Chief*, October 15, 1886.

The writer found no indication as to when Simpson became a United States citizen, a necessary qualification for the Kansas Legislature.

\(^{29}\) Headline in *Cresset*, October 7, 1886.

\(^{30}\) Letter, B. E. Kies to *Kansas Commoner*, October 30, 1905, published in Wichita *Kansas Commoner*, November 2, 1905. For information on how these school house campaigns were organized, see Donald H. Ecroyd, "An Analysis and Evaluation of Populist Campaign Speech Making in Kansas, 1890-1894" (Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 1949), passim.
The Medicine Lodge Cresset, in a day of editorial political libel, was easily the most vicious paper in the county. On October 14, it said, "Jerry Simpson or Dr. Hoover would cut about the same figure at Topeka that an emasculated dog does at a dog convention." It later claimed that McNeal had no connection with the attack.\footnote{Cresset, October 14, 21, 1886. Simpson still remembered the comparison with anger two years later, \textit{Index}, June 15, 1888. Kies recalled the story vividly in 1905, published in Wichita \textit{Kansas Commoner}, November 2, 1905. Kies exonerated T. A. McNeal, putting the blame on co-editor Lute Axline.}

McNeal had a reputation as the "funny man of the house".\footnote{Cresset, September 30, 1886 (quoting \textit{Kansas City (Missouri) Times}, \textit{Topeka Daily Capital}, and \textit{Larned Chronicle}).} The Chief felt that if the west side of the capitol were "a circus needing a clown . . . Jerry Simpson would make an admirable ringmaster."\footnote{Chief, October 15, 1886.}

The bloody shirt appeared as the Chief noted that the Independent candidate was the only ex-soldier in the race.\footnote{Chief, October 22, 1886.} The Cresset reported that he had traded land for cattle, "Land went up, cattle went down"; and it soured him. Simpson charged that McNeal had presided at a cattlemen's meeting which resolved that "a man who attempts to farm in Barber county should be hung."\footnote{Cresset, October 21, 1886.} Republicans spread the story that Simpson had offered the Russian Jew colony in
the south of the county $5.00 each for their votes. The Cresset charged that the Independents were trying to force Hoover to withdraw. The Chief asserted that the Democratic committee wanted Hoover to quit the ticket, but the Republicans induced him to continue and paid his campaign expenses plus a bribe. The Index felt that Simpson should get out of the race. The Democratic candidate for county Superintendent did withdraw, and the Democratic central committee substituted the Independent candidate.

When the men of Barber county went to the polls they elected all the Republican nominees except the Coroner. Barber was the only county in the seventh district to give a majority to the Democratic nominee for Congress however. Kiowa was proud of the number of votes

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36 Chief, October 29, 1886. In 1905 T. A. McNeal said that the Russian Rabbi offered to deliver forty votes for $1.00 each; McNeal turned it down; and Simpson also declined. Neither had $400, Topeka Mail and Breeze, November 4, 1905; see also Cresset, November 10, 1905.

37 Cresset, October 21, 1886.

38 Chief, October 15, 22, 29, 1886.

39 Index, October 27, 1886.

40 Index, October 20, 1886. Meetings were held by each party at various places throughout the county. Reported attendance and effectiveness varied with the editorial policies of each paper. Even some Democratic papers were not impressed with their nominees, see Lake City Kansas Prairie Dog, October 28, 1886; Chief, October 29, 1886 (quoting Kiowa Herald).

41 June G. Cabe and Charles A. Sullivant, Kansas Votes, National Elections, 1859-1956 (Lawrence: Governmental Research Center, University of Kansas, 1957), 119; Cresset, November 4, 1886; Index, November 10, 1886.
cast at their polls; the Medicine Lodge press was united in regarding many of the Kiowa votes as fraudulent.\textsuperscript{42} McNeal received 992 votes, Simpson 737, Hoover 656.\textsuperscript{43} The Chief, "bleeding at every pore", charged that eleven Simpson votes had not been counted at Leemore.\textsuperscript{44}

3. Barber County Economic Activity and the 1887 Election

Jerry Simpson fared poorly during the winter of 1886-1887. In December he lost twelve head of cattle by allowing them to run in dry stalk fields.\textsuperscript{45} In January "a fine milch cow" was killed when one of his hired men carelessly hit her on the head with a club.\textsuperscript{46} In February he advertised the sale of fifty head of cattle and two teams of work horses.\textsuperscript{47} March ninth his team became frightened at "the stir and bustle of the city" of Medicine Lodge and ran away with his spring wagon. The chase ended in the bottom east of town, Jerry making "the best race of his political career." The wagon was damaged to the amount of $7.00; the team was unhurt.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{42}Kiowa Journal, November 4, 1886; Cresset, November 4, 1886; Chief, November 5, 1886.
\textsuperscript{43}Index, November 10, 1886.
\textsuperscript{44}Chief, November 26, 1886.
\textsuperscript{45}Chief, December 24, 1886.
\textsuperscript{46}Chief, January 14, 1887.
\textsuperscript{47}Chief, February 18, 1887; Index, February 16, 23, 1887.
\textsuperscript{48}Cresset, March 10, 1887; see also Chief, March 11, 1887.
If the Simpson fortunes were mixed, other residents of the county were prospering. Kiowa had gambling houses, twenty saloons, and "several" brothels. They were organized and paid a regular "license fee" to the city. Medicine Lodge had only eight saloons but was able to operate the city government without any taxes on the citizens. Barber county had a cotton gin operating, was planning a coal mine, sugar mill, and oil operations.

Other Barber citizens changed jobs and moved. Representative McNeal made an unsuccessful try for State Printer and returned from Topeka declaring that he had "enough of law making" and would not run again; he retired from the Cresset and devoted himself to the practice of law. The Winfield Conference of the Methodist Church moved Rev. Robert Sanders from Hazelton to the county seat. He and his wife promptly voted in a Medicine Lodge city election despite a residence of only a week. In April Kies auctioned his household goods and left for California for his wife's health. Dr. Hoover left for Texas. David D. ("Dynamite Dave") Leahy appeared in the county to

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49 Index, February 2, 9, May 11, 1887; in 1892 Kiowa fines were $25 per month for men of leisure, $10 for women of leisure, Index, May 25, 1892.

50 Index, November 16, 23, 1887.

51 Chief, March 11, 1887; see also Chief, January 14, 1887; Cresset, October 20, 1887.

52 Chief, March 25, 1887; Index, April 6, 1887.

53 Chief, May 6, September 30, December 9, 1887.

54 Chief, June 10, 1887. Dr. T. R. Hoover had probably not resided in the state and county long enough to be a voter, much less a Representative, see Index, September 24, 1886.
take over the *Kiowa Herald*. The Knights of Labor claimed 500 members in Barber county. The Vincent brother had moved their *American Nonconformist* to Winfield, and the Farmer's Alliance and People's party were both organized in Cowley and Sumner counties by January 8, 1887. The Sumner People's party was part of a seventh district Union Labor party (Kies was on the executive committee briefly). May 7 Simpson presided over a meeting which organized the Union Labor party in Barber county. Saturday afternoon, July 2, the county central committee met with "80 friends", and Simpson spoke, opposing fusion with the Democracy. He was elected to a three man executive committee.

In the 1880's Kansas elections were held annually, part of the county posts being filled each year for two year terms. The new party considered running Jerry Simpson for county Treasurer. The *Index*

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55 *Kiowa Herald*, June 9, November 17, 1887.

56 *Chief*, May 20, 1887.


58 *Chief*, May 13, 1887.

59 *Chief*, July 8, 1887.
remarked that he had "about two-thirds of the brains" of the entire Barber county third party.\(^60\) On the sixth of August he spoke at a picnic at the William Garrison farm which was attended by 500 people.\(^61\)

The movement was having trouble with factions. Simpson nominated the chairman of the county convention and was rewarded by being made head of the credentials committee. He also pushed through the nomination of a candidate for sheriff, by a vote of 29-19.\(^62\) As the campaign progressed it was announced that Jerry Simpson would speak at twenty-two Union Labor rallies, most of them in school houses, during October and November. Just before he was to start on his tour he was called for jury duty during October, and the meetings were cancelled. He sat as juror only one day. Late in the month the court finished its work and Simpson took the stump, making more than seven speeches in school houses.\(^63\) The Republicans swept the county again.\(^64\)

\(^{60}\)Index, July 20, 1887.

\(^{61}\)Chief, August 12, 1887.

\(^{62}\)Chief, August 19, 26, 1887.

\(^{63}\)Chief, October 7, 14, 28, 1887; Cresset, October 6, 13, 1887, January 12, 1888.

\(^{64}\)Index, November 9, 1887. The Chief was suffering from lack of support. In mid-campaign it was cut from eight to four pages, and its pride, a large steam press, was sold to the Index. The ownership of the radical paper changed, and its editorial office moved to the second story of the T. A. McNeal building, from which it dispatched copy to the Index pressroom. The ailing Chief finally expired; two attempts at revival in 1888 were not successful, see Chief, October 14, November 18, December 9, 1887; Cresset, October 13, November 10, 1887; Medicine Lodge Independent Star, 1888; Medicine Lodge Barber County Democrat, 1888 (hereinafter Barber Democrat).
4. A Farmer Becomes a Contractor

The farming operations of Jerry Simpson continued to be disappointing. In August, 1887, he offered fifty steers for sale cheap. In December he rented his farm, and his wife went to Holton for a visit. Jane Simpson spent the winter there, but her husband remained in Barber county. Relieved of the farm, he kept busy preaching reform and debating in the Sharon literary society, for which he was janitor until it disbanded in February. With Garrison speaking for the affirmative Simpson won for the negative on a proposition to prevent resident aliens from voting.

Indecision marked the actions of Jerry Simpson in the spring of 1888. He put out over 250 fruit trees on his farm but rented it and secured pasture for his cattle so that he could leave the county without worry. In Mid-April he left for Holton, intending to spend the summer with his wife, who was in poor health. Within a month he was back in Medicine Lodge. His wife and son were to return late in May, and they were planning a trip to New Mexico for Mrs. Simpson's health.

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65 Chief, August 5, 1888.

66 Chief, December 9, 1887; Index, December 7, 28, 1887; Cresset, December 29, 1887, January 26, February 9, 16, 23, March 1, 1888.

67 Cresset, February 9, 16, 23, 1888 (Quoting Sharon Vidette, which the Cresset printed (Index, January 11, 1888)); Index, February 22, 1888. One of these debates provided an issue for the 1890 campaign, see page 64 below.

68 Index, April 12, 1888; Cresset, April 11, 1888.

69 Holton Recorder, April 19, 1888; Cresset, May 17, 1888; Index, April 11, May 9, 1888; Barber Democrat, April 13, May 11, 18, 25, 1888.
But by the time Jane Simpson arrived in town her husband had rented a house opposite that of Tom McNeal on Walnut street and was engaged in business as a contractor.70

The booming little city which was the county seat of Barber county could boast that the sidewalks in front of the Index and First National Bank were made of Winfield stone blocks six by ten feet, eight inches thick. Now it was to have a water system. A dam was to be constructed on Elm creek north of town and water diverted through a ditch two miles long to provide fire protection and industrial water.71

When the eleven bids for construction of the ditch were opened, May 19, 1888, it was found they ranged from a high of $8,982.20 down to the $6,950 bid of Jerry Simpson. The council moved to award him the contract, asking him to post a $100 performance bond. He asked for a delay until the following week but did not promise to produce bond even then. The contract was given to the next low bidder, P. B. Cole, for $7,433. The partnership of Cole and Simpson was formed, the two men thereby receiving an additional $483.72

The sharp business dealing of the partners did not end with outmaneuvering the city and the other bidders. Wage scales were set

70Cresset, May 24, June 7, 1888; Index, May 23, 30, 1888; Barber Democrat, May 25, 1888.

71Index, October 8, 1886, May 16, 23, June 20, 1888; Cresset, May 24, June 7, 1888.

72Cresset, May 24, June 7, 1888; Index, May 16, 23, 1888.
at fifty cents per day and board, $1 per day without board, and $2.50 for a man and a team. The work was to be on the eight hour system ("eight hours in the forenoon and eight in the afternoon", said the Index). The editor of the Cresset was especially critical, and Jerry Simpson rushed into print to defend himself. He maintained that labor was "a commodity that you buy in the market, and buy as cheap as you can." The Cresset replied with the suggestion that Cole and Simpson import a bunch of Chinamen. Workmen were paid in script to be redeemed at the Red Front store, and Simpson was getting a ten per-cent kick-back from the store manager.

The work was interrupted the night of June 19-20 by a flood on Elm creek which swept waist deep through the construction camp, forcing forty men and twenty teams to seek higher ground. The partners lost two wagons, several tents, all of their feed and supplies, several sets of harness, and a good portion of their camping outfit.

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73 Cresset, June 7, 21, August 16, 1888; Barber Democrat, June 15, 1888.
74 Index, June 6, 1888.
75 Cresset, June 7, 1888; Barber Democrat, June 15, 1888.
76 Barber Democrat, June 15, 1888.
77 Cresset, June 21, 1888.
78 Cresset, June 21, 1888; October 3, 1890.
Although none of the construction work was damaged, operations could not be resumed for several days.\textsuperscript{79}

The project was scheduled for completion by September 1, but the first water was not turned into the ditch until more than a month later. Caruthers, McNeal, and Simpson made impromptu speeches on the occasion.\textsuperscript{80} Two days later the walls of the waterway failed, making repairs necessary.\textsuperscript{81} The city paid for the contracted work, but in November the council objected that it was faulty and wanted Cole and Simpson to repair it without charge. They refused, and McNeal, as city attorney, began an investigation. By mid-December the city had spent an additional $300 on the ditch, and the prospects were that it would cost several hundred more. McNeal advised the council that there was no legal recourse against the contractors.\textsuperscript{82}

5. Fusion and Failure

In June, 1888, Dave Leahy, peripatetic editor of Kansas newspapers, arrived in the county seat to edit the Barber County Democrat for its last two months. He announced that he supported Jerry Simpson

\textsuperscript{79}Cresset, June 21, 1888; Index, June 20, 1888; Barber Democrat, July 6, 1888.

\textsuperscript{80}Index, September 12, 1888; Cresset, September 27, October 4, 11, 1888.

\textsuperscript{81}Cresset, October 4, 1888.

\textsuperscript{82}Index, November 14, December 12, 1888; Cresset, November 22, 29, 1888.
for the Democratic nomination for the Legislature, either House or Senate. 83 When the Union Labor party held its convention in mid-August, Simpson was not a delegate, although he appeared at the meeting. He was nominated by acclamation for state Representative on a complete separate ticket. On his motion the county executive committee was authorized to alter the slate of candidates. 84 He also attended the Union Labor state Senatorial convention at Coldwater and state convention at Wichita. 85

There had been a defection in the ranks of the reformers; in May William Garrison, sometimes Union Laborite, had turned up at the Republican convention. His reconciliation with the Grand Old Party was brief, however. By August he had found a new home and was exchanging open letters with Jerry Simpson in the columns of the Index. Simpson had said that the Prohibition party was "a party of one idea", and Garrison challenged him to debate. 86

83 Barber Democrat, June 8, 15, July 6, 1888.
Simpson and Dave Leahy first met while Leahy was editing the Kiowa Herald. Leahy was on his way to the county seat accompanied by three Republicans, who were giving him the worst of political argument. They encountered Simpson, whose team was stuck in the treacherous quicksands of the Medicine river, and succeeded in extricating him. They proceeded to town together, Simpson aiding Leahy with expert argument, Eagle, October 24, 1905.

84 Index, August 15, 1888.

85 Index, August 15, 29, 1888. Kies, now a widower living in Newton, was the Union Labor candidate for Representative from Harvey county, Cresset, August 23, 1888; Index, August 22, 1888.

86 Index, May 30, August 22, 29, 1888.
The new minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church was also attracting political attention. Rev. Robert Sanderson refused to pray for a Prohibition party meeting but offered an invocation at the Republican convention in August. It was "a close-corporation prayer and only asked blessings on the Republican party" and Harrison and Morton, the nominees for President and Vice President. "It was in fact a political speech addressed to the Deity and perhaps did not get outside the courthouse walls", sniffed the *Index*. 87

McNeal declined to return to the House, and the county convention nominated R. L. Carter, sixty-seven year old rancher. 88 The *Index* considered the possibility of Simpson as the Democratic nominee. 89 When the Democracy met early in September, Andrew Jackson Jones, lawyer and a former editor of the defunct *Democrat*, challenged Caruthers for control. Caruthers won the chair 39-19 on a rising vote. The chairman proposed a candidate for Representative, but the honor was declined; and Jones secured the nomination of Charles D. Nelson

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87 *Index*, August 22, 1888; see also *Index*, September 7, 1887, July 4, 1888; *Cresset*, August 23, 1888.

88 *Chief*, March 11, 1887; *Cresset*, August 23, 1888. In May, 1888, Chester I. Long, attorney, had challenged McNeal for the county endorsement for state Senator. McNeal won, 114 to 67. It was the turn for Barber county to receive the seat, but the quarrel gave the other counties an excuse to nominate another candidate, *Cresset*, May 24, 31, June 7, 1888.

89 *Index*, August 29, 1888.
of Lake City, ex-sheriff, by acclamation. The following day Simpson charged that the bankers of the county had set up Nelson in order to split the vote and defeat him.

Mrs. Carter was ill; and her husband was unable to campaign over the entire county. Nelson was sick, and on October 20 the Democratic central committee voted to substitute Jerry Simpson if Nelson withdrew. October 27 the Union Labor central and executive committees voted to substitute Democratic candidates for all county offices if the Democrats would place the name of Simpson on their ticket. October 29 Nelson wrote Caruthers that he was withdrawing, rather illogically giving as his reason the fact that stories were being circulated that he had already quit the race. The same day the Union Labor chairman and secretary replaced the names on their slate with the Democratic candidates for county offices. On the following day the Democracy took corresponding action, putting Jerry Simpson on their ticket.

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90 *Index*, September 5, 1888; *Cresset*, September 6, 1888.


92 *Cresset*, October 25, 1888.

93 *Index*, October 3, 31, 1888; for a Republican interpretation of these events see *Cresset*, November 1, 1888.

It was Jerry Simpson who, although he was not a delegate to the convention, had proposed that the three man county executive committee (of which he was a member) be empowered to make alterations in the county ticket, see page 21 above.
Tuesday, November 6, the men of the county went to the polls and elected the entire Republican ticket, Carter winning over Simpson 1,058 to 915. The Index felt that fusion had been a mistake but that Nelson could not have won either. The Union Labor vote was disappointing. The Cresset opined that many radicals had deserted their leader because of his construction dealings and that farmers did not appreciate the presence of two Democratic ex-loan agents and the vice-president of a Kiowa bank on the Union Labor ticket.

On Wednesday Simpson sarcastically told a group of men on the streets of Medicine Lodge that any worker who had voted Republican was a fool. Lee Corson, blacksmith, objected and said that he was doing well, was paying for a house and lot. Simpson recalled that he had contributed to a relief fund when Corson broke his leg a few months before: "Well, you must be doing a --- sight better than you were a while back. It hasn't been so very long since I subscribed and paid a couple of dollars to help you."

Corson went to his shop, got two dollars, took two drinks, and

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94 Index, November 14, 1888.
95 Index, November 7, 1888.
96 Cresset, November 1, 8 (actually published 9), 1888.
returned. Simpson refused the money, but the blacksmith pushed it into his overcoat pocket and then hit him in the face. In less than a minute the burly blacksmith was whipped, his opponent suffering not so much as a scratch. 97

Although unmarked by physical damage, the would-be legislator must have suffered a wounded ego. He appeared in the public eye seldom during the succeeding year. In March he sat on a Probate Court jury, and in June he was a minor functionary among the 300 Master Masons when James R. Hallowell of Wichita spoke at the laying of the cornerstone for a new school house. 98

The Union Labor party was dying. Chester I. Long, Medicine Lodge attorney, was nominated for the vacated state Senate seat and won without radical opposition. 99 When the Barber county third party met in convention in September, 1889, Simpson was in Holton, where his wife and son had been visiting for several months. The assembly adjourned without taking any action to nominate or endorse candidates. 100

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97 All material in the preceding two paragraphs including quotes: T. A. McNeal in Topeka Mail and Breeze, November 4, 1905; Cresset, November 8 (9), 1888. Corson later became one of Simpson's greatest admirers and staunchest political supporters, McNeal, When Kansas Was Young, 204-205.

98 Cresset, March 21, June 20, 27, 1889.

99 Cresset, June 6, 1889. See footnote 88, page 22 above.

100 Index, September 18, 1899; Cresset, September 19, 1889.
CHAPTER II

THE ALLIANCE DEFANCE

Jerry Simpson, farmer, was somewhat typical in Southwest Kansas in 1890. Barber county could be more accurately described as a bad example than typical of frontier government, but similar circumstances existed in other parts of the area. The combination of personal and political situations produced a condition in which a majority of the men of the seventh Congressional district proved willing to alter their government and institute a new order.

1. Farming in Southwest Kansas

Friends and enemies, at the time and long after, maintained that Jerry Simpson did not prosper in agriculture in Barber county. Certainly he was disillusioned with his prospects.\(^1\) He later told

\(^{1}\)T. A. McNeal, When Kansas Was Young (Topeka: Capper Publications, Inc., 1940), 201 (hereinafter McNeal, When Kansas Was Young); T. A. McNeal in Topeka Mail and Breeze, November 4, 1905; T. A. McNeal in Medicine Lodge Cresset, November 10, 1905 (hereinafter Cresset); Victor Murdock, Folks (New York, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921), 103 (hereinafter Murdock, Folks); obituary (probably written by Victor Murdock) in Wichita Daily Eagle, October 24, 1905 (hereinafter Eagle); Annie L. Diggs, The Story of Jerry Simpson (Wichita: Jane Simpson, 1908), 42-43 (hereinafter Diggs, Story); Percy S. Miller, "Pioneer History of Medicine Lodge" (unpublished Master's thesis, Wichita University, Wichita, n.d.), 96; Great Bend Register, July 24, 1890; Cresset, October 11, 1886, June 21, 1886; Barber County Index, April 29, 1908 (hereinafter Index).

The writer remains unconvinced that Jerry Simpson was unsuccessful as a farmer; Holton Recorder, January 10, 1884,

(This footnote continued on next page)
Victor Murdock of his motivation in moving to the frontier: "The magic of a kernel, the witchcraft in a seed; the desire to put something into the ground and see it grow and reproduce its kind. That's why I came to Kansas." ²

Such idealism may not have been widespread among his contemporaries, but if it existed at all a period of extended subnormal rainfall would cause dissatisfaction. In retrospect it would appear that Divine Providence was at fault in providing a semi-arid climate west of the ninetyeth meridian,³ but when discontent and disillusionment became the order of the day in 1890, railroads, loan agents, and politicians were much more accessible than the Deity and were more amenable to human discipline.

¹(Continued from preceding page) indicates he made a profit in Jackson county; Attica Advocate, July 25, 1890, said Simpson was "possessed of considerable means"; Kansas City (Missouri) Star, November 13, 1898, rated his ranch as one of the best in Barber county; Cresset, March 2, 1900, commented upon his prosperity and November 23, 1900, indicated he had acquired considerable property. The Eagle obituary estimated his estate as $1,500; but the Topeka Daily Capital, October 24, 1905, estimated $10,000; and the Index, November 1, 1905, placed it at $15,000 or more. Probate records in Sedgwick and Barber counties have no record of the estate. The Index, April 29, 1908, in reviewing Diggs, Story, said that Jane Simpson was left with many debts to pay when her husband died, her "modest home" in Wichita was mortgaged; profit was a secondary motive of publication of the biography of her husband.

²Murdock, Folks, 103; Diggs, Story, 55-56.

³"The settlement of the remote western counties of Kansas was a mistake and has resulted in great injury to the state . . . The soil is good enough . . . but the supply of moisture is uncertain," Kansas City (Missouri) Star, October 7, 1890.
The stock raising operations of Jerry Simpson received a setback in the winter of 1885-1886 when severe weather killed many of his animals. During succeeding years he purchased 560 more acres, mostly pasture land. The price of cattle went down. The precipitation, which had been running well above average, went down. Farmers began to leave their land, and among them Jerry Simpson moved to town. He must have considered leaving the county to return to the pleasanter regions from which he had come or to move on to a new frontier. His wife, certainly, spent a considerable amount of time in Holton where both she and her husband had relatives.

Factors in the human environment also contributed to unrest among the yeoman farmers of the semi-arid plains. Chief among these was usury. Frontierers are always in debt to older, established areas; even established farmers are frequently in debt. In 1890, long before price supports for agricultural products became accepted, interest rates were calculated to protect the lender from twin hazards: 1) bad weather, crop failures, no return; 2) good weather, crop surpluses, low prices, low return.

2. Frontier Politics

Barber county was organized in 1872 as a completely fraudulent

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scheme which eventually saw the issuance of more than $225,000 in warrants and bonds for a courthouse, bridges, and a railroad, none of which were ever built. The thieves who had conducted the looting moved out (as did the few honest cattlemen who had been transient residents); and permanent residents were burdened with the debt. Conflict between cattlemen and homesteaders was gradually resolved in favor of the farmers as townships were organized and instituted herd laws, and the grazing was transferred to the Indian Territory.  

It is not unreasonable to extend these examples of political corruption and agricultural misfortune to much of the seventh Congressional district. To these conditions may be added the general disillusionment with what were once regarded as the best friends of the farmer, the railroads. Even such a violent advocate of the ancien régime as the Hutchinson News felt strongly that the railroads were showing a cavalier disregard for the people and that corrupt politicians were aiding them.  

1890 was a year of farm revolt across the nation. The unique factors present in Southwest Kansas were a discouraging climate and larcenous original organization of counties which left the

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5 McNeal, When Kansas Was Young, 20-24.


7 Editorial in Hutchinson News, August 12, 1890, an inflamed attack on the railroads, railroad commissioners, and the Topeka Daily Capital by a staunchly Republican newspaper.
farmers burdened with governmental debts in addition to their personal obligations. Two much debated issues in Kansas which do not appear to have much affect on the final result were woman suffrage and racial problems.

Dr. Samuel Johnson once remarked that patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel in politics. The writer would add to this dictum, as it applied to Kansas in 1890, that prohibition also served. It should also be established that in 1890 patriotism was of a particular type; in Kansas political merit was measured by the yardstick of Union service during the Civil War.

Fundamentally mankind is gregarious; humans desire to belong to a group. Men may organize churches for social as well as religious reasons; they may also join literary societies, service clubs, veterans organizations, fraternal orders, or political parties. The more closely a man feels drawn to the in-group, the more aggressive are his emotional reactions toward the out-group. Common adversity suffered by individuals can result in sympathetic discussion and, possibly, the alteration of purpose of any organization to an instrument directed against the out-group persons held responsible for the misfortunes of the in-group.

The National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union was organized in Kansas as a fraternal, secret order. The Alliance grew, and accompanying it spread an idea for a party of the people. From Cowley and Sumner counties in 1887 the twin ideas radiated throughout
Kansas. Many of the farmers joining the Alliance had no idea that the ripples radiating from Winfield would form the vortex of a whirlpool which would change Kansas politics for a decade; many joined in order to belong to a group and for no other reason.9

3. Party of the Third Estate

Early in February, 1890, the Medicine Lodge Cresset noted, without apparent concern, that the county was "becoming pretty well organized" by the Alliance.10 At that time the political news was the interest rate

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8 John D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 1931), passim; Barr, "Uprising", 1134-1147; Martha A. Warner, "Kansas Populism: A Sociological Analysis" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, 1954); Medicine Lodge Chief, 1887, especially January 28, 1887. The state Alliance was organized at Lyons, August 9, 1888, Eagle, August 14, 1888.

Following the 1890 elections Republicans attempted to organize a secret society, the Knights of Reciprocity, Cresset, March 6, 30, 1891.

9 T. A. McNeal in Cresset, November 10, 1905, asserted Jerry Simpson "saw clearly the political possibilities in such an organization and was one of the strongest advocates in the order that it should take a hand in politics."

10 Cresset, February 6, 1890. Although the Republican Cresset was not impressed, the Democratic Ulysses Grant County Register, February 15, 1890, thought that "the political strength of the Farmer's Alliance in Kansas will cause weeping in the Republican and Democratic ranks next fall." It advocated direct political action by the farmers.

The Newton Kansas Commoner, (B. E. Kies, General Solicitor), March 21, 1890, issued a "Fair Warning: The Farmers of Kansas have determined to act politically without reference to the existing political parties."

The Kansas City (Missouri) Star, May 7, 1890, advised its rural readers that it was useless to organize Alliances, hold conferences, and address petitions as long as they continued to "vote straight."

The Republican Anthony Journal, March 21, 1890, said: "The (Continued on next page)
on county bank deposits. The county Commissioners had awarded the funds to a bank which had bid at a low figure, then reconsidered and voted to move the accounts to obtain a better rate. The bank filed suit to prevent the transfer, importing counsel from Wichita to help their local attorney, Chester I. Long. 11

Jerry Simpson and eleven others issued a multi-partisan call for a meeting in Thompson's opera house to consider the matter of the county funds. Simpson called the meeting to order, was chosen chairman and permanent president of the "Citizens' and Tax-Payers' Mutual Protective Association of Barber County" with support from staunch Republicans. Subsequent meetings were held as the president attempted to convert the group into a permanent organization. The bank attorneys moved to have the Association cited for contempt, but they were unsuccessful, also losing their case. With the transfer of funds

10 (Continued from preceding page) politicians are at sea in their contemplation of the farmer vote. Men who have cared but little for the farmer heretofore, now pat him on the back and tell him how deeply they love the honest yeomanry of these broad prairies. . . . The farmers (sic) Alliance can become an irresistible power for good if it will." However, July 25, 1890, it informed its readers: "When relief comes to the farmer or working man by national or state legislation, it will come through the Republican party."

11 Cresset, February 6, 13, 1890.

In 1887 the Commissioners had awarded the deposits to the First National Bank at 1% instead of the Citizen's National Bank which bid 5%. The chairman of the Commission was a vice president of the First National, Medicine Lodge Chief, May 13, 1887.
the Association became moribund. 12

In the spring a county Alliance was formed. Simpson was chairman man of the resolutions committee which proposed that the farm organization purchase and operate a newspaper. 13 People were, however, more interested in the forthcoming city elections. Women could vote in municipal contests and had made a serious attempt to exercise their franchise on behalf of "enforcement of law" (i.e. prohibition) in Medicine Lodge. T. A. McNeal, city attorney and enforcer, was elected mayor, 238-203. Speculation over who would henceforth wear the marshal's star produced nine names, including that of Jerry Simpson. 14

"Joints" existed in Medicine Lodge in 1890. Sales of alcoholic beverages had not been ended by prohibition and had been only temporarily interrupted by a visit by the Attorney General. 15 The new mayor told the council it would be the duty of the incoming marshal "to use the utmost diligence in suppressing the unlawful sale of liquors and gambling in the city limits." Jerry Simpson was appointed and confirmed. 16 The frontier lawman entered immediately and seriously

12 Cresset, February 6, 13, 20, March 28, 1890. The Cresset supported the changing of the accounts.

13 Cresset, March 14, 1890; see also Cresset, June 6, 1890.

14 Cresset, April 11, 1890.

15 Index, October 6, 1886, February 2, 9, 1887; Cresset, October 20, 1887, November 29, 1888, April 11, 18, 1890.

16 Cresset, April 18, 1890; see also Index, April 16, 1890. The Cresset, reported that the appointment of Simpson was "quite a surprise to many and created no little commotion." The Index thought that Simpson would "make a good marshal" and noted that "about one (Continued on next page)
upon his duties. He served notice that henceforth boys were forbidden to swim in the sugar works lake. 17

A convention of delegates from Alliances in the seventh Congressional district assembled at Great Bend, July 22, 1890. It was a political convention; and, although the name of the People's party does not appear in the local press, the campaign was made under that name. The purpose was to nominate a candidate for Congress. Jerry Simpson attended as a delegate, but he had not been mentioned as a probable nominee. S. M. Scott of McPherson, proponent of a government price support plan, was the favorite to make the race; but he could not conceive that it would be possible to overcome the 14,000 Republican majority in the district; and he did not work for the honor. 18

16(Continued from preceding page) hundred men" had made up jokes about "Tom and Jerry" but did not laugh at each other's witticisms.

There was disagreement in 1890 as to whether Simpson moved to town for his wife's health or because he was broke and needed the $40 per month the city paid the marshal. Great Bend Barton County Democrat, July 24, 1890, supported the former while the latter reason was spread during the campaign by much of the Republican press and later repeated by T. A. McNeal (Cresset, July 16, 1897 (quoting Topeka Mail and Kansas Breeze), November 10, 1905.)

17Cresset, April 18, 1890.

18McNeal, When Kansas Was Young, 202; Great Bend Evening News, July 23, 1890; Great Bend Tribune, July 25, 1890; Great Bend Register, July 24, 1890; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, July 24, 1890; Newton Kansas Commoner, July 24, 1890; Wichita Weekly Beacon, July 25, 1890; Cresset, April 9, 1897 (quoting T. A. McNeal in Topeka Mail and Kansas Breeze), Leoti Western Farmer, July 31, 1890. Wichita Weekly Beacon, July 25, 1890, reports that James R. Hallowell worked, through agents, to gain the Alliance nomination; but that the delegates did not give it a second thought. The news story probably deserves the same fate.

The Newton Kansas Commoner, July 24, 1890, said: "Several good candidates were before the convention, but none seemed to want the nomination." This may have been true for some of the possible nominees, but the opportunity to run for office probably appealed to Jerry Simpson.
The committee on permanent organization recommended a man from Harvey county for permanent chairman; he protested that he was not qualified, having just come from the plow; but he was elected. The prospective candidates who were present were asked to make short speeches. V. M. Goodner (1888 Union Labor Congressional candidate) talked first, at such length that he had to be shut off; then Jerry Simpson spoke, declaring that he had come from Indiana with $6,000, but the laws of Kansas robbed him of it, and saying he opposed pensions; Scott also addressed the convention, protesting his unwillingness to run. Informal and formal voting produced the following results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal votes</th>
<th>Formal Ballots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V. M. Goodner</td>
<td>1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. I. Smith</td>
<td>1 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Simpson</td>
<td>8 9 9 24 31 39 55½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. H. Clover</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. M. Scott</td>
<td>18 18 18 33 29 36 38½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. A. Hammers</td>
<td>8 8 8 10 10 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. T. Armstrong</td>
<td>2 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. E. Winters</td>
<td>2 2 2 17 16 15 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. L. O'Mealey</td>
<td>9 9 9 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on next page)

19 Newton Kansas Commoner, July 24, 1890; Great Bend Register, July 24, 1890. A conflicting report states that "no one was permitted to talk up his own claims," Index, July 30, 1890.

20 Informal vote A: Newton Kansas Commoner, July 24, 1890, internal evidence would indicate this report was written by B. E. Kies; Informal vote B: Pratt Pratt County Union, July 31, 1890; Informal vote C: Leoti (Continued on next page)
The Great Bend Register reported that the resolutions committee had proposed:

8. That we demand that all honorably discharged soldiers, their widows orphans, be pensioned...

But, the account continued, this was reconsidered and changed. 21

20(Continued from the preceding page) Western Farmer, July 31, 1890, probably written by D. T. Armstrong, its editor; Formal ballots: Great Bend Barton County Democrat, July 24, 1890. Spelling of names varies between the four reports, that of the Barton County Democrat is used in the text.

Wichita Weekly Beacon, July 25, 1890, reported 102 of 114 delegates selected attended the convention. Pratt County Union and Kansas Commoner said that Kies, Parkhurst, and others withdrew before the formal balloting. Kies had only recently invested a considerable sum in the Commoner, which had almost suspended publication, and could not afford to leave it, see letter B. E. Kies to Kansas Commoner, October 30, 1905, published in Wichita Kansas Commoner, November 2, 1905, for an explanation of his part in the proceedings. S. M. Scott protested repeatedly but not too convincingly and begged the delegates not to vote for him, Leoti Western Farmer, July 31, 1890. See also McNeal, When Kansas Was Young, 281.

The name of B. H. Clover appears only in the Barton County Democrat and Western Farmer. He was president of the state Alliance and was living in Winfield; he was elected to Congress from the third district, see page 82 below.

21Great Bend Register, July 24, 1890.
The Index later printed the platform:

9. We demand that congress enact a graduated service pension law for the benefit of all honorably discharged soldiers and their widows, and a limited pension for the orphans of the same ... 22

The responsibility for the alteration is vague in the Register, but apparently the nominee dictated it as a sine qua non before his acceptance. 23

4. Major Parties in 1890

The Republican party was having no trouble finding a candidate. The incumbent, S. R. Peters, was not popular with portions of the Republican press and was not seeking renomination; at least six men were prominently mentioned for the race. 24

June 7, Col. James R. Hallowell of Wichita addressed a large audience at the Great Bend opera house, attributing the distressed

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22Index, September 24, 1890; the same wording appears in Great Bend Barton County Beacon, September 11, 1890; the Pratt Pratt County Union, July 31, 1890, printed a platform containing the declaration: "That we demand that all honorably discharged soldiers, their widows and orphans be given a service pension ... ."

23Western Farmer, July 31, 1890; Cresset, September 26, 1890 (quoting letter; Jerry Simpson to American Nonconformist, August 29, 1890, probably published in the Winfield American Nonconformist, September 4, 1890, which is missing from the Kansas Historical Society microfilm); Great Bend Register, July 24, 1890; Diggs, Story, 86.

24Great Bend Tribune, July 18, 1890.
condition of farmers to the lack of money in circulation, high rates
of transportation, dealing in futures, and growth of trusts. He
advocated free silver, regulatory laws, liberal pensions for old
soldiers, but endorsed most of the McKinley tariff. 25

Hallowell was born in 1841 in Montgomery county, Pennsylvania.
His Quaker ancestors had accompanied William Penn to the new world.
His father moved first to Baltimore and then to Greencastle, Indiana.
The boy worked in the family flour mill and attended school, but his
education was interrupted when his father suffered business reverses. 26

The young Hallowell enlisted in Company C, 11th Indiana Zouaves,
Col. Lew (Ben Hur) Wallace, commanding, and saw some action before being
mustered out. He formed a company for the 31st Indiana and rose from
Second Lieutenant to command a regiment at Atlanta. He was wounded
seriously in the hip and arm and, after four years and nine months
service, was discharged as a Colonel after occupation duty in Texas. 27

In 1869 he was assistant secretary of the Indiana Senate.
The same year he moved to Kansas. Hallowell had studied law after his

25 Hutchinson News, June 8, 1890; see also Great Bend Tribune,
July 18, 1890; Wichita Weekly Beacon, July 4, 1890; Cresset, August
1, 1890.

26 Irene G. Stone, "The Lead and Zinc Fields of Kansas",
Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society, 1901-1902
(Topeka: State Printer, 1902), VII, 251, footnote which contains
a biography of James R. Hallowell (hereinafter Stone, "Hallowell");
Great Bend Register, August 7, 1890.

27 Great Bend Register, August 7, 1890, says Hallowell was
wounded twice; Stone, "Hallowell", mentions only once. The two
biographies vary slightly in detail, e.g. enlistment dates.
discharge and this was the profession he followed in Fort Scott, Columbus, and Baxter Springs. He was elected to the Kansas House of Representatives in 1875 and the Senate in 1876. In 1879 he was elected Congressman-at-Large, but the Democratic majority refused to grant Kansas an additional seat. Hallowell was named United States District Attorney in 1879; after he moved to Wichita in 1887 he acted as state Assistant Attorney General, prosecuting liquor law violations. He was well known throughout the state. 28

The Republican convention assembled in Dodge City July 30. Organization was delayed six hours while it waited for a credentials committee report; three counties had contesting delegations. The resolutions committee made an effort to hold the farm votes by writing a platform that even staunch Republicans felt was a ridiculous attempt to please the Alliance. At 8:00 p. m. eleven men were nominated (including two Alliance members); Hallowell was ahead on the first ballot; he was still in the lead on the twenty-first ballot when the convention adjourned at midnight. At 9:00 a. m. the meeting reconvened and Hallowell swept the twenty-second ballot. 29

28 Great Bend Register, August 7, 1890; Stone, "Hallowell"; Holton Recorder, August 7, 1890; Holton Signal, August 6, 13, 1890; Index, January 18, 1888.

29 Dodge City Times, August 1, 1890; Cresset, August 8, 1890; see also Wichita Western Methodist, August 7, 1890; Cresset, August 1, 1890; Great Bend Register, August 7, 1890.

William Allen White told an Ohio audience in 1896: "When Jerry (Continued on next page)
When the Democracy of the "Big Seventh" gathered at Pratt on August 19 eight counties sent no delegates. The convention listened to oratory about the struggle between the masses and classes; but, after considerable bickering, adjourned without nominating. This tacit endorsement of Jerry Simpson was protested by W. S. Denton and Andrew Jackson Jones of Medicine Lodge, among others. The independent Hazelton Express printed the three party tickets in parallel columns and listed the Democratic nominee for Congress as A. T. B. Hallowell, i.e. Anybody To Beat Hallowell.

29(Continued from preceding page) Simpson ran for congress the first time the Republicans in his district stole the platform bodily. . . . The people . . . had to choose between the less violent of two lunatics," Topeka State Journal, February 13, 1897.

T. A. McNeal thought the platform was "wonderfully and fearfully made. It might have been worshipped without conflicting with any of the provisions of the second commandment, for there was nothing like it in the heavens above, in the earth beneath or in the waters under the earth," Cresset, April 9, 1897 (quoting Topeka Mail and Kansas Breeze).

The Wellington People's Voice, October 3, 1890, reported that Col. Marshall Murdock, editor of the Eagle, privately thought the platform impractical.

For the story of how the Republican platform figured in the campaign and the use that Jerry Simpson made of it see the following pages below: 56 and 62.

30 Hutchinson News, August 19, 20, 1890; Pratt Pratt County Union, August 21, 1890; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, August 21, 1890; Dodge City Times, August 22, 1890.

31 Hazelton Express, October 11, 1890.
CHAPTER III

THE SOCKLESS SOCRATES

Jerry Simpson, candidate for the Congress of the United States, addressed delegates to the convention which had nominated him and citizens of Great Bend while he waited for his train.¹ His appearance and demeanor were mild -- deceptively mild. He lacked the dignified, polished look of a lawgiver. Many in his audience were dressed as well as he.

His hair was black and abundant, his mustache touched with gray. Behind the old fashioned glasses his eyes gleamed with humor, and the wrinkles around his mouth creased readily into a grin. His voice was unstrained, crisp, deep, and pleasant. He was slender but gave an impression of stamina for the task before him.²

When he arrived at St. John the Knights of Labor asked him to speak at the opera house. Although he was unprepared, he talked about money, land, and means of transportation.³ On his arrival in Medicine

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¹Pratt Pratt County Union, July 31, 1890.


³St. John County Capital, July 31, 1890; Pratt Pratt County Union, July 31, 1890; Stafford Courier, October 19, 1905; Great Bend Register, October 26, 1905.
Lodge Mayor T. A. McNeal headed the citizenry to make a welcoming speech. Jerry resigned as marshal. 4

1. Preparation for Battle

From Winfield the American Nonconformist issued a warning to the candidates and members of the Alliance. It said a fair estimate was that the approximate cost of a campaign by a reform candidate for Congress would be $500. 5 From Holton emanated a cry of horror and anguish that the seventh district Alliance would nominate "a rabid fiat greenbacker, with communistic tendencies." 6

The campaign was to cost more than the Nonconformist estimated. Early in August E. P. Caruthers sold out his interest in the Barber County Index to an agent of the Alliance, and it became the official organization paper for the seventh district. The price for half ownership was reported as $1,500. 7 Bitter Barber Democrats moved the Kiowa

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4Newton Kansas Commoner, July 31, 1890; Pratt Pratt County Union, July 31, 1890; Medicine Lodge Cresset, July 25, 1890 (hereinafter Cresset); see also Kiowa Herald, July 24, 1890.

5Winfield American Nonconformist, July 31, 1890.

6Holton Weekly Recorder, July 24, 1890.

7Cresset, August 15, 1890; see also Medicine Lodge Barber County Index, August 6, 13, 1890 (hereinafter Index). E. P. Caruthers sold his interest and left the county.

Jerry Simpson later claimed his personal expenses totaled only $200 (including $100 in donations), Hamlin Garland, "The Alliance Wedge in Congress," The Arena, V (March, 1892), 453, or $250, Index, March 18, 1891 (quoting Detroit (Michigan) Free Press).
Herald to the county seat as the Barber County Herald. This mouth-
piece of true Democracy promptly denounced the action of the Pratt 

convention.

The editors of Southwest Kansas renewed their old feuds and 
developed some new ones. It was charged that the Republican nominee, 
James R. Hallowell, had ridden to (or home from) Dodge City in a 
private palace car. The morals and temperance of both candidates 
became a subject for discussion. A barrage of paper flew back and 
forth, but the candidates were not immediately active; probably Jerry 
Simpson farmed. Early in August the Hutchinson News had an opportunity 
to hear the hope of the People’s party and judged that he was "not 
accustomed to making political speeches", but was "an apt scholar".
Later in the month Simpson went to Wichita to deliver a speech at 
Garfield hall and in a walnut grove near Haysville.

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8 Kiowa Herald, August 14, 1890; Medicine Lodge Barber County 
Herald, August 23, 1890; see also Hazelton Express, August 23, 1890.

9 Index, August 6, 20, 1890; see also report of Simpson speech 
at Coldwater, September 26, 1890, Coldwater Western Star, October 4, 
1890.

10 Great Bend Barton County Democrat, August 21, 1890; Wichita 
Western Methodist, August 7, 1890. One charge was that James R. Hallowell 
had been drunk July 4, 1890, at Kiowa, Index, September 10, 1890. 
Two years later a Republican paper charged Hallowell with being a 
"frequenter of saloons and horizontal parlors," Index, March 30, 
1892 (quoting Anthony Republican).

11 The occasion was a Reno county convention to nominate a county 
ticket, Hutchinson News, August 10, 1890.

12 Winfield American Nonconformist, August 28, 1890; Index, August 
13, 1890; Kiowa Herald, August 14, 1890.
Late in August Simpson and the man he had defeated for the nomination, S. M. Scott, spoke at the roller skating rink in Pratt. Simpson expressed a "strong hope our troubles may be settled peacefully." He continued at considerable length, with frequent cheering, about greenbacks, government ownership of railroads, homestead tax exemptions, heavier taxation upon non-resident landowners, and his opposition to the Sherman silver purchase act. A collection was taken to defray expenses, grossing $13.13

The realities of Congressional campaigning were becoming apparent. It would be exhausting, expensive work. Hutchinson, Wichita, and Pratt on the swaying, steamy, smoky trains -- next it would be picnics at Walker's grove near Sun City and at Harper.11

"Farmers left their plows in the furrow and came to learn the art of driving the great team of government" when Jerry Simpson spoke at Sisson's grove near Harper. A parade of more than 200 teams and five bands was sixteen blocks long. There were 4,000 people in the grove, covering every bit of available shade. Cloths were spread and a picnic lunch served; children played in the swings; wagon loads of watermelons disappeared; barrels of ice water and lemonade stands slaked the multitude. The crowd sang "America", and "Hurrah for the Farmer"

13Pratt Pratt County Union, August 28, 1890; Index, September 3, 1890; see also Cresset, September 5, 1890, November 10, 1905; Arlington Enterprise, September 12, 1890 (quoting Pratt Pratt County Republican).

11Index, August 20, September 3, 1890.
(to the tune of "Marching Through Georgia"). Jerry Simpson spoke, telling jokes on himself; and the crowd laughed with him. 15

But the sympathetic Holton Signal feared that it would be "hard rustling against the wiley Jim." 16 James R. Hallowell was speaking at a picnic at Galatia, Barton county. 17 It had been announced that Jerry Simpson would address another picnic in Barber county on September 12, but when that date came he was at the opposite end of the district. 18 The "big seventh" could not be won in the picnic groves and roller rinks of South Central Kansas; it had to be fought for on the barren high plains, along the broadly curving strip of wet sand of the Arkansas river, and in the booming little cities which unfolded and folded along the ribbons of steel creeping across the prairies.

2. A Plain, Unpretentious Farmer

Friday, September 12, 1890, brought a dreary, cold wind to Scott City, Kansas. In spite of the elements a good number of farmers appeared in town to welcome their champion. They organized a parade, halting in front of the West and Wright building, where 160 feet of

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15 All material in this paragraph, including quotes, is from Harper Sentinel, September 5, 1890; see also Index, September 3, 1890.
16 Holton Signal, August 13, 1890.
17 Hoisington Dispatch, September 4, 11, 1890.
18 Index, September 3, 17, 24, 1890; Scott City Sentinel-Herald, September 18, 1890; Tribune Greeley County Journal, September 18, 1890.
tables had been prepared for the basket picnic and grand free dinner. After eating "the throng repaired to Case's Hall" for the speaking.\textsuperscript{19} Simpson told them, in the course of a one and a half hour speech: "I want every union soldier to have a service pension but I do not want to compel him to vote the republican ticket in order to get one."\textsuperscript{20}

As he journeyed even farther west, to Leoti, Jerry Simpson was impressed by the dimensions and development of the high plains. About Wichita county, he wrote to the \textit{Index} that "the land is level and rich, and if the government would spend some of the money that is being used to build iron clads to build up a useless navy" to irrigate "these fertile plains" with mountain water or drill wells "this county could feed a million people. I am surprised to see so many people here."\textsuperscript{21}

At Leoti Simpson was greeted by an "immense audience of farmers."\textsuperscript{22} Knapp's hall was full to overflowing; after a ninety minute introduction, he spoke for fully two hours, being interrupted frequently by demonstrations of approval; many of the crowd were loath to leave when the speech ended.\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{19}Scott City Sentinel-Herald, September 18, 1890; Tribune Greeley County Journal, September 18, 1890.
\textsuperscript{20}Tribune Greeley County Journal, September 25, 1890; see also Index, September 17, 24, 1890.
\textsuperscript{21}Index, September 24, 1890; italics appear in the Index.
\textsuperscript{22}Tribune Greeley County Journal, September 18, 1890.
\textsuperscript{23}Leoti Western Farmer, September 18, 1890; Great Bend, Barton County Beacon, September 18, 1890.
\end{flushleft}
Some difficulty with the schedule of meetings arose over the week-end. The candidate was to have spoken in Dighton, Monday, September 15, but did not appear until the following day. About 100 farmers listened to a talk by the "plain, unpretentious farmer" until the train for the east arrived at noon. (A full hall listened to S. M. Scott two hours later.) Simpson attacked Republican Senator John J. Ingalls for never losing an opportunity to tear open afresh the almost healed wounds of the Civil War. The snarled arrangements and spontaneous applause of the People's movement provoked Victor Murdock of the Wichita Eagle to remark, after the election: "The Alliance defiance lacks science." Hallowell, meanwhile, was also riding the rails of the Missouri Pacific; he appeared in LaCrosse, September 15, proceeded west to Brownell and then cross country to Dighton. It is difficult to

24 Index, September 24, 1890; Great Bend Barton County Beacon, September 14, 1890; Dighton Journal, September 15, 1890.

25 Dighton Journal, September 18, 1890; Dighton Lane County Herald, September 18, 1890.

26 Wichita Daily Eagle, November 5, 1890 (hereinafter Eagle).

27 LaCrosse Chieftain, September 19, 1890; Ness City Ness County News, September 20, 1890; Dighton Journal, September 25, 1890.
determine just when each candidate spoke, to whom he spoke, and what
response was received. The press of 1890 was usually highly partisan,
often careless about details, and sometimes neglectful of posterity
by failing to forward papers to the Kansas State historical Society.
The Ness County News probably treated Jerry Simpson in the correct
manner for a Republican newspaper. It almost ignored him, reporting
only that his speech was "dastardly". 28

By Wednesday, September 17, Scott had rejoined Simpson, and
both spoke at the court house in LaCrosse. 29 Later in the month a
staff member of the Kansas City (Missouri) Times reported from Rush
county that with people outside the towns Simpson was "very strong"
and "increasing if possible every day."

Simpson went on to Kinsley,
Fellsburg, and Macksville. 31

The pace of events quickened. The candidates spoke to admiring
audiences. If the gatherings were of unequal size or differing
enthusiasm, it was unnoticed. Both caught the roar of the crowd.
Their voices were heard over picnic grounds, across roller rinks,
through opera houses, in court rooms and school houses, and over wind-
swept station platforms. The voices of the people answered. The

28 Ness City Ness County News, September 20, 1890.
29 LaCrosse Chieftain, September 19, 1890.
30 Index, October 1, 1890 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Times).
31 Kinsley Mercury, September 25, 1890; St John County Capital,
September 25, 1890; Great Bend Barton County Beacon, September 4, 1890;
see also Index, October 1, 1890 (quoting Greensburg Times).
magic excitement of democracy had touched them.

3. The Battle is Joined

Colonel Marshall Murdock, publisher of the *Wichita Eagle*, later accepted partial responsibility for the idea of bringing the two candidates together face to face for a debate. The plan was to contrast the polished Hallowell with the rough Simpson. It was a remarkable idea; it demonstrated that the Republican managers were out of touch with the people.

At Hutchinson Hallowell had offered $25 to Simpson to debate against him. As the challenged party Simpson should have had some choice of weapons; but the Republican managers arranged everything; and Simpson obligingly agreed. The place chosen was Larned; the

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33 Cresset, September 4, 1896 (quoting T. A. McNeal in *Topeka Mail* and *Kansas Breeze*), places the blame on Hallowell.

34 Larned *Eagle-Optic*, September 26, 1890.

35 Grant W. Harrington "As Jerry Told It" (Unpublished manuscript, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka). This report of a conversation with Simpson (ca. 1901-1905) was written about 1938 (hereinafter Harrington, *op. cit.*). Harrington was an Eastern Kansas leader of the People's party.

Morgan Caraway of the Great Bend Register, Bob Blair of the Stafford Herald, W. S. Hebron of the Kinsley Mercury (Republicans all), and H. R. Griggs of the Kinsley Graphic (Democratic) reinforced the local press corps, *Larned Weekly Chronoscope*, September 26, 1890. Locally the *Larned Eagle-Optic* represented the Democracy; the *Larned Weekly Chronoscope* spoke for the Grand Old Party. The *Hutchinson News*, September 23, 1890, received conflicting reports from two unidentified sources datelined Larned and printed them in the same column; the *Wichita Eagle*, September 23, 1890, also carried a report by a Larned correspondent. See note 43 below, page 52.
time was September 22, 1890, the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. The Republicans were expecting that it would be an occasion to wave the "bloody shirt" of loyalty to the Union, but the farmers of Pawnee county made use of the opportunity to declare their bid for economic freedom.

The candidates had both been addressing meetings. They had been speaking to enthusiastically loyal supporters. Undoubtedly there was a silent, sullen minority in each assembly; occasionally there had been a vocal, vituperative individual or two to challenge the speaker; but these were always in the minority. On this night the crowd was different; Republican leaders had urged their faithful to attend; Alliance members enthusiastically turned out to support their candidate; Democrats came to enjoy themselves at the expense of others; the curious and gregarious filled in the rest of the hall to break the monotony which was part of the environment of plains life before REA and RCA, GM and GE connected the remotest farm house to the entertainment of the centers of population.

The Larned opera house had standing room only for many of the 1,500 people who came to hear the debate. By agreement Simpson was to speak one hour, Hallowell one and a half, and Simpson another half hour.

36 Hutchinson News, September 23, 1890; Eagle, September 23, 1890.

37 Larned Weekly Chronoscope, September 26, 1890; Great Bend Register, September 25, 1890; Ashland Clark County Clipper, September 25, 1890; Eagle, September 23, 1890.
Simpson recited his indictment of the financial conspiracies against the farmer during his opening speech. 38

Hallowell rose; the polished orator defended national banks, promised pensions, discussed legislation and political parties, and filled the remainder of his time with a reminder of the significance of Emancipation day and the loyalty of the Republican party to the American Union. 39

The Republican Learned Chronoscope peevishly complained that the "masterly" arguments of Hallowell" were met with a batch of bald-headed jokes which provoked laughter the same as people laugh at a clown. 40 Simpson was somewhat nervous when he entered upon his closing speech. 41 The audience had been swayed by logical reasoning; Simpson felt it. He told a joke; the crowd laughed; but it was not enough. He went on, "Hal tells you that he is a law maker, that he has been to Topeka; and that he has made laws. I am going to show you the kind of laws that Hal makes." He reached over the lectern, picked up a book, and opened it, tapping a page with his finger. "Here is

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38 Eagle, September 23, 1890.
39 Great Bend Register, September 25, 1890; Learned Eagle-Optic, September 26, 1890.
40 Learned Weekly Chronoscope, September 26, 1890; other sources confirm that this was another evening full of standard Simpson stories, see Great Bend Register, September 25, 1890; Harrington, op. cit.
41 Great Bend Register, September 25, 1890; Harrington, op. cit.
one of Hal's laws. I find that it is a law to tax dogs, but I see that Hal proposes to charge two dollars for a bitch and only one dollar for a son of a bitch. Now the party that I belong to believes in equal and exact justice to all." Seconds and minutes which could have been used by Simpson to offer rebuttal to the logic of his opponent were wasted while the hall echoed with laughter.

Hallowell received a beautiful floral offering at the close of his speech, but Jerry Simpson received the bulk of the applause. The writer believes that Hallowell may have won the debate; but Jerry Simpson won the audience. Marshall Murdock said that, "with the audiences that turned out at those meetings our candidate wasn't any match for Jerry at all."{

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42 Harrington, op. cit. (some punctuation supplied by the present writer); other evidence confirms the story; Wichita Weekly Beacon, October 31, 1890, quotes a stenographic transcript of a Simpson speech, October 23, 1890, in which he told the same story (in nicer language) but with the emphasis upon the fact that this would tax worthless curs equally with valuable pointers and that a graduated (income) tax would be more states-manlike.

The statute referred to appears, without the name of the author, in Session Laws of 1876 (Topeka: George W. Martin, Kansas Publishing House, 1876), 99-100. Hallowell was a Representative from Cherokee county, Ibid., xv.

43 Hutchinson News, September 23, 1890, in what was later (Kinsley Mercury, September 25, 1890) referred to as the "associated press" story; higher in the same column of the same News was a story, datelined "Special", claiming that Hallowell completely annihilated Simpson. Internal similarity would indicate that the "Special" writer was the Learned Weekly Chronoscope reporter. The sources for the "associated press" story and the report in the Eagle, September 23, 1890 (a "Special Dispatch") cannot be determined.

44 Diggs, Story, 111; Kansas City (Missouri) Star, October 23, 1905. Reports appeared in the Alliance press that Hallowell fled into hiding in his dressing room, Barton County Beacon, October 2, 1890; Ashland Clark County Clipper, September 25, 1890; however neither of these papers 11Continued on next page.11
The next day Jerry Simpson spoke to a large audience at Stafford. He spent Tuesday night at the Grand Central hotel there and went on the next day to Hutchinson. The sun shone brightly, yet not too warm, the streets and roads were dry, but not dusty. Farmers began to appear in town at an early hour; many more poured in by train later. The Arlington band played to the crowded streets.

The Republican Hutchinson News estimated that 2,000 men, women, and children appeared at the fairgrounds to listen to the two men and two women speakers. They paraded into town, and a small number returned

(Continued from preceding page) had a reporter on the scene. The Larned Eagle-Optic, September 26, 1890, reported the Republican explanation that their man wasn't in condition to do himself justice, that he was sick, and in confirmation of this statement cite the fact that he had to be braced up with 'three fingers!' before he could appear at the breakfast table the next morning."

The Alliance-Democratic Ashland Clark County Clipper, September 25, 1890, quoted accurately a Wichita Daily Eagle story and claimed that the paper had gone to press at 2:30 a.m., September 22, fourteen hours before the debate began at 7:30 p.m. in Larned. This would discredit the Eagle as a source if it were not for the fact that the Eagle containing the story referred to is dated Tuesday, September 23, 1890. In 1890 the Eagle did not publish a Monday paper.

St. John County Capital, September 25, 1890; Hutchinson News, September 24, 1890; Ness City Ness County News, September 27, 1890.

Hallowell was scheduled to be in Coldwater Tuesday, but appeared at Tribune instead, Coldwater Western Star, September 20, 1890; Eagle, September 25, 1890. Except for the Tribune (or Coldwater) engagement Hallowell dropped out of sight for a time. The writer made no effort to trace the complete movements of the Republican candidate but noted them only incidentally as part of the campaign. It was considered sufficient to trace Simpson during the final six weeks.
to the fairgrounds that night for a meeting; but the bulk of the crowd went to the opera house to hear the program there. Jerry Simpson spoke last, for only a half hour, lamenting that Republican tactics cast ridicule upon Alliance candidates. The News admitted that the two day rally was a "successful affair", that 2,500 paraded through the streets. The second day crowd at the fairgrounds was large enough that it was divided and speakers alternated between the platform and an improvised stage on a farm wagon. Simpson was the "big gun", although he was bothered by hecklers. 46

When Simpson arrived at the Comanche county court house, Coldwater, on Friday evening he found it well filled. He charged that the majority of the members of Congress were attorneys for corporations and repeated the accusation that the Republican candidate had ridden to Dodge City in a private palace car. 47 Barber county was preparing an appropriate homecoming welcome for their champion. When he arrived in the county seat on Saturday 8,000 people paraded 450 vehicles for an hour and five minutes (200 other vehicles were in town but did not join in the procession). The country people had brought picnic lunches and five beeves had been barbecued. The Simpson speech contained many

46 Hutchinson News, September 25, 26, 1890; see also Arlington Enterprise, October 3, 1890.

47 Coldwater Western Star, October 4, 1890.
humorous anecdotes.\textsuperscript{48}

The weekend spent with his family was brief (during the entire campaign Simpson never spoke on Sunday); on Monday he was on the trail again. Farmers traveled a long distance to Wellington that day; the assembly was three times the size of that which had listened to Hallowell. The opera house barely held the people who listened to Simpson speak for more than two hours in the afternoon. Again the speech was interspersed plentifully with funny stories, and it received frequent hearty cheers.\textsuperscript{49}

He said that reform was not new, that machinery and faster transportation and communication had changed the character of business, that tramps were unknown and mortgages the exception before the contraction of the currency; but now tramps and mortgages were everywhere.\textsuperscript{50} During the Civil War the federal government had issued large amounts of paper money, the greenbacks. In succeeding years much of this fiat currency was retired; coincidentally the railroads and farmers spread across the vast American steppes. This contraction of the medium of exchange

\textsuperscript{48}Index, October 1, 1890; Lyons Central Kansas Democrat, October 8, 1890; Hazelton Express, October 4, 1890.

\textsuperscript{49}Index, October 3, 1890, reported the attendance as 1412 (including 591 children, 345 ladies), 395 vehicles (including an estimated fifty wagons from Pratt, Harper, and Kingman counties). Owing to poor management not more than half the people shared in the barbecue. "One man threw an entire quarter of beef into his buggy and drove off with it."

\textsuperscript{50}News story, largely a stenographic transcript, Wellington People's Voice, October 3, 1890.
during a time of increased need for capital reminded Simpson of a story:

In '65 a little boy was placed in a cradle clothed in a small pair of pants. Time rolled on and every few years a clip of the scissors -- demonetization of silver, resumption of specie payments, etc. -- shortened the boy's pantaloons. A few months since the boy started kicking and squirming to get out of the cradle. "Lie still," said the unnatural parent, (the g.o.p.). "I won't," said the boy. "I am an Alliance boy, 25 years old, and I am going to get out of here."

The national bank system was the "crime of the century," he said; the railroads controlled the state governments; the Santa Fe had brought Hallowell back from Dodge City in a private parlor car and was transporting him without charge during the campaign.51

The Dodge City Republican platform was quite liberal. It closely resembled the one written at Great Bend for the Alliance party.

This also reminded Jerry Simpson of a story:

The Irishman went to the priest to make confession. The priest said, "Why, Pat, you were here yesterday morning." "Yes," said Pat, "but I want to confess to converting a Jew. I saw him (go) overboard and got in a skiff and went after him, got him by the hair and lifted him up and asked him if he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. He said no, and I souzed him again. I raised him up, and again I said 'Now do you believe?' He said no and I souzed him again. I said 'now do you believe?' He said yes, and I put him down and held him there and said, 'die now, d--n you, while you're in the faith. If you get out you'll repent.'"

The application was that the Republican party should go to the hereafter

51Wellington People's Voice, October 3, 1890.
I pointed to a fine old Irish woman of seventy odd years. And what should my gay Jerry do but crave her partnership in a Virginia reel. Out both of them went to the middle of the floor and such dancing I never saw. It was a great compliment to the old lady who told her friends for miles around that they must vote for Jerry and give her the honor of dancing with a congressman.54

4. A War of Attrition

Tuesday afternoon, September 30, Simpson fulfilled a delayed appointment, speaking to an audience of farmers in Caldwell. He explained in detail how the tariff forced them to buy in a protected market and sell in an unprotected market. He talked pessimistically about government, impartially attacking both old parties.55 At Burrton the following night 200 people were turned away when the opera house would not hold the crowd.56

That night he registered at the Occidental Hotel in Wichita. After an early breakfast he was interviewed by a reporter for the Wichita Beacon. Simpson was getting a little hoarse from continued speaking in the open air, but he was pleased by the enthusiasm and

54E1Dorado Daily Republican, January 18, 1915.

55Caldwell Journal, October 2, 1890; Anthony Journal, October 17, 1890 (quoting Caldwell News).

56Wichita Weekly Beacon, October 10, 1890; Burrton Weekly Graphic, October 9, 1890.
earnestness of his crowds. He expressed distaste for the Hutchinson News. He hoped to have an opportunity to debate with Hallowell in Wichita.

An alert Republican had discovered an amazing entry in the register of the Occidental for August 23, 1890; it read "Jerry Simpson, Madsonlonlodge." The Wichita Beacon claimed that investigation proved that the signature was not written by Simpson at all but by a farmer from Waco township who wanted to give the Republicans an opportunity to make fools of themselves. A careful check of the hotel records revealed that Simpson had stayed there several times, always

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57Wichita Daily Beacon, October 1, 1890. Most of the Simpson appearances reported in the press were held indoors, however it appears certain that some unscheduled stops were made. Eagle, November 7, 1890, says Hallowell spoke in towns, Simpson at Alliance picnics. The number of meetings which can be classified as "picnics" which were fully reported is small. Probably some meetings were organized too quickly to be advertised in the weekly press, and they were advertised in handbills or by word of mouth. The Index, official Farmer's Alliance paper of the seventh district, published a list of the scheduled appointments every week. For information on how these meetings were organized and conducted see Donald H. Ecroyd, "An Analysis and Evaluation of Populist Campaign Speech Making in Kansas, 1890-1894" (unpublished Doctor's thesis, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 1949), passim.

58Wichita Weekly Beacon, October 10, 1890, contains the "Madsonlonlodge" hotel register story. Cresset, August 29, 1890, reprinted a story from the Kansas City (Missouri) Star and referred to the Topeka Daily Capital saying that Simpson had spelled his address "Madison Lodge". Topeka Daily Capital, October 4, 1890, said Simpson was spelling the town name "Maidsonlodge". The writer is impressed that either Simpson was a truly original speller or that newspapers could not reproduce his mispelling accurately.
spelling Medicine Lodge correctly. He reportedly remarked: "Well, maybe I don't always spell the name of that town just right, but I wouldn't give a cent for a man who couldn't spell a word more than one way."

Thursday night, October 2, the Grand opera house, Great Bend, was filled to suffocation. Simpson spoke two hours. The Barton County Beacon observed a resemblance to Abe Lincoln and commented on his illustrations, "which are romance and pathos, fun and logic, all welded together." The following day the people of Larned were presented with an opportunity to hear both Simpson and Governor Humphrey, at separate rallies. Saturday afternoon and evening Scott and Simpson spoke at Flohr's opera house in Kinsley. Even the Republican press observed a "large and attentive audience." In the afternoon a heckler interjected that he was better paid for his labor than he used to be. (He proved to be on the payroll of the

59Wichita Weekly Beacon, October 10, 1890.

60Greensburg Kiowa County Signal, November 4, 1892; Victor Murdock, Folks (New York, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921), 104 (hereinafter Murdock, Folks); Diggs, Story, 98, admits Simpson was a poor speller.

61Great Bend Barton County Beacon, October 9, 1890; see also Wichita Weekly Beacon, October 10, 1890; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, October 9, 1890. Group singing was a part of the program.

62Larned Eagle-Optic, October 10, 1890; Topeka Daily Capital, October 4, 1890.

63Kinsley Mercury, October 9, 1890.
Republican Sheriff of Edwards county.) That night some of the county officials were drunk and rowdy at the meeting. 64

The Democratic Dodge City Times put aside partisan prejudice and admitted that Jerry Simpson was the "superior of any public speaker who has so far appeared in this city." The court room was insufficient to hold the crowd, and the halls were blocked to the stairway; the audience was "convulsed with laughter" by one witty story. 65 The Simpson logic in his speech at Ingalls Tuesday did not impress the Republican Ingalls Union. 66

Hallowell was in Garden City Tuesday, October 7. His speech was "good and smooth" and produced "some enthusiasm" among Republicans. The next day Simpson drew more farmers, fewer city people and received twice the applause. The Republicans had hired a band and unsuccessfully attempted a parade; the Alliance party used only a fife and drum for advertising. 67 Hallowell was heading east; Jerry Simpson was going west. 68

64Kinsley Graphic, October 10, 1890.
65Dodge City Times, October 10, 1890; see also Dodge City Globe-Republican, October 8, 1890.
66Ingalls Union, October 9, 1890.
67Garden City Finney County Democrat, October 11, 1890. The Republican Garden City Weekly Sentinel, October 11, 1890, said Simpson had a good audience because the entertainment was free; Topeka Daily Capital, October 8, 9, 1890, reported that the opera house was "crowded to its utmost capacity" for Hallowell, only half full (including many Republicans) for Simpson. The entire text of the Hallowell speech was published as a supplement to many Republican weeklies, October 30, 31, 1890.
68Cresset, October 3, 1890; Index, October 1, 1890.
Thursday Simpson visited Syracuse and then went on to speak that night at Johnson City. A great many people, "very enthusiastic", crowded the Stanton county courthouse to listen to a two hour lecture on the history of the People's party, labor and capital, national banks, railroads, the tariff, finance, pensions, and irrigation. The Dodge City Republican platform reminded Simpson of a story about a horse trader who had a horse which sat down every time it was touched in the belly with foot or spur. He sold it to an Englishman, saying it was a marvelous hunter. The Briton mounted, spurred the horse; the horse sat down. The Englishman complained and was told the animal was a "setter and pointer"; it was on point for a rabbit in a nearby pasture. That satisfied the new owner until he rode into a stream, touched the sensitive spot again, and the horse sat down in the water. The Englishman asked, "And what is he setting for now, do you know?" The trader answered, "Easy enough, he is setting for suckers." The platform was set for suckers.

Friday morning Simpson went to Michland for a speech which had

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69 _Syracuse Journal_, October 17, 1890; _Johnson City Journal_, October 11, 1890. Hallowell was speaking to an "enthusiastic crowd" at the Hodgeman county courthouse, Jetmore, in the afternoon, _Jetmore Sunflower_, October 15, 1890.

70 _Johnson City Journal_, October 11, 1890.

71 _Johnson City Journal_, October 11, 1890, reports that a story was told about an Englishman and a "setter"; T. A. McNeal repeats the story, connecting it to the Republican platform, in _Cresset_, November 10, 1905.
not been on his schedule when he began his campaign. The candidate for the Legislature, a Grand Army member and ex-Republican, introduced him, saying, "I am tired of seeing the old soldiers waving the bloody shirt." Simpson also emphasized his desire to talk of current issues instead of fighting twenty-five year old battles. Meanwhile, at Stafford, Hallowell was telling a large audience that Simpson was never out of Illinois during his Army service, and that following his discharge he shipped on a Canadian flag vessel to avoid the draft.

Saturday, October 11, Simpson appeared at Ulysses. Monday, October 13, the Haskell county courthouse was full of farmers in town to welcome their candidate. The Republican Santa Fe Monitor admitted that Simpson "tells an anecdote well" but thought he was only a successful agitator, and would be a total failure as a Representative.

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72 Richfield Monitor-Republican, October 11, 1890; see also Johnson City Journal, October 11, 1890. Index, October 1, 1890, is the source of the list of appointments during this trip. It is almost certain that other stops were scheduled after the trip was begun; this one was announced by Richland Monitor-Republican, October 4, 1890. Some of the scheduled appearances cannot be confirmed from available newspapers, but this account assumes that all dates were kept unless evidence to the contrary exists.

73 Sunflower Shimmer, Eagle, October 14, 1890; Topeka Daily Capital, October 10, 1890.

74 Index, October 1, 1890.

75 Santa Fe Monitor, October 17, 1890. Santa Fe, Kansas, is now called Satanta and is no longer the county seat. The Republican Monitor reported that Simpson said he had raised 4,300 bushels of wheat on 104 acres; at an 1890 price of $0.82 per bushel this would have meant an income of $3,526 from wheat; it would be 41 bushels per acre. This might indicate either good farming or partisan reporting.
Tuesday he was in Arkalon, Wednesday in Meade, Thursday in Bucklin. "Sunflower Shimmer", a column written by Victor Murdock in the Wichita Eagle, quoted Jerry Simpson as having said, "Under certain circumstances I prefer the red flag to the stars and stripes." The remark about the flag had apparently been made during an 1888 debate in the Sharon literary society; William Garrison, who had been on the opposite side that night, remembered that Simpson had said, "The flag does not amount to anything if it does not protect something." Other witnesses swore that he had said, "A flag that does not protect its protectors -- the men who fought for it -- it was no better than any other rag," citing the Confederate flag as an example. Hallowell had been charged with saying, "The American flag inspires no patriotism in my breast when it waves over a prohibition state."

Friday, October 17, Jerry Simpson spoke at Haynes' grove near Turon to 1,500 to 2,500 people. He mentioned that Republican papers

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76 Index, October 1, 1890. Half of the Arkalon News was made up elsewhere, and nearly all the rest was copied from other papers. It contained almost no local items and apparently existed only to publish land notices, a lucrative source of income. The Meade County Globe was somewhat better, but it also made no mention of a visit by Simpson. See note 72 above, page 63.

77 Eagle, October 18, 1890.

78 Letter from William Garrison, published in Wichita Western Methodist, October 30, 1890.

79 Affidavits published in Index, October 22, 1890.

80 Index, September 17, 1890; see also Sterling Gazette, September 27, 1890 (quoting Hallowell letter published in Geneseo Herald).
were calling him a baboon and an orang-utan; the independent Turon Headlight was not highly impressed by Simpson but believed "if Darwin was around looking for the lost link, he would hardly pick on Jeremiah."  

Simpson was scheduled to speak at Pratt that night; H. B. Kelly, state Senator from McPherson, was also to speak there. Only the roller rink was large enough for a Republican or an Alliance crowd, and the local committees had decided to schedule a debate. Simpson altered the arrangements, cutting the total time, and insisting on thirty minutes at the end to reply to personal remarks made by Hallowell two days earlier in Pratt. After the debate portion, Simpson spent more than his allotted half hour roasting his opponent.  

The Kingman Weekly Journal observed the immense Saturday crowd outside its office and was reminded of the children of Israel. It estimated the total at 7,500 and counted 555 vehicles, 200 horsemen, 3,500 people, including 1,025 voters in the parade. Jerry Simpson

81 Turon Headlight, October 23, 1890; Pratt Pratt County Register, October 23, 1920. Hallowell had spoken at the Turon Methodist Episcopal church October 14. The Headlight had to apologize for saying the minister "viciously" assailed Jerry Simpson; it corrected the adverb to read "vigorously", Turon Headlight, October 16, 23, 1890.

82 Pratt Pratt County Register, October 23, 1890; Pratt Pratt County Republican, October 23, 1890; Pratt Pratt County Union, October 23, 1890; Turon Headlight, October 23, 1890.
arrived on a freight train from Pratt.83

A Sunday without campaigning also offered Simpson another opportunity to rest with his family in Medicine Lodge. But Monday, October 20, he was in Ashland, where a "mighty army of honest toilers" joined a mile long procession. The farmer's wives and daughters had prepared plenty of food for the dinner in the Cooper building. The Berry opera hall was filled early and "many were turned away". Simpson spoke for more than two hours.

Meanwhile the seventh district Democratic Congressional campaign committee was meeting in Hutchinson. In an action which did not meet with unanimous Democratic approval they placed the name of Jerry Simpson on their list of candidates. The failure of the Pratt convention to approve a nomination had implied tacit endorsement of Simpson; the insertion of his name on the Democratic ticket may possibly have held some voters who otherwise would have bolted to the

83Kingman Weekly Journal, October 24, 1890. The Republican press confirms these figures; Eagle, October 19, 1890, estimated the crowd as 5,000 to 7,000; Hutchinson News, October 19, 1890, reported 500 vehicles, 2,000-3,000 people in the parade, with the Second Regiment Band, Hutchinson furnishing music.

Alliance and Republican estimates of crowds usually differ markedly. Text material on attendance is taken from Alliance or Democratic papers except where noted in the text. The writer felt that Republican estimates were proved faulty by the election returns.

84Ashland Clark County Clipper, October 23, 1890.
complete Alliance slate in order to vote for Simpson. 85

Cold rain poured down all Tuesday morning in Harper county. Despite this not less than 1,000 people (including 600 voters) appeared at the Anthony opera house. Jerry Simpson missed train connections, was compelled to drive the twenty-seven miles from Spivey; and did not arrive until after three o'clock. He showed signs of hoarseness and fatigue and "was some time in warming to his subject," but after he got started he succeeded in convincing most of the audience of his intelligence and ability, although he occasionally butchered the English language. He gave a sarcastic and witty review of the "benefits" of the McKinley tariff. Hay was protected at $4 per ton, he said; it was selling for $4 a ton in Anthony. If it were unprotected would it have no value? He passed the hat for campaign contributions. 86

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85 Eagle, October 23, 1890; Hutchinson News, October 23, 1890; Wichita Daily Beacon, October 23, 1890. Among the Democratic papers the bitter Barber County Herald remained unreconciled until after the election, and the Kinsley Graphic and Newton Journal did not openly endorse Simpson although they were editorially kind. The Dodge City Times, October 17, 1890, approved the committee action and supported Simpson subsequently; the Anthony Harper County Enterprise, October 24, 1890, did not believe the Democracy had made a wise move in accepting Simpson as their candidate but advised the voters to "shut both eyes and swallow the ticket." The Wichita Weekly Beacon, Great Bend Barton County Democrat, Garden City Finney County Democrat, and Ashland Clark County Clipper rode the Simpson bandwagon home from the Pratt convention. The Lyons Central Kansas Democrat supported the Democratic state ticket but endorsed Simpson and a county People's ticket as early as October 8, 1890.

86 Anthony Journal, October 24, 1890; Anthony Republican, October 24, 1890; Anthony Harper County Enterprise, October 24, 1890; Eagle, October 23, 1890.
The Conway Springs Star had a staunchly Republican sense of humor. It reported: "Jerry Simpson has come and gone. He was here Wednesday. He talked. He is a talker. The man who says Jerry Simpson can't talk is a prevaricator." The day and the audience (especially the ladies) were beautiful. Simpson compared the suffering of the Alliance people with the persecution and crucifixion of the lowly Nazarine. The Star thought that "if it ever be his unfortunate lot to be crucified he will not be suspended in the middle, but will be one of the two outside ones." The crowd sang:

Bye Princy, bye-lo, by party, bye-lo,
Bye, Princy, bye-lo,
Good bye, Prince Hally, good bye.

In later years the story was circulated that Jerry Simpson had ridiculed James R. Hallowell by giving him the nickname of "Prince Hal". However, Republican papers had spread the illusion of their candidate's royalty as early as 1888, claiming the name had been given to him during his Army service. Simpson only picked up the name and

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87 Conway Springs Star, October 25, 1890.

88 Conway Springs Star, October 25, 1890; text of the song from Hutchinson Alliance Morning Gazette, November 6, 1890.

89 Diggs, Story, 108; obituary in Eagle, October 24, 1905.

90 Eagle, October 14, 1888, September 23, 1890; St. John County Capital, September 18, 1890; Murdock, Folks, 103.
satirized it. Stenographic reports of Simpson interviews and speeches contain only references to "Mr. Hallowell" early in the campaign and "Jim" at the close.

Hallowell was being accused of taking a $400 retainer from a man named Jackson to defend his son against a Texas murder charge and then remaining in Kansas while the young man was tried and hung. It was also said that he borrowed money on personal notes and then did not repay his debts.

After speaking at Conway Springs Jerry Simpson went on to Clearwater and then drove to Wichita for an appearance at Garfield hall, missing his supper. B. E. Kies spoke first (one and a half hours) and then Simpson was introduced. He brought down the house frequently with such sallies as: "Jim is the best advertising agent I ever had. When this thing is over and Jim is out of a job I am going to write Barnum in Jim's behalf." He alternated criticism of the established order with proposed legislative remedies. About railroads he said,

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91Jetmore Sunflower, October 22, 1890; Cresset, July 1, 1898.

92Wichita Weekly Beacon, October 3, 31, 1890; Eagle, October 23, 1890. It is probable that a heavy sarcastic emphasis was laid on the "Jim".

93Index, October 22, 1890; see also Wichita Weekly Beacon, October 24, 1890.

94Wichita Daily Beacon, October 23, 1890.
somewhat *ungrammatically*, "We want a system different from the one we got now."\(^95\) At the close, he received deafening applause; then the crowd settled back to listen to another orator. The house was jammed although John J. Ingalls, Republican United States Senator from Kansas, was speaking crosstown.\(^96\)

It had rained in Sedgwick county for two days, but October 23 dawned with dry skies. The parade took more than two hours to pass through the streets of Wichita. A thousand voters and two thousand women and children rode in 600 wagons, according to Republican report. A badly disfigured rooster represented the *Eagle*; some Democrats were indignant at the sight of a donkey labeled Hallowell.\(^97\) A gang of Republican toughs made an unsuccessful attempt to break up the parade.\(^98\)

"The *Eagle* cannot tell a lie." It admitted that there were many

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\(^95\)Quotations only are from stenographic report in *Eagle*, October 23, 1890; all other material in the paragraph is from *Wichita Kansas Commoner*, October 30, 1890. This is the same paper cited above as *Newton Kansas Commoner*; B. E. Kies had moved the paper in mid-campaign.

\(^96\) *Wichita Kansas Commoner*, October 30, 1890; *Wichita Daily Beacon*, October 23, 1890.

\(^97\) *Eagle*, October 24, 1890, said there were 600 wagons, 962 voters, 2,748 people; *Topeka Daily Capital*, October 24, 1890, reported 562 wagons, 927 people. It is unlikely that either of these Republican papers exaggerated the procession. The Democratic *Wichita Daily Beacon*, October 23, 1890, reported 865 vehicles, 280 horsemen, five brass bands, 4,000-8,000 people, the largest procession ever seen in Wichita.

\(^98\) *Wichita Kansas Commoner*, October 30, 1890.
farmers in town. The Republican daily estimated the crowd at four or
five thousand.\textsuperscript{99} The \textit{Wichita Beacon}, assessing the same gathering at
the fairgrounds, believed that twenty-one to thirty thousand attended.\textsuperscript{100}
Whatever their numbers, the throng was large enough that it was divided
in three parts; and the six speakers moved from platform to platform.
Simpson shook hands with thousands; and hundreds of women held up their
babies to see him. He outdrew the other orators but spoke only twice.\textsuperscript{101}

With the coming of darkness and a growing chill in the air, the
farmers collected their families and headed their horses down the muddy
roads leading to their homes. Many of the throng, however, were still
not surfeited with political talk. For the second night Garfield hall
had standing room only. J. F. Willits, gubernatorial aspirant, spoke at
length, apologizing at the close that "Honest Jerry" was worn out and
would not address the meeting. The people would not be appeased, and
they demonstrated until Jerry Simpson consented to step forward. His
\textit{boariness} told plainly that he ought not to speak."\textsuperscript{102}

\textsuperscript{99}\textit{Eagle}, October 21, 1890.

\textsuperscript{100}\textit{Wichita Daily Beacon}, October 23, 1890; \textit{Wichita Weekly Beacon},
October 31, 1890. This estimate would have meant that the People's party
orators outdrew the Sedgwick county fair by 5,000.

\textsuperscript{101}\textit{Wichita Daily Beacon}, October 24, 1890; \textit{Wichita Weekly Beacon},
October 31, 1890; \textit{Wichita Kansas Commoner}, October 30, 1890. The other
speakers were J. F. Willits (candidate for Governor), W. F. Rightmire (state
chairman, People's party), L. D. Lewelling (candidate for state Senate from
Sedgwick county, later Governor), Col. S. N. Wood, and John N. Ives
(candidate for Attorney General).

\textsuperscript{102}\textit{Wichita Daily Beacon}, October 24, 1890; \textit{Wichita Weekly Beacon}
October 31, 1890.
"If I ever had a doubt," he said, "of the great future that awaits Wichita, that doubt is now removed. (Cheers.)" He continued with praise of the city, promised to represent all the district, repeated the story about Hallowell and the dog tax law, lectured on money, and exposed the fallacy of Republican economic arguments about overproduction. After the unwilling orator sat down the people were served another hour and a half speech. 103

That same evening the farmers of Sumner county were closing the first day of a two day rally. Friday, October 24, the weather in Wellington was all that could have been desired. The twenty-four block procession required an hour to pass in review, and fully 5,000 people packed the grandstand at the fairgrounds. S. M. Scott spoke first; just as he was closing the speaker's stand collapsed; but nobody was hurt. A wagon was driven in and covered with boards, and Jerry Simpson spoke from this improvised platform. Those who remained in town that evening attended another three hours of speaking at the opera house,

103 Stenographic text of speech published in Wichita Daily Beacon, October 24, 1890, and Wichita Weekly Beacon, October 31, 1890. This stenographic report indicates that Simpson knew how to appeal to each community's civic pride. It was interrupted every first, second, or third sentence by demonstrations of approval.
however Jerry Simpson was not on the program.\textsuperscript{104}

He returned to Barber county for the week-end. Kiowa had scheduled a parade at 11:00 (two bands), dinner at 1:00 (barbecued ox and picnic lunch), and outdoor speaking at 2:00. The candidate was expected on the Santa Fe at 1:40, but the train was two hours late. Simpson hurried to the open prairie northwest of town where a stand had been erected and seating arranged. The October wind was blowing briskly from the north; but the enthusiastic crowd cheered and applauded and laughed.\textsuperscript{105} "His voice seemed about worn out and he talked with some difficulty," said the Hazelton Express; the paper did not take sides, saying only that it was "favorably disappointed."\textsuperscript{106}

5. Victory is in Sight

The ladies band from Sedgwick and bands from Valley Center and Halstead were featured in the Newton parade, Monday, October 27. The

\textsuperscript{104}Wellington People's Voice, October 31, 1890, reported 475 vehicles in the parade, 600 at the fairgrounds; the Democratic Wellington Sumner County Standard, October 30, 1890, counted 300 vehicles and 50 farmers on horseback; Topeka Daily Capital, October 25, 1890, described the affair as attracting "not over 450 voters".

\textsuperscript{105}Hazelton Express, November 1, 1890; Kiowa Journal, October 30, 1890, reported the barbecued beef was slightly burned.

\textsuperscript{106}Hazelton Express, November 1, 1890.
reception committee missed Simpson at the station; and he had to walk uptown, where he accidentally met S. M. Scott. Scott, Willits, and Simpson addressed a large crowd in West Park. The rested Simpson spoke rapidly and he departed immediately for his evening appointment at Halstead. 107

It remains unproved that religion is the opiate of the people, but in 1890 the lack of it could become a real political issue. The religiosity of Jerry Simpson became a matter of heated discussion in the 1890 campaign. 108

The Reverend Robert Sanderson may have sometimes confused the best interests of Caesar and God; but he had no more doubt about his Republicanism than about his Christianity. One faith offered salvation in this world and the other in the next; unquestionably any creed except these two was the work of Satan. Sanderson was transferred from Medicine Lodge to Halstead before the 1890 campaign, and it was from there that he called down fire and brimstone upon the "atheist" and "infidel" Jerry Simpson. The charge of atheism covered acres of newsprint. Ministers rushed to the defense; others rushed to the

107 Newton Journal, October 31, 1890; Wichita Kansas Commoner, October 30, 1890. The floats and banners were among the most amusing of those which were described in the many parades.

108 For the purpose of understanding the 1890 campaign the writer feels that it is only necessary to report the public debate. The religious beliefs of Simpson are discussed on pages 202 and 208.
Simpson addressed a meeting in the Halstead opera house at 7:30, October 27. Before, during, and after the meeting he spoke against preachers in politics and Sanderson in particular; but Simpson asserted repeatedly he was not a scoffer at religion.

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109 Interview with Rev. Robert Sanderson, Hutchinson News, October 9, 1890, is the focus of the attack. Simpson was a "low grade" of "infidel", had spoken of Christ as an "illegitimate child", never aided "moral reform" (i.e. temperance), was an anarchist, and cheated both city and workers as a contractor.

The defense was diffused. See Index, August 27, 1890; in September his friends protested, somewhat lamely, that Simpson's beliefs were somewhat like those of Unitarians, Index, September 17, 1890: "Mr. Simpson is not saying anything meaner about Rev. Sanderson than Mr. Sanderson is saying about Mr. Simpson." For a sample of what he was saying about Rev. Sanderson see Wichita Daily Beacon, October 23, 1890: "A little chuckle-headed Englishman, who disgraces his calling as a minister..."

The Wichita Western Methodist, which supported Simpson with increasing vigor from August through October, was not an official church paper but was the semi-private organ of J. D. Botkin, a preacher-politician (not to be confused with Republican Judge Theodosius Botkin) who had been a Prohibition candidate for Governor, was to become Chaplain of the Alliance dominated state Senate, and a Populist Congressman-at-Large.

110 In spite of the amount of space devoted to the events no authoritative picture of the day can be assembled. The election was too near for any paper to report accurately. See Hutchinson News, October 30, 31, 1890; Wichita Weekly Beacon, October 31, 1890; Wichita Kansas Commoner, October 30, 1890; Wichita Western Methodist, October 30, 1890; Halstead Tribune, October 31, 1890; Halstead Independent, October 31, 1890.
Jerry Simpson had been accused of being unpatriotic, of having simian characteristics, of being a scoffer at religion, of double dealing as a contractor, and of being an anarchist. It would seem that one more small accusation would not attract attention. The Hutchinson News confidentially informed its readers that Jerry Simpson did not wear socks. Although Simpson later became famous as "The Sockless

Hutchinson Alliance Gazette, October 31, 1890. Repeated searching of both the Hutchinson Weekly News and daily Hutchinson News for October, 1890, in the bound volumes of the Kansas State Historical Society and in the microfilm of Forsyth Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College, did not produce the original remark. In addition to the Alliance Gazette, the Haven Independent, November 6, 1890, and Turon Headlight, November 6, 1890, copied the item disapprovingly crediting the News. The Republican Hutchinson Times-Republican, October 31, 1890, without mentioning the News, charged "Jerry Simpson is opposed to soft water and soap, wears neither drawers nor socks."

When Jerry Simpson remarked to a newsman the following summer that the sockless story was started by "a little red-headed editor (who was) rotten before he was ripe", Victor Murdock of the Eagle and Ralph Easley of the News rushed into print, competitively "claiming to be rotten to the core", said Lute Axline in the Cresset, August 7, 1891; Axline disclaimed any connection with the story. The Easley claim appears in Hutchinson News, July 25, 1891 (quoting Wichita Daily Beacon in support of the News version); the Murdock claim was made in the "Sunflower Shimmer" column, Eagle, July 24, 1891.

The Eagle claim rests on an item which appeared in "Sunflower Shimmer", Victor Murdock's column, November 7, 1890; Simpson was quoted as saying: "Prince Hal can wear his silk underwear, but I (here he grasped his trouser-leg and bared his limb to the knee) can't wear any at all." Murdock, Folks, 103, reasserts the claim. McNeal, When Kansas Was Young, 202; Diggs, Story, 108-109; and Elizabeth N. Barr, "The Populist Uprising", A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans, ed. William E. Connelley (Chicago, Illinois: Lewis Publishing Company, 1919), 1151, support him.

Jennie Small Owen, Annalist, The Annals of Kansas, 1886-1925, ed. Kirke Mechem (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, n.d.), I, 110, reports that on October 31 Simpson, after a speech, "pulled off one boot, drew his trouser leg to the knee and exhibited a naked leg and foot (declaring) that under the high tariff the Kansas farmer 'can't have no drawers, and ain't got no socks.'" This entry in the Annals is taken (Continued on next page)
Socrates". the story could not have had any influence on the election outside of Reno county.112

The Simpson movements during the final week were not well reported in the press; by the time the papers went to press in November the big news was election returns, not the visit of a candidate (even a successful one) the previous week. He visited Hutchinson, Haven, and McPherson.113

While he had been in Wellington he had stayed overnight with his old friend Dave Leahy. Simpson laughingly told Mrs. Leahy that she had

111 (Continued from preceding page) from an item in Kansas City (Missouri) Times, November 8, 1890. The present writer knows of no reason for dating it October 31. It does not appear likely that the Times was copying from the Eagle because of the time element involved; the Eagle was an afternoon paper in 1890.


An inaccurate, but highly entertaining and interesting account of how the "Sockless" story aided in the Simpson election is Chester I. Long, "McFlimsey for Congress", The Kansas Day Club, Addresses (Hutchinson: W. Y. Morgan, 1901). It is almost a classic of the Republican position: Simpson won by clowning. The G.O.P. could not admit that Simpson won by appealing to the interests of the people.

113 Topeka Daily Capital, October 30, 1890; McPherson Democrat, October 31, 1890; Hutchinson News, October 31, November 1, 4, 1890; Hutchinson Alliance Gazette, November 4 (an extra), 1890; Hutchinson Times-Republican, November 7, 1890.
not only made tea that was fit for a Congressman, but that the next Representative of the seventh district was then drinking it. To Leahy he predicted victory by 7,000 votes; Hallowell was claiming a majority of 20,000. 114

Jerry Simpson returned to Medicine Lodge to vote. Tuesday, November 4, the men of the nation went to the polls. The partisan press dug out cuts of roosters; they would want a proud, crowing cock if their party was victorious, a sick, dispirited chicken if the opposition won.

The counting began. Two years previously S. R. Peters, Republican, had won by a margin of 15,319. 115 Jerry Simpson may have been a radical in politics, economics, and spelling; but he was slightly conservative in forecasting votes. He won by 7,431 instead of the 7,000 he had predicted. Simpson carried twenty counties, all but three lying in the eastern, or more developed half, of the district. Hallowell carried

114 Dave Leahy in obituary in Eagle, October 24, 1905; Dave Leahy in El Dorado Daily Republican, January 18, 1915.

115 June O. Cabe and Charles A. Sullivant, Kansas Votes, National Elections, 1859-1956 (Lawrence: Governmental Research Center, University of Kansas, 1957), 121.
seventeen counties, winning only one (Pawnee) in the eastern half.  

"Let's talk about something else," was the lead sentence in the editorial column of the Medicine Lodge Cresset the following Friday.

116 McNeal, When Kansas Was Young, 203; Eagle, October 24, 1905; Office of the Secretary of State, Abstracts of Election Returns, Microfilm reels 3, 4; June G. Cabe and Charles A. Sullivan, Kansas Votes, National Elections, 1859-1956 (Lawrence: Governmental Research Center, University of Kansas, 1957), 123, the actual vote was 32,612 to 25,181.

117 Cresset, November 7, 1890.
CHAPTER IV

GRASSHOPPERS OR A CROP FAILURE

November 4, 1890, the People's party began to fall apart. It had been spontaneous, a leaderless mob. Now it had selected leaders; it had authorized a group to speak for it. The mob dispersed and awaited the results of its protest.

November 5, 1890, the Republican party began to draw together. Its organization had become overconfident and overcomplicated. It had campaigned for many years on its loyalty to the Union, winning with old soldier candidates and old soldier votes. Now it faced the test of developing new leaders and new issues.

The Republican press felt that the third party had received protest votes because of hard times. "The only hope of the Alliance is in grasshoppers or a crop failure," said the Wichita Eagle.¹

¹Wichita Daily Eagle, April 8, 1891 (hereinafter cited as Eagle).
on politics: "We Republicans will last; the People's party will break. One reason is that this new party is merely tempered; the Republican party is annealed. One is brittle, the other flexible."²

The smith continued working, grinning at the comparison. "Another reason we Republicans will whale the daylights out of that crowd of calamity-howlers," Heiserman continued, gathering inspiration from the surgery on a farm wagon, "is that people travel in ruts. For a time they may jolt out of the track, but their whole tendency is to get back to the grooves." The large man shifted his wooden leg to a more comfortable position and went on, "You have to guide the horses when you are out of the ruts, but you let them guide themselves when you're in the ruts. Mostly people don't care to guide, for they're not very expert at it anyhow. The ruts are fighting on our side."³

Contrasted with the practical, cynical Heiserman, the leaders of the new party were an unpredictable lot. William Garrison of Sharon had been a Republican when Jerry Simpson arrived in Barber county; he became an Independent for the 1886 election; he returned briefly to the G.O.P.; he supported the Prohibition party in 1888; he was an avowed People's party man in 1890. He was later to become an

³Murdock, Folks, 110.
Alliance member of the Kansas House of Representatives, but he left before his term was finished to make the run into the Cherokee Strip, where he was elected to the Oklahoma Territorial Council. He was typical of one aspect of the Alliance movement.\(^4\)

Genial, jovial B. H. Clover, president of the Kansas Alliance, was also representative of the People's party. His gregariousness made him a skilled organizer and leader of the Farmer's Alliance. His ambition and pugnacity threw him together with the Vincent brothers in building the People's party. He worked, organized, schemed; and his efforts were crowned with success. He was elected to Congress in 1890.\(^5\)

The tree which had grown tall above its neighbors suddenly became aware of the immensity of the forest, and the harsh elements tore at the easily bent branches which extended above the protection

\(^4\)See above, pages 6, 7, 15, 21; Wichita Western Methodist, October 30, 1890; Medicine Lodge Barber County Index, October 22, 1890, March 18, May 6, June 3, July 8, 22, August 5, September 8, 21, October 5, 12, 1892, January 4, 18, 25, February 1, 8, 15, 22, March 15, 22, April 12, July 12, August 23, 30, October 18, 1893, November 11, 1896, April 19, 1899 (hereinafter Index); Medicine Lodge Cresset, August 19, October 14, 1892, December 1, 1893 (hereinafter Cresset).

of the mass. Clover became resentful of Simpson's leadership. He succumbed to the wicked city; his wife divorced him. He was denied renomination; he became a Republican again and was rewarded with petty patronage. Clover died in poverty and disgrace, by his own hand.  

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Lease had a voice. She had ability as a speaker. While Jerry Simpson amused crowds and made them feel that he was one of them, Mrs. Lease was an exhorter of mobs. One can picture her at the Bastille; she probably pictured herself at Orleans. She had no clear idea of what she wanted, but she was quite certain that everyone should satisfy her desires. She told the farmers to raise less corn and more hell. When they complied and elected a People's party Governor, he appointed her to the State Board of Charities. She continued to raise hell, but it slowly began to sound suspiciously like corn. Two Governors attempted to remove her; she jangled on and on like an alarm clock which will not

6Index, April 6, 13, June 29, July 27, August 3, 1892; January 18, March 1, 1894, May 29, 1895, September 2, 1896, January 3, 1900, especially August 3, 1892 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Times): Cresset, July 15, 1892, August 10, 24, 1894, May 24, 1895; Wichita Jerry Simpson's Bayonet, January 8, 1900. See also page 166 below.

run down; but people were slower and slower to awake to her call and finally they ceased to listen.

Small people with small minds belong to every political party, but in the People's party they discovered an opportunity to become powerful people and deal with big issues. (They might destroy the Bastille, but it would require a Napoleon to conquer a continent.)

The People's party was unrivaled in the art of having meetings, but it was weak in the business of organizing. It had little or no patronage with which to reward the party faithful; and faith alone could not buy groceries or pay mortgages. Whenever and wherever it secured the offices which controlled the patronage, its leaders became indiscreet and quarrelsome over distribution. The voters lost their enthusiasm for men who had become just another bunch of politicians.

The People's party demanded change; the electorate voted for change; the voters now wanted the legislative enactments they had been promised. The people, a sluggish giant, had stirred themselves to take part in the shaping of their destinies. They wanted immediate changes, or like a sleepy giant they would return to their slumbers.

The Alliance party was trapped by its own promise of a legislated Zion.

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8Murdock, Folks, 97-101; Index, January 3, 10, February 21, May 30, July 4, 1894; March 20, 1895, February 19, April 8, 1896; Bright, "Populism in the Nineties", 496-499, see also pages 136-137 below.
2. A Battle Is Not a War

On the Tuesday after the election Jerry Simpson appeared at Wellington for a victory "ratification". The Big Six band was prompt in meeting the train from Anthony. Simpson said he hardly knew how to act after being on the losing side for so long. "Let us begin now," he urged, "to organize for '92." He promised to serve all the people and to work for reform legislation.\(^9\)

On Saturday Simpson and S. M. Scott spoke in Hutchinson. It rained all day, but jubilant Alliance men crowded the Grand hall for both afternoon and evening meets. The Congressman-elect told his supporters: "It is the work of reformers to tear down, but of statesmen to build up." The Hutchinson Times-Republican thought that "with success came responsibility." He received a pair of silk socks as a present from the manager of the hall.\(^10\)

Simpson talked his way across the state until he reached Holton, where the one and a half hour speech was full of fun, spotted with

\(^9\)Wellington People's Voice, November 14, 1890. The Medicine Lodge ratification on Saturday had been "a slim affair"; attendance was hampered by bad weather; T. A. McNeal spoke, Cresset, November 14, 1890.

\(^10\)Hutchinson Times-Republican, November 21, 1890; see also Hutchinson Alliance Gazette, November 21, 1890; Hutchinson Weekly Interior Herald, November 22, 1890 (quoting Topeka State Journal).
grammatical errors, shallow in thought.\textsuperscript{11} The Democratic \textit{Holton Signal} said he was "a living illustration that the lowliest American citizen may aspire (to Congress)."\textsuperscript{12}

He returned to Medicine Lodge and almost immediately left again, this time for a meeting of the Farmer's Alliance at Ocala, Florida. Jane Simpson visited the South with him for her health, but she and son Lester spent the winter in Holton where both Jane and Jerry had relatives.\textsuperscript{13} At Ocala Jerry reportedly proposed that no Alliance Congressman-elect allow his name to be proposed for Senator.\textsuperscript{14}

In mid-January he appeared in Topeka, supporting B. E. Kies for State Printer, even though W. G. Musgrove of the \textit{Barber County Index} wanted the job. The Alliance controlled the Legislature when the houses met for a joint ballot to elect a Printer and a Senator.\textsuperscript{15} The struggle over government printing was only a minor skirmish however. The center of attention was the United States Senate seat of John J.

\textsuperscript{11}Index, November 26, 1890; \textit{Holton Weekly Recorder}, November 27, 1890; \textit{Holton Signal}, November 26, 1890; \textit{Holton Independent Tribune}, November 29, 1890.

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Holton Signal}, November 26, 1890.

\textsuperscript{13}Index, December 3, 1890, January 7, 1891.

\textsuperscript{14}Index, December 24, 1890; see also \textit{Cresset}, December 19, 1890; \textit{Holton Weekly Recorder}, December 11, 1890.

\textsuperscript{15}Neither B. E. Kies nor W. G. Musgrove was elected. \textit{Index}, January 14, 21, February 4, 1891; \textit{Cresset}, January 23, 30, 1891.
Ingalls. This aristocratic and erudite lawmaker, threatened by a return to private life in Kansas, abased himself before the plebian state legislators in a futile attempt to avoid his fate. The Alliance politicians settled upon the intelligent but retiring W. A. Peffer for Senator and elected him in spite of his inclination for a protective tariff. 16

The Kansas radicals indulged themselves in furious quarreling. The Speaker of the House, State Printer, president of the state Alliance, and the Vincent brothers publicly made war on each other to collect the available spoils. 17

Jerry Simpson spoke on Kansas Day in Arkansas City and spent the last day of January in Wichita as guest of the mayor and the city. He

16Index, January 21, 28, February 4, April, 1891; Cresset, December 19, 1890, January 16, February 6, 1891; Topeka State Journal, January 2 (quoting Hutchinson News), 6 (local edition), 7 (midnight mail edition), 7 (local edition), 9, 13 (quoting New York, New York) Sun, 14, 16 (quoting Atchison Globe), 23 (referring to Kansas City, Missouri, Star, January 6, 22, 1891.

The writer does not believe that Jerry Simpson made more than a nominal effort to secure endorsement for Senator. He denied that he was a candidate when he arrived in Topeka, Topeka State Journal, January 6 (local edition), 7 (midnight mail edition), 1891. All the People's party Representatives-elect were in the Kansas capital, ibid., January 13, 1891. Speaker of the House P. P. Elder made reference to "Jerry Simpson's boom", in an interview, ibid, January 23, 1891.

Peffer was "the mildest mannered candidate . . . offered . . . no more typical (of Populism) than a summer zephyr is typical of a tornado," Murdock, Folks, 107.

17Index, January 21, February 4, 11, September 9, 1891, November 30, 1892, Cresset, August 5, 1892 (quoting interview in Kansas City, Missouri, Journal).
told an audience at the Garfield hall that campaigning for Congress reminded him of a story about the Nebraska militia. The citizen soldiers bestowed Indian names on each other during a campaign against the savages. Jerry felt like the one called "Young-Man-Who Bit-Off-More-Than-He-Could-Chew." 18

Simpson stayed briefly in Barber county and then went to Washington to observe Congress in action, stopping enroute to advise the Illinois Legislature on the choice of a Senator. 19

3. Fervor v. Discipline

The attention of the People's party was turned to converting the heathen, while the Republican party worked to secure the repentance of those who had turned to strange gods.

Jerry Simpson became a missionary in Illinois and Maryland. His wife rented the farm and joined him in the East, as he continued his speaking tour through New York and New England. J. H. Kyle, South Dakota Alliance Senator-elect, alternated political evangelism with holding of religious revivals in the federal capital. 20

18 Index, February 4, 1891 (quoting Eagle).

19 Index, December 3, 1890, February 4, 18, March 4, 1891; Chicago, Illinois, Semi-Weekly Inter-Ocean, February 12, 1891; Cresset, February 13, 1891; Kingman Leader-Courier, October 5, 1893; see also footnote 47, page 149 below.

20 Index, March 25, April 1, 15, May 6, 20, 1891; Cresset, March 27, 1891; Clay Center Dispatch, January 15, 1891 (quoting New York Sun); Manchester, New Hampshire, Mirror and Farmer, April 2, 1891.
Simpson went to Cincinnati for a meeting which organized a national People's party. He felt personally that things were moving too fast, but he agreed to carry on with a speaking tour through Wisconsin and later would campaign widely in behalf of the new party. But first, he said, he had to return to his farm to harvest the wheat so that he could "blow in the proceeds on the campaign in Ohio." He left Kansas after two weeks for his Georgia, Missouri, Indiana, and Ohio engagements. Jane was ill in the care of Dr. Menninger at Topeka, and Jerry returned briefly to Kansas, taking her back to Indiana with him.

While Simpson, Mrs. Lease, and Senator Peffer toured the Midwest, South, and East evangelizing converts to their economic heresies, the Republican party of Kansas took stock of itself. It consolidated its hierarchy and purged its dissenters. Hank Heisemann, Marshall Murdock of the Eagle, Lute Axline of the Medicine Lodge Cresset,


22Index, June 24, 1891 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Times).

23Index, July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, August 15, September 16, 23, 30, October 14, 1891; Cresset, June 26, July 3, 10, 14, 1891.
Morgan Caraway of the Great Bend Register, and other Republican leaders carefully screened their applications for patronage, discarded from their ranks editors who carried columns of Alliance news, and generally forced out of the party the weak hearted. The spectacle of thousands deserting to the People's movement did not deter the bosses from expelling hundreds of others.24

While the Grand Old Party was cauterizing and binding its wounds it was also seeking a candidate for Congress in 1892. The man would have to be an organization man; he would have to be willing to lead a party shattered by a 7,000 vote defeat, which was even now discarding many of the broken pieces. This time there would be no liberal candidate nor liberal platform; a defender of banks and railroads would satisfy Republican specifications exactly. Such a pleader was available in Medicine Lodge, state Senator Chester I. Long.

The thirty-one year old lawmaker had been born in Pennsylvania but had moved to Paola, Kansas, with his parents in 1879. He had graduated from normal school at Paola and taught school for several

24Murdock, Folks, 110-114; Index, April 29, November 4, 1891; Cresset, May 29, 1891; Greensburg Kiowa County Signal, September 23, 1892.

Morgan Caraway had himself been guilty of tacit encouragement of the Alliance, see Great Bend Register, June 26, 1890; Lute Axline had underestimated the power of the movement, see Cresset, February 6, 1890; possibly the Register, Cresset, and Eagle drew closer together because the Alliance organized a boycott against them and the Nickerson Argosy and Topeka Daily Capital, see Cresset, October 31, 1890.
years. He studied law in the office of George R. Peck, chief counsel for the Santa Fe railroad; and when he was admitted to the bar in 1885 Long began practice in Medicine Lodge. Long had worked hard in 1890, travelling widely in the district, speaking in behalf of the candidacy of James R. Hallowell.

When Jerry Simpson visited his farm for the 1891 harvest he addressed his home town constituents once but pleaded fatigue in declining to speak again. Chester I. Long remarked that he drew a larger crowd to the courthouse for an attack on the People's party than Simpson had attracted for his speech.

Tuesday, September 29, was "a perfect picnic day -- cool, clear and bracing, and a day calculated to draw enthusiasm from a Piute Indian." Two bands and a glee club entertained the picnickers in Durst's grove as they awaited Simpson's arrival on the afternoon train. The Medicine Lodge Cresset observed that "great gobs of admiration could be seen oozing out of the eyes of the populace," as they cheered


26Index, November 5, 1890 (quoting Eagle); Clearwater Sun, October 21, 1890; Sedgwick Pantagraph, October 30, 1890; Pratt Pratt County Register, October 23, 1890; Hutchinson News, October 28, 1890.

27Index, July 8, 15, 29, 1891; Cresset, July 3, 10, 1891.
his appearance. In his speech Simpson "tread on the carcasses of 
some of his local opponents," continuing the attack on Long, T. A. 
McNeal, and Cresset editor Lute Axline in his evening speech at the 
courthouse. 28

When Jerry Simpson arrived Washington in December, 1891, to 
take his seat in the First Session of the 52d Congress his fame as 
a "Sockless Statesman" had preceded him. He confessed ten years 
later that he had stage fright, possessed an exaggerated idea of the 
greatness of Congressmen, and was keenly sensitive to ridicule. 
Capital hostesses, newsmen, and the old party leaders in the House 
attempted to humiliate him; but they discovered that he could strike 
back with repartee which made even the most aggressive retire in 
confusion. 29

His favorite technique in debate was insertion of short comments 
and questions into the lengthy speeches of other members. Many examples 
could be given, but they lie outside the scope of this account. Typical 
of most was the occasion when he rose to ask a pointed question of 
Sereno Payne:

28 Cresset, October 2, 1891, see also October 9, 1891 (quoting 
Topeka State Journal).

29 Interview in Eagle, November 24, 1901; Index, January 7, 
March 4 (a capital hostess asked Simpson to show his socks and was 
told that he believed in reciprocity and would expose his legs on 
that basis), June 24, (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Times), February 
10 (quoting New York (New York) World), March 9 (quoting Chicago 
(Illinois) Tribune), April 13 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Star), 
1892; Diggs, Story, 115-120, 135, 151.
Mr. Payne: If I were inclined to be rude, Mr. Speaker, I would answer the foolish query of the Gentleman from Kansas by asking him if his ancestors were monkeys.

Mr. Simpson: In which event I should reply as did the elder Dumas, when a French fool asked him the same question. I should say to the Gentleman, Yes, your family ends where mine began. 30

Simpson dressed fashionably in Washington and acquired a reputation as a sport, riding a bicycle on Pennsylvania Avenue with Tom Johnson and Tom Reed; the Republican press concluded that he had acquired Eastern ways. 31 He returned only briefly to Medicine Lodge between Christmas and New Year's Day. 32

Jane and Jerry were living simply in the capital in the same boardinghouse with Representative Clover. Jane, never the society type, was shocked at the extravagance of Washington. She acted as his clerk, Lester worked as a capitol page. Forty years later Dave Leahy said Simpson had gone to Congress owing $4,000 to a Medicine Lodge bank; the family lived on the clerk salary and used the pay of the Congressman to repay the loan. Jerry and Lester helped with the housework, washing and ironing. 33

30 Diggs, Story, 145; see also Eagle, October 24, 1905.


32 Cresset, January 1, 1892; Index, December 30, 1891.

33 Index, December 16, 30, 1891, January 13, 20 (quoting Kansas City [Missouri] Star), 27, February 17, 1892; Cresset, December 25, 1892; Dave Leahy in Eagle, September 24, 1933.
While Representative Simpson was occupied in Washington during the winter of 1891-1892, Long was busy in Kansas. In January the Coldwater Star reported he was being proposed for Congress; and early in March he announced his candidacy. Long was of the opinion that a defeated candidate should not run again. The candidate for nomination proceeded smoothly through the process which made him a candidate for Congress. Simpson returned to Barber county in time for the 1892 harvest; he had already been renominated by acclamation.

The People's party state convention was held in Wichita in mid-June. The big question was whether or not the attempts at fusion with the Democrats would be successful; if the nominee for Governor would be acceptable to the Democracy, joint victory would be assured. The convention balloted all day and then adjourned until evening. The young William Allen White was covering the story for the Kansas City Journal. Jerry Simpson gave him advance information that L. D. Lewelling would be the nominee, and White tied up the only night telegraph wire to Kansas City, thereby insuring that he and the Journal would have a

34 Index, February 10, (quoting Coldwater Star), March 23, 1892 (quoting Kingman Leader-Courier); Cresset, March 4, 1892; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, May 12, 1892.

35 Index, March 30, June 15, 22, 1892; Cresset, June 17, 1892; Great Bend Register, June 16, 1892; Hutchinson News, June 16, 1892.

36 Index, June 15, 22, 1892; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, June 16, 1892; Hutchinson News, August 17, 1892.
clean scoop. The telegraph editor cut the story and buried it on a back page; White quit his job and went to work for the Kansas City Star.  

The national convention of the People's party met in Omaha late in June and nominated a professional third party man, General James Weaver of Iowa, for the Presidency. Although Kansans were prominent among the organizers of the national party, Jerry Simpson apparently was not an enthusiastic supporter of the organization in 1892. Only speculation is possible on the reasons for his reserved attitude, and the writer offers either or both of the following explanations without attempting to produce conclusive proof of

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37 William A. White, *The Autobiography of William Allen White* (New York, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946), 227-229, White incorrectly said the convention was delayed until August; the story appeared in 2¾ columns on page 7, Kansas City (Missouri) Daily Journal, June 16, 1892; the right hand column of page 1 and nearly two columns of page 2 were devoted to a final convention story, June 17, 1892. Jerry Simpson figures prominently in the reports but is not credited as the source of advance information.

For other stories on the convention and its manuvers to nominate candidates acceptable to the Democracy see Great Bend Barton County Democrat, June 23, 30, July 14, 1892; Salina Weekly Republican, October 7, 1892; Hutchinson News, June 18, 1892 (a report that Simpson had insisted upon the nomination of Lewelling); editorial in Eagle, August 21, 1892.

Murdock, *Folks*, 108-109, reports a belief that B. E. Kies manuvered L. D. Lewelling into the race for Governor so that Kies would have no opposition for nomination for Clerk of the District Court; see also editorial in Eagle, August 21, 1892.

38 *Index*, July 6, 13, 1892; *Lincoln, Nebraska, Semi-Weekly Nebraska State Journal*, July 1, 5, 1892; Hicks, *Populist Revolt*, 208-209, 212-216, 221-223, 229, 236.
either one: 1) Simpson felt that the local organizations were not strong enough to provide the foundations for a national structure; 2) he thought the interests of various local agrarian groups were too dissimilar and their leaders too doctrinaire to effectuate a compromise on a national program.39

In mid-August the Democratic seventh Congressional district convention met at Dodge City. Although the state convention had endorsed the People's party state ticket and Simpson was an advocate of fusion, opposition had developed; and the prospects indicated a close battle until the news came that the People's party of the second district had voted to support a Democratic nominee; an endorsement of Simpson followed.40

The Congressman went on the campaign trail through the seventh district late in August: Anthony, Caldwell, Lyons, Wichita, Kingman, 

39 These conjectures are supported by items in Index, May 27, June 3, 24, 1891, July 6, 13, 1892; Cresset, April 10, May 22, 29 June 19, 1891; Hicks, Populist Revolt, 126, 211.

40 The convention vote was variously reported as: 72-36, Great Bend Barton County Democrat, August 18, 25, 1892 (the editor was secretary of the convention); 63-45, Hutchinson News, August 17, 1892; 74-35, Index, August 24, 1892. See also Coldwater Western Star, August 20, 1892 (reporting the vote as 72-36); Topeka Daily Capital, August 17, 1892.

A discussion of seventh district and state fusion appeared in Great Bend Barton County Democrat, July 14, 1892 (quoting and disputing with Great Bend Barton Beacon).

The Democratic state convention, led by John Martin, had given grudging endorsement to the People's party nominees, Topeka State Journal, July 7, 1892.
St. John, Larned, Great Bend, Jetmore, Garfield county, Cimarron, Hartland, Syracuse, Stanton county, Morton county, Stevens county, Grant county, Haskell county, Seward county, Meade, Coldwater, and then back home after more than five weeks of campaigning. Following a brief sojourn and vigorous vote seeking in Barber county, Simpson headed northward to help in the reelection campaign of his colleague William Baker in the sixth district. As he travelled eastward across the state helping in local campaigns, the Republican press accused him of attempting to secure support for a bid for the United States Senate.

Morgan Caraway of the Great Bend Register was the seventh district Republican chairman. He had issued a challenge for a series of Long-Simpson debates, and his newspaper had been extremely

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41 Index, August 24, 31, September 7, 14, 21, 28, October 12, 1892; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, September 15, 22, 1892; Great Bend Register, September 22, 1892; Great Bend Tribune, September 23, 1892; LaCrosse Clarion, September 23, 1892; Cresset, August 26, September 16, 23, October 7, 14, 1892; Eminence Garfield County Call, September 23, 1892; Greensburg Kiowa County Signal, September 30, November 4, 1892; Coldwater Western Star, October 8, 1892.

42 Smith Center Pioneer-Bulletin, October 20, 1892; Smith Center Smith County Journal, October 20, 1892; Salina Weekly Republican, October 28, 1892; Salina Daily Republican, October 21, 24, 1892; Salina Saline County Journal, October 13, 27, 1892.
nasty when the Congressman declined. After Jerry Simpson returned to his home district late in August, Caraway was one of the hundred people from the county seat who rode the Missouri Pacific special to Hoisington to hear him. It was an exceptionally fine day, and the people were entertained by the usual side shows and gambling devices that travel with a circus, including an old man with a rat show.\textsuperscript{43}

The editor perched himself atop a hayrack to obtain a good position from which to hear and observe. The speaker picked him out of the crowd; and, recalling that Caraway had accused him of writing that times were so hard in Kansas that women were selling their virtue,\textsuperscript{44} Simpson offered him one hundred dollars if he would

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{43}Great Bend Register, October 27, 1892; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, October 20, 27, 1892; Great Bend Barton Beacon, October 27, 1892; Hoisington Blade, October 27, November 3, 1892; Hoisington Dispatch, October 27, 1892; Index, September 21, October 3, 1892.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{44}Simpson had been among the reform leaders invited to contribute to the first issue of the Washington, District of Columbia, National Watchmen. This issue is missing from the Kansas State Historical Society files, but Volume I, number 17, August 31, 1892, repeats the offending paragraph. Simpson had written that the mineral wealth of the nation had been appropriated by the "enemy" and labor had to beg for work.

The poor privilege of producing wealth is graciously granted with the understanding that they surrender the products of their toil to those Lords of the nation, and thousands denied this poor privilege go clothed in rags, wanting the necessaries of life. Under these conditions, life becomes a fierce and terrible struggle; men sell their honor, women their virtue, children become criminals and outcasts in a land where the forces for producing wealth are so enormous that if the people could obtain access to this vast storehouse they could feed the world and then have abundance left.

Republican Judge Theodosius Botkin lifted a phrase from context, declared Simpson had been referring to his constituents, and read the quotation to (Continued on next page)
come to the platform and substantiate his charges. Caraway declined, having better sense than to attempt to address a People's party crowd; and Simpson said: "If you come on the platform, I'll give you another hundred if I don't prove you're an infamous lying scoundrel before you get away." Caraway replied, "You can call me that from the stand, but I dare you to say it on the street." The bitter personal tirade continued; Simpson was surrounded by a bodyguard of twenty men when he went to his special train; and rumors of assassination plots marked the closing week.

(Continued from the preceding page) a Grand Army encampment in Wichita, August 18, 1892. Simpson was present, and he and the Judge "exchanged a few words with fire in them" reported the Eagle, August 19, 1892. The Eagle said Simpson had been writing "in reference to slums in politics." See also Kansas City (Missouri) Journal, August 21, 22, 1892.

The writer found, but did not make notes on, numerous references to this dispute in Republican papers. Pertinent items appeared in Great Bend Register, August 25, 1892 (quoting Meade Republican), and September 15, 29, October 27, 1892 (quoting Washington, District of Columbia, National Watchman).

Both quotations in the text are composites of quotes from three or more sources; the writer takes responsibility for the wording used in the text. Sources used were Stafford Courier, October 19, 1905; Great Bend Register, October 27, 1892; October 26, 1905; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, October 27, 1892; Great Bend Tribune, October 26, 1892; Great Bend Barton Beacon, October 27, November 3, 1892; Claflin Barton County Banner, November 3, 1892; Hoisington Blade, October 27, 1892; Hoisington Dispatch, October 27, 1892; see also Index, September 28, 1892.
of the campaign. 46

Jerry Simpson, in good humor, told a Greensburg audience that the old parties reminded him of finding birds nests while he was a boy. If the little birds were tapped on the bill they would open their mouths, expecting food, and then swallow the pebbles dropped into them. 47

When he returned to Medicine Lodge he was greeted by thirty-seven little girls in red, white, and blue, representing each of the counties of the district. The picnic was already over; the candidates for both houses of the Legislature had made their speeches; and the crowd was impatient to hear the Congressman. But he was too hoarse to say more than a few words, and a glee club and another speaker entertained the afternoon meeting. Simpson talked briefly to a meeting held that night. 48

The contest produced an Alliance victory; the Kansas People's party elected six Congressmen out of seven, the Governor, a majority

46 Stafford Courier, October 19, 1905; Great Bend Register, October 27, November 3, 1892, October 26, 1905; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, October 20, 27, 1892; Great Bend Tribune, October 28, 1892; Index, October 12, 1892; Cresset, October 21, 28, November 4, 1892; Hoisington Dispatch, October 27, 1892; Claflin Barton County Banner, November 3, 1892; Greensburg Kiowa County Signal, October 28, 1892; Salina Saline County Journal, October 27, 1892; Smith Center Smith County Journal, October 27, 1892 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Star); Barr, "Populist Uprising", 1165.

47 Greensburg Kiowa County Signal, November 4, 1892; see also Coldwater Western Star, October 15, 1892.

48 Index, November 9, 1892; Cresset, November 4, 1892.
of the state Senate (if Long anticipated this it might explain his willingness to make an unsuccessful race for Congress); but amazingly, the control of the state House of Representatives was in doubt.\footnote{Index, August 24, 31, September 7, 14, 21, 28, October 12, November 9, 1892; Cresset, July 1, August 26, October 7, 14, 21, 28, November 4, 11, 1892.} The undaunted Medicine Lodge Cresset proposed that Long be given another chance in 1894.\footnote{Cresset, November 25, 1892.} The Simpson majority had been sharply reduced although the fusion forces swept the state.

4. Where the Embattled Farmer Stood

The first People's party government was to be inaugurated in January in Topeka. The leaders and spokesmen of the masses were an oddly assorted lot. They were professional third party men, hysterical women, dissident and disgruntled Republicans who would desert the G.O.P. but declined to associate with the Democracy, cynical opportunists, and idealistic do-gooders.
Governor-elect L. D. Lewelling was a big, pleasant man with a spreading pirate moustache and a soft voice. He was a dealer in farm produce, a middleman. "A naturally peaceful man, devoted to domestic joys, with an affectionate family to fill full his cup of contentment, fate [had] pushed him out on the firing line where the partisan shells were falling fast and furiously."  

The Populists had elected one member of the Supreme Court, had swept the executive offices, and had secured a majority of the state Senate through combination with the Democracy because leaders such as Jerry Simpson advised fusion; but on the grass-roots, local level; overconfidence had resulted in nomination of both Democratic and Populist candidates for the lower house of the Legislature. Probably this obstinancy gave pluralities to Republicans in a majority of the state Representative districts. In several counties the People's party was definitely third in support; in many it was second; but only rarely was it first, when the three parties had candidates.  

Monday, January 9, 1893, L. D. Lewelling was sworn as Governor

51 Murdock, Folks, 109; also Ibid., 106-109.  
52 Joseph J. Mason, "The Populist Contest for the Kansas Legislature in 1892-1893" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Fort Hays Kansas College, Hays, 1958), 128 (hereinafter Mason, "Contest"). The above conclusion as to cause for defeat is that of the present writer; the conclusion that the Republicans were entitled to organizing the House of Representatives is that of Mason. The present writer acknowledges that his use of the Mason thesis in preparation of this section approaches plagiarism.
of Kansas. Someone in the crowd saw Jerry Simpson and cried, "Jerry! Jerry!"; the Congressman made a bow, saying it was not time to talk, but a time for action.\(^{53}\) That evening the Populists held a rally in the chamber of the House of Representatives. Although Congress was in session, two Populist United States Representatives were in Topeka; after miscellaneous speaking and entertainment, Jerry Simpson spoke:

> You have beaten the Santa Fe railroad and you must take charge of the government. You must organize the legislature in this hall tomorrow and I wouldn't let the technicalities of the law stand in the way. I do not favor revolution in this case, but only as a last resort, but see to it that you organize the legislature here tomorrow.\(^{54}\)

The Legislature organized the next day, the Senate without incident; but there was bedlam in the lower house as both parties claimed that their candidate had been elected Speaker. Two houses met in the same hall on friendly terms at first, but soon animosity bred friction. After some hesitation the Governor and Senate gave recognition to the Populist house.

The five Democrats in the House joined in recognizing the Republican speaker but met in joint session with the Populists of House and Senate to re-elect the Populist State Printer. Their price

\(^{53}\)Topeka State Journal, January 9, 1893.

\(^{54}\)Topeka Daily Capital, January 10, 1893; see also Topeka State Journal, January 4, 9, 10, 1893.
was the election of John Martin, Democratic fusion leader as United States Senator. 55

Jerry Simpson had been called to Washington, where Jane was ill, a week after the inauguration of Lewelling. From the national capital he issued statements denying he was a candidate for Senator and exhorting the Populists of the Kansas House to struggle for their organization (Senator Peffer had sent a soothing message to Topeka, and Simpson said Peffer was "a very musty old back number" and opined nobody in Kansas would pay the slightest attention to him). 56 When the Kansas Populists, angered at Democratic participation in the Republican organization of the House, began to back down on a tacit agreement to send Martin to the Senate, it was a telegram from Jerry Simpson which secured the election of the fusion Democrat. 57

February 14 and 15 matters approached a crisis. Republicans made two arrests by authority of their House of Representatives organization, seeking a decision by the Republican dominated state Supreme Court. The Populists, who had been sharing Legislative Hall with the G.O.P. for alternate sessions, locked the doors. The Republicans battered down the doors and ejected the Populists.

55 Mason, "Contest", 46-77.
56 Topeka State Journal, January 19, 1893, see also January 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14 (quoting Arkansas City Traveler), 16, 1893.
57 Topeka State Journal, January 19, 23, 24, 25, 1893; Topeka Daily Capital, January 14, 15, 17, 21, 24, 25, 1893. It was John Martin who had moved that the Democratic state convention accept the People's party slate of nominees, Topeka State Journal, July 7, 1892.
Sergeants-at-arms were sworn in by the score, the Governor called out the militia, 500 deputies were enlisted by the Shawnee county sheriff (Republican). These small armies camped on capitol square, some inside the statehouse, some in the park. Governor Lewelling proposed a compromise on the afternoon of February 16 which would disband the opposing forces and allow the Republicans to hold the legislative hall pending judicial settlement. The Republicans agreed, and the Supreme Court by a partisan majority of two to one recognized the Republican organization on February 25, 1893.58

Four Populist sponsored measures were passed by the Republican House, including an Australian ballot law.59 The present writer feels that Governor Lewelling allowed the opportunity to establish a People's government to slip when he compromised to avoid bloodshed. Probably a majority of Populists would not have condoned bloodshed; probably the Republicans were entitled to their organization of the House; but true revolutionary leaders are not troubled by legality and mixed sympathy. The successful revolutionary must act without qualms or conscience; he must be so confident in his mission that he is willing to crush all opposition whatever the source and regardless of cost or consequence.

58 Mason, "Contest", 97-115.
59 Mason, "Contest", 117.
Populism showed itself in Topeka in February, 1893, to be only a protest movement and not a revolutionary movement.  

It had failed to harmonize its disparate elements into a smooth organization, and now its leaders proved unwilling to force the people into new ruts; so the people began to slip back into the old ones.

While the tragic-comedy at Topeka spun itself out to its unglorious conclusion the expert politicians in the national capital were contriving a parliamentary snare for Jerry Simpson. They brought a bill to the floor which purported to control speculation in grain futures. Such an "anti-option" law was desired by the farmers of the plains, and this bill was a control measure. It had been passed by the House and amended by the Senate, but Simpson recorded a "Nay" to its consideration in the closing days of the Congress, because as amended it would introduce government meddling in the grain market without preventing dealing in futures.

The opinion of the present writer is supported by Martha A. Warner, "Kansas Populism: A Sociological Analysis" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Kansas State Teacher's College, Pittsburg, 1954), 101: "The loss of the 'legislative war' demoralized the Populists. Patronage troubles arose in the state administration. The anti-administration faction bolted the party and formed a separate ticket in the 1894 election."

Index, March 29, April 12, 26, November 1, 1893. This vote was to have a far reaching affect on Simpson's relationships with some of the radicals in the People's party, see Cresset, January 21, September 16, 1898, page 149 below.
Simpson was planning to go to Europe between sessions but was forced to cancel the trip; both he and Jane had been ill.\textsuperscript{62} He was neglecting to inform the press of his home district about his decisions, plans, and movements.\textsuperscript{63} Chester I. Long unbent enough to umpire a kid baseball game in the streets of Medicine Lodge.\textsuperscript{64}

The 1890 election had offered a lesson to the People's party; in the four Kansas Congressional districts in which the Democrats supported Alliance nominees they were successful; the two districts in which three candidates were presented elected Republicans.\textsuperscript{65} In 1892 Simpson had favored fusion with the Democracy to present a united effort.\textsuperscript{66}

Democrats of the 1893 Legislature were willing to cooperate with the Alliance to send Democrat John Martin to Washington as a Senator, but they joined the organization of the Republican House.\textsuperscript{67} Much of the Alliance press apparently assessed the relative strength

\textsuperscript{62}Index, April 26, May 3, 10, 1893.
\textsuperscript{63}Index, 1892, 1893, 1894, for example March 29, April 12, 1893, on the anti-option bill; May 10, 21, July 5, 1893, on his plans.
\textsuperscript{64}Index, June 28, 1893.
\textsuperscript{65}Bright, "Populism in the Nineties", 486.
\textsuperscript{66}Great Bend Barton County Democrat, June 30, 1892.
of the political organizations as: 1) People's party, 2) Republicans, 3) Democrats. Instead of being impressed that victory lay only in fusion, the reformers demonstrated an increasing inclination to stand alone in 1894. 68

As if the performance of the Kansas Legislature had not been absurd enough the reformers continued to make themselves ridiculous. Governor Waite of Colorado earned himself the nickname of "Bloody Bridles" by promising to wade in blood to that level to accomplish his objectives (this attitude is a true revolutionary spirit). 69

Inmates of the Kansas state penitentary began publication of a paper, the *Prison Trusty*, which commended the Populist administration for better treatment. 70 The nadir was achieved when the People's party of Ohio nominated Jacob Coxey for Governor. 71

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68 *Index*, May 24, June 28, July 5, 12, 19, 1893, March 21, 1894.

69 *Hicks, Populist Revolt*, 291-299.

70 *Index*, August 30, 1893.

71 *Index*, August 18, 1895.
CHAPTER V

THE POPULIST PARTY WILL CEASE TO BE

Black prairie soil gives a thin, rich humus plating to the iron red of Barber county; humus soils leach easily. The farmers of southwest Kansas had long coveted the virgin land to the south; there red men and red earth were separated by the same grass and grass produced soil which had been so fertile for the Kansas pioneer with the sod-busting plow.

1. Greatness with a Big G

When Congress convened August 7, 1893, Jerry Simpson appeared without his mustache, receiving seven votes for Speaker of the House.¹ He took his son on the floor during the debate on the opening of the Cherokee Strip.² In September he was speaking in Virginia; Chester I. Long was speaking in southwest Kansas.³

The Cherokee strip was opened September 16, 1893; Kansas farmers rushed to the new land; as claimants in the Territory they lost their residence and voting privileges in the state of Kansas.⁴

¹Medicine Lodge Barber County Index, August 9, 1893 (hereinafter cited as Index).
²Index, August 30, 1893 (quoting Washington (District of Columbia) Post).
³Index, September 27, October 4, 1893.
⁴Index, August 23, September 13, 27, October 11, 18, 1893; Medicine Lodge Cresset, December 1, 1893 (hereinafter Cresset).
Barber county People's party leaders who staked claims in Oklahoma included the state Representative, the county Attorney, and a former Index editor. But enough Alliance men remained in the county in 1893 to reelect one of their number as county Clerk (which would be important in the event of an election contest), and an agrarian candidate defeated McNeal for county Attorney.

Chester I. Long revealed a new talent during the Christmas season when he played Pythias for three nights in a production of "Damon and Pythias". On New Year's Day, 1894, he demonstrated that he could still run a good race by catching a Santa Fe train a half mile from the Attica depot. In 1892 he had argued that a defeated candidate should not be sent a second time against Simpson, but in 1894 he desired another opportunity for himself; and May 5 a

5*Index*, September 27, October 11, 18, 25, 1893.

6*Index*, June 21, October 18, 25, November 1 (actually published 2), 8, 15, 1893.

Long had predicted a victory because many of the third party voters had migrated, *Index*, October 11, 1893 (quoting interview in *Kansas City (Missouri) Star*).

The Barber Democracy had put a separate ticket in the field, the stalwarts winning over the fusionists by 14-10 in the county convention; the relative strength in the race for Attorney was: People's - 508; Republican (McNeal) - 427; Democratic - 100; *Index*, October, November 8, 15, 1893.

7*Index*, December 20, 27, 1893.

8*Index*, January 3, 1894.
convention at Newton gave him the nomination by acclamation.9

The Congressman was gravely ill in Washington; he went to Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, to recover strength; and he was absent from Capitol Hill from April until late in June, when he returned to the House in time to vote for an anti-option bill.10 Late in July a mass convention (estimated at 5,000) in Hutchinson listened to Governor Lewelling and other speakers and then renominated Jerry Simpson.11 The Democracy of southwest Kansas met in Hutchinson two weeks later to debate the issue of endorsement or a separate nomination but adjourned without action.12 The People's party was spurning the Democrats, and three separate state tickets were presented to the voters.13 After Simpson returned to rebuild his fences the Democratic Congressional committee met in Great Bend

9Index, January 10, 24, March 14, 21, May 9, 1894; Great Bend Tribune, May 4, 1894; Great Bend Register, May 10, 1894.

10Index, April 25, May 2, 9, 23, June 6, 13, 27, July 11, 1894 Great Bend Register, May 10, August 16, 1894; Cresset, May 11, 1894; Caldwell Weekly Advance, May 3, 10, 1894. Among the resolutions passed by the Republican Congressional convention at Newton was a declaration "that we sincerely regret to hear of the serious illness of the Honorable Jerry Simpson and hereby extend to him our sympathy and hope for speedy recovery," Great Bend Register, May 10, 1894.

11Index, August 1, 1894.

12Great Bend Barton County Democrat, August 9, 1894; Great Bend Register, August 9, 1894.

13Great Bend Register, August 9, 1894; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, July 5, passim, 1894; the Prohibition party also put a slate in the race, Index, October 3, 1894.
and voted nineteen to nine to put his name in their party column on the new Australian ballot.\textsuperscript{14}

Simpson found his party damaged internally by factions and weakened seriously by its split with the Democrats. He declined invitations to speak and turned his attention to his farm while his health slowly improved.\textsuperscript{15} Long was campaigning determinedly, making two speeches a day.\textsuperscript{16}

Kiowa held a celebration on September 15 on the anniversary of the opening of the Cherokee Strip. The eight featured speakers included Democratic candidates for Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General, Republicans McNeal and Long, and Representative Simpson. The arrangements committee switched the order of the speakers' appearances, putting Long at the end, immediately following Simpson. When the ailing Congressman went to his seat after roasting the committee for an hour and twenty minutes a man named Wells pulled his chair from under him, spilling him on the platform.\textsuperscript{17}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14}Great Bend Barton County Democrat, September 27, October 4, 1894; \textit{Index}, October 3, 1894; \textit{Cresset}, September 28, 1894.
\item \textsuperscript{15}\textit{Index}, September 5, 12, 19, 1894; the Barber Democracy nominated a complete slate, \textit{Index}, September 26, 1894.
\item \textsuperscript{16}\textit{Cresset}, August 17, September 28, 1894; \textit{Hutchinson News}, October 12, 1894.
\item \textsuperscript{17}\textit{Index}, September 19, 1894; \textit{Cresset}, September 21, 28 (quoting \textit{Kiowa Journal} and \textit{Alva (Oklahoma Territory) Republican}).
\end{itemize}
Jerry Simpson did not begin his campaign until the last week of September. He was "thinner and very much weaker," noted the Great Bend Register, and "did not bubble over with the old time briskness." There were not the same public demonstrations there had been during the Alliance picnic period, and the schoolhouse style oratory did not enthuse as it had in 1890 and 1892.

The Register thought "the people of the Seventh district have gone out of the clown business;" but there was almost regret in the report; "He was greatness with a big G," said the Republican paper. It was not just a colorful character that was slipping from the Kansas scene, but the whole pattern of politics was undergoing a change; and the Republican editors must have realized that there would be only a few more of the thrilling campaigns, with parades, torchlight processions, barbecues, and crowds numbering thousands no matter who counted them. If the people were falling again into the ruts it would be lonely and a little bit dull, even for men like Morgan Caraway and Hank Heisermann, without the excitement of competition for control of the course of the common-wealth.

18 Index, October 3, 17, 24, 31, November 7, 1894; Cresset, October 5, 19, 1894.

19 Great Bend Register, October 13, 1894; see also Great Bend Tribune, October 12, 1894: "The old time crowds have passed into history. There is no more of the hurrah and wild excitement. No more dollars thrown to the speaker." Great Bend Barton County Democrat, October 11, 18, 1894; Great Bend Evening News, October 4, 5, 1894. The crowd at Hutchinson was also much smaller than in 1892, Hutchinson News, October 15, 1894.
On election day the voters of the country stampeded to the republican party because times were hard and nothing had been done (by the Populists in Topeka and Democrats in Washington) to relieve the people," said the Index two years later. "The people elected Chester I. Long . . . for no other reason than because Simpson and the other Populist congressmen could not enact into law the demands of the People's party." 20

Long carried all but three of the counties in the western third of the district; Simpson won two and tied one western county and received a majority in thirteen counties in an hourglass shape in the center; Long led in Rice, McPherson, Reno, Harvey, Sedgwick, and Sumner. 21

Simpson believed that the 1894 split with the Democrats on the state level had brought his defeat. "When times improve," he predicted, "when idle men find employment and better industrial conditions prevail, than (sic) the populist party will cease to be. It will have no excuse for living, and it will go out of existence." 22

20 Index, August 19, 1896.

21 Office of the Secretary of State, Abstracts of Election Returns, Microfilm reel 5; Simpson lost by 1,985 votes, 25,459 to 27,444, June G. Cabe and Charles A. Sullivant, Kansas Votes, National Elections, 1859-1956 (Lawrence: Governmental Research Center, University of Kansas, 1957), 129 (hereinafter Kansas Votes).

22 Index, December 12, 1894.
2. A Snug Five Room House

The Republicans of Medicine Lodge held a ratification party for Chester I. Long, Congressman-elect. Jerry Simpson was staying at the hotel but was compelled to leave by a jeering crowd. He took refuge in a private home, but even there he was molested by people displaying the Hallowe'en spirit. That night he predicted victory for himself in 1896.23

Jerry and Jane Simpson left Barber county November 12, she going to Holton, he to take spring water for his health.24 The Associated Press circulated a rumor he was planning to return to Indiana.25 In December, still far from well, he returned to Congress.26

Chester I. Long was to be doubly congratulated. The handsome young politician had acquired a wife.27 In the spring Jerry and Jane Simpson settled down in their five room farm home with their maturing son, who was becoming popular with the girls. The large acreage of oats succumbed to the wind and was blown away, and

23Index, November 11, 1896.
24Index, November 14, 1894; Cresset, November 16, 1894.
25Index, November 14, 1894; Cresset, November 16, 1894.
26Index, December 12, 1894.
27Index, February 6, April 3, May 15, 1895; Cresset, February 8, 22, March 1 (quoting Paola Miami Republican and Paola Western Spirit), 1895.
the corn suffered from a lack of rain. Although the farm was quite well stocked with horses, hogs, and cattle and had plenty of range and water, Simpson felt that "farming is an expensive luxury under present conditions." 28

The growing issue in American politics was the coinage of silver; and Jerry Simpson, private citizen, jumped quickly into the fight for metallic inflation. He left his ailing wife to make a silver speech in Topeka on June 12; the roar of the crowd caught him; he went on a Chautauqua tour through Kansas and South Dakota advocating the coinage of the white metal. He was to speak July 4 at Warrensburg, Missouri; but a visit to Medicine Lodge prompted him to cancel the appearance. Something caused him to renew his interest in the farm, and a speech to the county People's party convention, August 3, concentrated upon a personal devil, Lute Axline of the Medicine Lodge Cresset, who had to suffer in full view during the one hour attack. 29

Simpson accepted speaking dates in Missouri and eastern Kansas but was soon back in the Southwest for speeches at Wellington (twice), Anthony, Harper, Wichita, Kiowa, and other towns of the

28Index, May 15, 1895; see also Index, March 20, July 24, August 28, September 18 (quoting Wellington People's Voice), 1895; Cresset, April 19, May 24, July 5, 19, August 6, 30, 1895.

29Cresset, August 2, 9, 30, 1895; Index, May 29, June 12, 19, 26, July 3, 10, 24, August 7, September 25, 1895.
seventh Congressional district. Long was not active in the 1895, off year, campaign. The People's party showed the beginnings of a comeback in the election.  

Thursday morning, November 21, Jerry Simpson hitched up a low-wheeled feed wagon; and he and Jane set out for town. As they rode along the country road, the board on which they were riding broke; and Jane fell under a rear wheel, which passed over her back below the shoulders. The shock rendered her helpless and, for a time, unconscious. She was taken to a nearby house, and physicians were summoned. Her recovery was good after the initial shock had passed.  

In December the Barber county People's party considered narrowing the reform objectives to a single issue: silver. Jerry Simpson protested that the broader reform aims should be retained.  

He joined the Grand Army of the Republic.  

He went on a speaking
tour through Minnesota and the eastern states, spending several days in the District of Columbia, where he reportedly had to introduce Representative Long to other Members of Congress. He returned through Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. February 12, 1896, Long was recorded as voting "Nay" on a bill to increase the coinage of silver.

Simpson thought that President Cleveland was "too hasty" in his handling of the Venezuela boundary dispute. The idea of making a "request for arbitration and then appointing the arbitrators was rather peculiar." Although Simpson did not exactly condemn the President, he believed the "same end could have been reached in a better way." Simpson thought the boundaries of the United States could very well be enlarged to take in all of North America.

May 2, 1896, Jerry Simpson lectured on "The Problem of

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34 Index, January 8, 12, 22, February 5, 19, March 4, 1896; Cresset, January 17, February 21, March 6, 1896; Kiowa Review, November 18, 1896 (quoting Hutchinson Bee); Frank A. Feltret in Wichita Jerry Simpson's Bayonet, August 21, 1899.

35 Index, February 19, 1896.

36 Interview with Jerry Simpson, Cresset, January 3, 1896. Kansas City [Missouri] Star, October 23, 1905, quotes Simpson as jestingly expressing a reluctance to support a House Resolution to buy Canada while in Congress. He said that he would be accused of attempting to move New Brunswick under the Constitution so that he could run for the Presidency.
Human Progress" at the Rush county courthouse. He felt that "human progress in the direction of a higher and better civilization is and has even (sic) been retarded, arrested or developed in proportion as mankind have (sic) obtained or have been denied free access to the soil." He cited the examples of land monopoly in ancient Greece and Rome and medieval France and said, "We in this country are approaching that condition." He advocated remedial legislation: a graduated income tax and Henry George's single land tax. 37 He attended the Presbyterian church Sunday morning and the United Brethren church Sunday evening. Monday morning he left LaCrosse for Beloit to speak for an old soldiers reunion. 38

3. The Case of Silver

July 4, 1896, Jerry Simpson was paid $200 to speak at a celebration at Fort Dodge, Iowa. 39 He was on his way to Chicago where the Democratic national convention was gathering. People's party leaders assembled in the convention city and proceeded to advise the Democracy on the issue and the candidate. Their spokesman was Jerry Simpson; the issue, he said, should be silver; and the candidate should be Senator Teller of Colorado or Representative Bland of Missouri. 40

37Index, May 6, 1896 (quoting LaCrosse Chieftain).
38Cresset, May 1, 1896 (quoting LaCrosse Clarion); Beloit Gazette, April 21, 22, 1896.
39Index, July 8, 1896; Cresset, July 3, 1896.
40Index, July 15, 1896; Cresset, July 10, 1896; Salina Daily Republican-Journal, July 6, 7, 8, 9, 1896.
On July 9, Congressman Bryan of Nebraska delivered "a masterpiece of fervid oratory; with consummate eloquence he stated the case of silver and parried the arguments of the gold men. The convention took fire with enthusiasm."\(^4\) Bryan had been discussed as a nominee, but he was a dark horse; and when the convention stampeded to nominate him many Democrats were disgruntled. The nomination of Sewall for Vice President was an effort to pull the party together, but it alienated the fusionists of the People's party.\(^2\)

Simpson returned briefly to Kansas, making speeches and receiving the endorsement of his county organization for Congress. The convention was not unanimous in its support however, Kiowa and a rural precinct voted against instructing the delegates. This factional split within the People's party was serious; and, although it was patched together until election time, the fight broke out with real bitterness during the winter months.\(^3\)

The national convention of the People's party assembled in St. Louis July 22; symbolically the lights in the hall went out during the night session, leaving the delegates in the dark. Several


\(^2\) *Salina Daily Republican-Journal*, July 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 1896.

\(^3\) *Index*, July 15, 22, 1896; *Cresset*, June, July, 1896, especially June 19, July 17, 1896. For details of this imbroglio, see Chapter Six below.
states were determined to nominate a straight ticket; others were willing to support the Democratic candidates; Jerry Simpson mounted a chair to lend his voice to silver during a parliamentary wrangle. The convention voted to select a man for Vice President first and then adjourn overnight. Tom Watson of Georgia was nominated, and the telegraph lines to Omaha carried the news to Bryan. He responded by saying he would not accept unless Sewall were to be his running mate. The dismayed delegates proceeded, nevertheless, to endorse him; and then, after investing their national committee with plenary powers over the replacement of candidates on the ticket, they adjourned. \[1\]

Although the national convention attempted to maintain a semblance of reform integrity and separate radical identity, organizations of the state level were willing to combine completely with the Democracy. The Kansas arrangement was typical; the People's convention was held at Abilene simultaneously with the Democratic meeting at Hutchinson; a joint committee met in Abilene and proposed that the Abilene assembly select state nominees and the Hutchinson group name the Presidential electors; the same names would appear in both party columns (with the exception of Vice Presidential candidates); the electors would vote for Bryan and for whichever Vice Presidential nominee received the most support

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outside Kansas. Stories that Watson was to be dropped had circulated before the convention which nominated him had closed, and the uncertainty continued up to election day. 45

The Democratic and People's parties of southwest Kansas were more direct than the state organizations; both conventions met in Larned August 8 and nominated Jerry Simpson by acclamation.46 There had been opposition, but it disappeared before the conventions met. 47

The Medicine Lodge McKinley and Hobart Club was organized July 31, 1896. Jerry Simpson attended the meeting to listen to the


46Pratt Pratt County Union, August 13, 1896; Great Bend Tribune, August 14, 1896; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, August 13, 1896; Great Bend Register, August 15, 1896; Index, August 12, 1896; Cresset, August 21, 1896.

47Great Bend Barton County Democrat, May 28, 1896; Index, June 22, July 15, 22, August 12, 1896; Pratt Pratt County Union, July 16, 1896 (quoting Hutchinson News, Garden City Sentinel, and Central Kansas Democrat).
speech of Representative Long. The Congressman quoted from Simpson speeches in Congress and in previous campaigns; he promised to carry them with him on his tour of the district. Simpson remarked, sotto voce, "If he did he would probably learn something."

"I heard the remark," replied Long. "I know I will learn something and the people of the district will learn from them. Two years ago they learned something from them and ... recorded their verdict against them by about 2,000 majority." \(^{48}\)

The following day a Bryan Silver League was organized, and Jerry Simpson spoke, answering Long's speech and expressing a desire to debate Long formally. \(^{49}\)

The Honorable Chester I. Long, Member of Congress, formally opened his bid for reelection in Garden City on August 15. The man who had placed his name before the district Republican convention in March was now for Bryan and Silver. In his previous campaigns Long's debate proposals to Simpson had been brushed aside, but Long now accepted a challenge to address joint meetings. Simpson began his tour late in August. \(^{50}\)

\(^{48}\) _Cresset_, August 7, 1896; see also _Index_, August 5, 1896.

\(^{49}\) _Index_, August 5, 1896; _Cresset_, August 7, 1896.

\(^{50}\) _Index_, August 19, 26, September 16, 1896; _Cresset_, September 21, 28, 1894, September 4, 1896 (quoting Coolidge Enterprise); _Topeka State Journal_, January 2, 1897; _Dodge City Globe-Republican_, March 12, 1896; _Caldwell Weekly Advance_, March 12, 1896; _Wichita Daily Eagle_, March 10, 1896 (hereinafter _Eagle_).
4. Sixteen Girls in White, One in Yellow

The two candidates were drawing approximately equal crowds.51 Enthusiasm for Silver replaced the apathy which had marked the 1894 campaign. The pop corn man, the hot candy vendor, the street fakir made the sidewalks of Hutchinson look like a county fair on the morning of September 22. People came from a radius of twenty miles; by noon the banks of the Arkansas river near the auditorium were lined with families eating picnic lunches and waiting for the doors to open for the debate. The building was surrounded long before the doors opened at 1:30. 3,500 crowded inside, 100 finding perches in the rafters; 3,000 more milled outside, demanding a move to the park, the police suppressing one vociferous voter who mounted to a window and shouted his insistence on a transfer to the open air. Local orators occupied those unable to gain admittance. Simpson spoke on Silver; Long discussed the tariff. The Congressman introduced six questions and challenged his opponent to answer immediately; Simpson answered one flatly and promised to respond to the others two day later at Newton.52

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51Index, September 9, 16, 23, 30, 1896; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, September 24, 1896; Hutchinson News, August 24, 1896.

52Hutchinson News, September 22, 23 (a lengthy synopsis of the speeches, probably by Dave Leahy), 1896; Dave Leahy in Eagle, September 23, 1896; Kansas City (Missouri) Times, September 23, 1896 (probably by Dave Leahy); Hutchinson Gazette, September 24, 1896; Pratt Pratt County Union, October 1, 1896 (quoting Hutchinson) (Continued on next page)
The Newton merchants were unprepared for the immense crowd which poured into town. Farm vehicles from Harvey and adjoining counties filled the roads "like great funerals without hearses."

Dave Leahy was discussing the coming debate with Simpson when they were interrupted by a man from Butler county who wanted to talk to the candidate. Simpson abandoned his study, and Leahy wandered down the hall of the hotel, finding Long two doors down intensively studying a typed stenographic copy of the Hutchinson debate with a party of friends.53

The roller rink was "crowded like a sardine box" with an estimated 4,000 people. Others piled boxes and barrels against the outside walls to listen through the windows near the roof. When

52(Continued from preceding page) Democrat); Anthony Weekly Bulletin, September 25, 1896 (quoting Eagle and the following Kansas City, Missouri, dailies: Journal, Star, World).

Pratt County Union, October 8, 1896, quotes a Wichita Beacon charge that Leahy, city editor of the Republican Eagle, also filed stories on all the debates to the Democratic Kansas City (Missouri) Times. The Hutchinson News story is attributed to Leahy because of internal similarities to the Eagle report. Leahy admitted later that, although his personal sympathies lay with Simpson, he wrote his Eagle stories to confirm with the editorial policies of the Republican paper, Eldorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915.

The questions were: 1) would a 16 to 1 ratio in the United States raise and maintain the world price of silver? 2) Has free coinage ever maintained the coinage ratio on the market? 3) Name a country with double standard which still has gold in circulation. 4) Do you favor paper as a substitute for coined metal? 5) The amount of coins per capita has gone up. Why? 6) Do you favor free trade? Simpson gave an unqualified yes to the last question.

53Eagle, September 25, 1896.
the speakers arrived it was impossible for them to enter through
the doors, and they crawled through windows in full view of the
audience, Long first, Simpson a few minutes later. 54

The plan of the debates was for the opening speaker to
occupy sixty minutes, his opponent, ninety, with a half hour close
by the first speaker; the debaters alternated the speaking order.
At Newton Long spoke first. When Simpson rose he removed his coat
and vest, collars and cuffs, saying, "When I want to skin a goldbug
I want to do it right." 55

He brought out the fundamental rivalry of the social classes
in Medicine Lodge by devoting only an hour to discussion of issues
(answering all but one of Long's questions) and then spending twenty-
seven minutes in personal ridicule of "Chester". During Long's
closing half hour, Simpson interrupted him a dozen times, claiming
that the Congressman was misquoting him. Long promised to produce
the Congressional Record at Wellington and cram it down Simpson's
throat. 56

54Eagle, September 25, 1896; see also Kansas City (Missouri)
Times, September 25, 1896; Newton Kansan, September 24, 1896; Newton
Harvey County Banner, September 25, 1896; Hutchinson News, September
25, 1896; Dave Leahy in Eldorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915;
Ann L. Diggs, The Story of Jerry Simpson (Wichita: Jane Simpson,
1908), 125 (hereinafter Diggs, Story).

55Eagle, September 25, 1896.

56Eagle, September 25, 1896; Kansas City (Missouri) Times,
September 25, 1896; Hutchinson News, September 25, 1896; Newton
Harvey County Banner, September 25, 1896; Newton Kansan,
(Continued on next page)
Long, nearly exhausted, went to his hotel room; and Leahy found him there reclining full length, a political friend on each side of the bed in a chair, planning his strategy for the Wellington debate. Simpson went out of the hall shaking hands and making small talk with the people who were his adherents. Both candidates asked Leahy who had won; he awarded the Newton meeting to Long, a decision Simpson never accepted.

The Wellington meeting was planned for the open air, but rain during the morning forced 3,000 people (mostly voters) to crowd into

(Continued from preceding page) September 24, 1896; Pratt Pratt County Union, October 1, 1896 (quoting Wichita Beacon); Dave Leahy in ElDorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915 (Long was worn out by the "terrible sarcasm"). See pages 207-208 below.

Diggs, Story, 127, says that Simpson "put into that one word 'Chester' at least a dozen insinuations -- ranging all the way from reprehensible to criminal;" Dave Leahy wrote in the Simpson obituary in the Eagle, October 24, 1905, that "Jerry had a knack of saying two words that was awful. The words were 'Chester' and 'Sister'." The 'Sister' had been applied to Mary Elizabeth Lease in 1890, see page 136 below.

Simpson answered Long's questions (footnote 52 above): 1) if America sets the pace, others will follow; 2) yes, in France, 1803-1873; 3) Mexico; 4) the bill which Simpson had introduced to withdraw coined money had been "introduced by request"; 5) not answered; 6) yes.

Dave Leahy in obituary in Eagle, October 24, 1905; Dave Leahy in ElDorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915; see also Newton Harvey County Banner, September 25, 1896.

Leahy awarded four of the debates to Long, two to Simpson, Eagle, October 21, 1905; ElDorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915. Pratt Pratt County Union, October 8, 1896 (quoting Wichita Beacon), accused Leahy of reporting twice during the series that Long won in the Eagle and that Simpson won in the Kansas City (Missouri) Times.
the roller rink. The protagonists avoided personalities and discussed economic theory, quoting Mill, Ricardo, and others. Long told the crowd, "Mr. Bryan does not go as far as Mr. Simpson." Simpson interjected loudly, "He will catch up." Simpson retreated slightly from his free trade position; because the Supreme Court had declared the income tax unconstitutional a tariff was necessary to provide revenue to operate the government.

Both candidates spent Sunday at home and then took the excursion train carrying their Barber county supporters to Harper for the debate. Five thousand people were gathered in the open air north of the Patterson House, but only half could hear. The Congressman was to speak first; the chairman, introducing him, said he was "expecting a cyclone before long;" Simpson interrupted to predict, "the cyclone will be after Long." The orators restricted themselves to the financial issue, and Long produced four new questions which he challenged Simpson to answer. Simpson objected to being diverted by irrelevant questions. He pulled off his coat,

59 Hutchinson News, September 28, 1896. T. A. McNeal believed Simpson "never was at heart in favor of free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of sixteen to one," T. A. McNeal, When Kansas Was Young, (Topeka: Capper Publications, Inc., 1940), 204.


61 Hutchinson News, September 30, 1896; see also Index, October 7, 1896; Cresset, October 2, 1896; Harper Sentinel, October 2, 1896; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, October 2, 1896; Wellington Daily Mail, September 30, 1896; Wellington People's Voice, October 1, 1896.

(Continued on next page)
drank water directly from the pitcher, wiped his mouth on his sleeve, ridiculed Long, sneeringly referred to the gold dollar as an "Honest dollar", and asked for a show of hands on the question of gold v. silver. 62

Privately, Long was already certain of his defeat; but he continued to give the campaign his untiring effort, attempting to carry a few votes for McKinley and the state ticket. 63

Five Thousand persons crowded the courthouse park in Great Bend October 1; another 3,000 in the streets could not get within earshot. The day was beautiful, and the crowd and speakers were in good humor. Simpson recalled that Lincoln had used the technique in debate of asking his opponent questions. "If Chester stays with me long enough I may make a man of him," he said, "but considering the material I don't think I can make a Lincoln out of him." Long opened his speech by saying, "I never dreamed of comparing Mr.

61 (Continued from preceding page) The new questions were:
1) Why do you demand exactly 16 to 1? 2) How has the repeal of reciprocity affected the seventh district? 3) Hasn't the Wilson-Gorman tariff lowered the price of farm products? 4) Do you still believe possession of property in land is morally similar to property in slaves?

62 Harper Sentinel, October 2, 16, 1896.

63 Dave Leahy in El Dorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915; Dave Leahy in Eagle, July 15, 1934. See also Kansas City (Missouri) Times, September 25, 1896, for a report (probably by Leahy) that Long wanted to abandon the series after the second debate but continued after communicating with state Republican headquarters at Topeka.
Simpson with Douglas." Each party held a dance in town that night. 64

The final debate was held in the Wichita auditorium; only voters were admitted to the floor. Simpson dealt with all the questions Long had asked; Long interrupted him several times. The provoked Simpson interjected comments into Long's half hour closing speech, and the Congressman told him, "keep quiet, please." Long attempted to stifle applause during his speech by adapting Shakespeare, providing his own rhyme: "Hear me for my cause while I am here, because my time is limited, and you have all night to cheer!" 65

"Mr. Simpson won the applause but Mr. Long worsted him in the debates," said the Medicine Lodge Cresset more than a decade later. 66

64 Hutchinson News, October 2, 1896; see also Great Bend Barton County Democrat, October 8, 1896; Great Bend Register, October 3, 1896; Great Bend Evening News, October 2, 1896; Eagle, October 2, 1896; Kansas City (Missouri) Times, October 2, 1896.

65 Eagle, October 4, 1896; the stenographic text can be found in many Republican papers as a supplement. Wellington People's Voice, October 8, 1896, briefly reports the Wichita meeting and then brands the Eagle stenographic version as false and misleading. See also Kansas City (Missouri) Times, October 4, 1896.

66 Serial biography of Chester I. Long, Cresset, June 12, 1908. Cresset states that Simpson admitted Long won the debates to a reporter before the election; this conflicts with the statement of Dave Leahy, obituary in Eagle, October 24, 1905.
The Republicans imported Thomas B. Reed, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, to the district. In a speech in Wichita he said, "There was a time when this district was represented by what might be denominated as chaos." 67

On October 30, the Cresset devoted the entire fourth page to a sample Australian ballot. Page one was completely covered with legal notices of sheriff's sales. 68

Tuesday, November 3, Jerry Simpson was met at the Medicine Lodge depot by a band and sixteen young ladies in white, one in yellow. This escort accompanied him to the polls. Representative Long had been home since Saturday. 69 Jerry Simpson carried Barber county, although he ran behind Bryan, four state candidates, the state Senator, and two county candidates of the People's party. 70

Cresset, July 19, 1895, reported that Simpson and Thomas B. Reed had been cycling companions in the national capital; and Eagle, October 24, 1905, and Diggis, Story, 142, 177, report their personal friendship. Eagle, April 30, 1957, no doubt reading its own 1896 files, repeated the campaign charge of "chaos" against Simpson.

68 Cresset, October 30, 1896. The full page of Sheriff's sale notices was commented on by the Index, October 28, 1896.

69 Index, November 4, 1896.
70 Index, November 11, 1896.
The seventh district again sent him to Congress, by a majority of 2,823. Simpson carried twenty counties, sixteen of them in the eastern two-thirds; Long won in sixteen, only Rice, Reno, and Harvey being in the eastern third.  

Office of the Secretary of State, *Abstracts of Election Returns*, Microfilm reels 6, 7; *Kansas Votes*, 133. William Allen White offered an explanation of the election in the *Emporia Daily Gazette*, November 10, 1896:

Congressman Long was defeated in his district by Jerry Simpson by 1200. Long was defeated, not so much by the free silver sentiment as by a factional fight in Wichita, a Republican stronghold, which gave Simpson 1000 majority, entirely unexpected. Long made gains in the farming districts, showing that free silver did not defeat him. The Republican vote in Wichita shows a heavy decrease.
CHAPTER VI

A NEW SPECIES OF TRAMP

In 1891, when Republican Senator John J. Ingalls had spoken of himself as "a statesman out of a job", Jerry Simpson had quipped that such a condition could also be described as a "new species of tramp."

Chester I. Long and Jerry Simpson had demonstrated to each other that popular approval was an uncertain thing. Another battle would come, and the ultimate victor would be the one who had the support of the better organization.

The 1896 election was the high water mark of the economic protest. Bryan almost became President, silver almost became the metallic basis for the monetary system, and the Democratic party almost completely swallowed the People's movement. Economic developments made metallic inflation unnecessary; growth of Progressivism within the Republican party robbed the third party of its principal issues.

The people had indicated that they would vote for reform during the decade of the People's party. In the succeeding years they would be offered the reform and Republicanism wrapped together in one package. This phoenix-like change in the Grand Old Party removed first Jerry Simpson and then Chester I. Long from political

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1Barber County Index, July 8, 1891 (hereinafter cited as Index).

One of the secrets of the success of the People's party was the character of its leadership. Volatile personalities provided the magnetism which drew it together, and volatile personalities tore it apart. The dissension which led to defeat had been evident in the convention which launched the Farmer's Alliance into politics in southwest Kansas in the summer of 1890.²

1. Sharper than a Serpent's Tooth

Friday, July 18, 1890, was excessively hot in Attica, Kansas. Nevertheless eight or nine hundred people were in town. The day before Farmer's Alliance men had hauled lumber to the open space north of the skating rink and erected seats and a speaker's platform. The rostrum was protected from the sun with canvas, and a large American flag flew above it. Flags were out in front of business places; barrels of ice water were placed along both sides of Main street; and two concession stands near the roller rink were well patronized. The Ruella brass band alternated with a fife,

²See biographical notes, pages 81 and 82 above. The Attica convention described below was not the first entry of the Farmer's Alliance into politics. County organizations had nominated candidates June 4, 1890 (Harper and Johnson counties), and July 12, 1890 (Sumner); but the Attica convention was the earliest meeting of delegates from an area larger than a county of which the writer is aware, see Jennie Small Owen, Annalist, The Annals of Kansas, 1886-1925, ed. Kirke Mecham (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, n.d.), I, 105, 107.
snare drum, and bass drum in providing music.  

The Farmer's Alliances and Citizen's Alliances of Barber and Harper counties were meeting to select a candidate for district judge. The decision to enter directly into politics had been made at conventions held in the two counties during the first week in June.  

A report had been circulated throughout the state that the Barber county Alliance had resolved not to vote for anybody but a farmer for judge. The story was denied at the time by Harry Landis, the county president. The incumbent Republican judge, C. W. Ellis of Medicine Lodge, had angered loan agents and pleased farmers by his decisions in mortgage cases. The G. O. P. had nominated another man, and many Harper county farmers wanted to claim Ellis as their nominee.  

The convention effected temporary organization in the morning inside the rink and then adjourned outside for impromptu speaking  

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3*Attica Advocate, July 25, 1890.*

4*Index, June 4, 1890; Medicine Lodge Cresset, June 6, 1890 (hereinafter Cresset); Attica Advocate, June 6, 1890; Anthony Republican, June 6, 1890; Harper Sentinel, June 6, 1890; Anthony Journal, June 6, 1890.*

5*Index, July 23, 1890.*

6*Index, June 4, July 23, 1890; Cresset, June 6, 1890; April 9, 1897 (quoting Topeka Mail and Kansas Breeze (hereinafter Mail and Breeze)).*
while its committees thrashed over questions such as whether only Farmer's Alliance delegates were to be seated or if representatives of Citizen's Alliances from the towns would also be allowed to participate. When the perspiring delegates re-entered the skating rink they were warmed to their task by a short speech by Mary Elizabeth Lease, already attracting attention as an Alliance orator. Unfortunately for herself she tramped on a hornet's nest. She took the hide off the legal fraternity of the two counties and then proceeded to eulogize Judge Ellis and urge the delegates to nominate "a man who admits that the Republican party left him."  

This brought Jerry Simpson to his feet, "as quickly as a cork comes out of a pop bottle"; and he made the fur fly. He informed "Sister" Lease that she had overstepped herself; the men of Harper and Barber counties could select a judge without the assistance of a woman from Wichita. Waving a paper before the eyes of the delegates, he said it was the record of Judge Ellis and offered to read it if it became necessary. There was considerable confusion ensuing.  

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7 Harper Sentinel, July 25, 1890; see also Attica Advocate, July 25, 1890; Anthony Republican, July 25, 1890; Anthony Journal, July 25, 1890.

8 Harper Sentinel, July 25, 1890; see also Anthony Republican, July 25, 1890; Attica Advocate, July 25, 1890; Cresset, April 9, 1897 (quoting Mail and Breeze); Wichita Daily Eagle, October 24, (Continued on next page)
Mrs. Lease apologized, and S. M. Scott, seventh district Alliance lecturer, counseled that harmony should prevail. The convention then reconvened and proceeded to consider the reports of the committees. The credentials committee did not recommend seating delegates from the Harper and Anthony Citizen's Alliances, but an attempt was made from the floor to qualify them. Jerry Simpson protested that "Ellis's man Friday", Ed Sample (Medicine Lodge attorney), was responsible for these two organizations. The issue was compromised by accrediting part of the claimant delegates.

Four men were presented to the convention as candidates for the nomination for the district bench. The roll was called:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>1st roll call</th>
<th>2nd roll call</th>
<th>3rd roll call</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. W. Ellis</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George W. McKay</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. J. Beebe</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geo. E. McMahon</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
<td><strong>59</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued from preceding page) 1905 (hereinafter Eagle).
For Simpson expressions of opinion about Mrs. Lease see Kiowa Review, March 4, 1896 (quoting Chicago (Illinois) Record): "I hope she does (abandon politics). She has never been anything but a disturbing element ... a woman of great ability ... too aggressive and independent ... wants to be the 'Great I Am' ... won't tolerate anybody else's views ... always causing trouble"; also Woodward, Oklahoma Territory, Livestock Inspector, December, 1896: There was a rumor that Mrs. Lease had been "run in" by someone, and Simpson suggested offering a reward.

**Anthony Republican**, July 25, 1890.

**Harper Sentinel**, July 25, 1890; see also **Index**, July 23, 1890.
George Washington McKay, Harper county, was the nominee of the convention. McKay claimed to have studied law for two years in Michigan although he was farming at the time of his nomination.

Jerry Simpson returned to his duties as marshal over the week-end, having done his part to secure the selection of McKay. S. M. Scott spoke twice in Medicine Lodge on Saturday. On Tuesday the Alliance convention which nominated Simpson for Congress met at Great Bend.

Two years later, when state Senator Chester I. Long was nominated to oppose Simpson, the People's party convention at Greensburg selected Harry Landis as a candidate for his seat. Landis had been president of the Barber county Alliance, was twice elected county Superintendent as a Republican, and had been elected Clerk

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11 Official minutes of the convention published in Index, July 23, 1890 and Attica Advocate, July 25, 1890. There was considerable switching of votes during the second roll call, and it was probably faulty as there were only fifty-eight delegates enrolled by the convention, Harper Sentinel, July 25, 1890. The Democrats nominated their own candidate, August 16, after debating and endorsement of McKay, Harper Sentinel, August 22, 29, September 5, 1890.

Ellis became a People's party speaker in 1892, addressing meetings with Jerry Simpson, Coldwater Western Star, September 17, 1892; Cresset, October 7, 1892.

12 Attica Advocate, August 1, 1890; Index, July 23, 1890.

13 Index, July 25, 1890; Attica Advocate, July 25, 1890.
of District Court by the Alliance in 1890. Landis was elected to the Senate in 1892 but resigned his seat in May of 1896 and Judge McKay appointed him to fill a vacancy, caused by death, in the office of Clerk of District Court. One of the points of attack of the People's party had been against "office seeking politicians"; it was an axiom of the reform movement that the job should seek the man instead of the man seeking the job. Rotation in office (i.e. one term for each individual) was also held to be a virtue. When the reform leaders scrambled to secure and retain their positions like any other politicians, many voters became disillusioned.

There was always factional quarreling within the People's party over the question of fusion with the Democracy or nomination of a separate ticket; Jerry Simpson always supported fusion. By 1896 personal factions and followings developed to complicate the picture. George Washington McKay gave an interview to a Kansas City Star reporter in which he declared he had discovered strong opposition within the party to the nomination of Jerry Simpson.

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14 Cresset, June 24, 1892; Greensburg Kiowa County Signal, June 24, September 9, 1892.

He proposed ex-Governor Lewelling be nominated. Simpson dismissed the machinations of the diminutive jurist with the remark: "His coat tails are too close to the ground." The Medicine Lodge Cresset was an amused spectator of the maneuvering within the People's party. It warned McKay to cease and desist, and it advised the Honorable Harry Landis that his attempts at "harmony" were pleasing neither side. Landis was chairman of the 1896 county convention which chose delegates to the Congressional convention and instructed them (although not unanimously) to vote for Jerry Simpson. Apparently Landis had thrown his support to Simpson.

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16 Cresset, June 5, 1896 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Star); see also Cresset, May 22 ("the basest political crime is ingratitude;" McKay was giving financial support to the anti-Simpson faction in Barber county), 29 (quoting Kingman Leader-Courier), June 19 (quoting Claflin Leader), July 10 (quoting Anthony Weekly Bulletin), 1896, April 9 (quoting Mail and Breeze), 1897; Harper Sentinel, June 12 (some seventh district Populists "won't tell the office where Jerry is hiding."), 26 (quoting Topeka Daily Capital), July 17, 1896; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, July 17, 21, 1896, July 30 (quoting Eagle), 1897; interview with McKay in Eagle, July 14, 1896.

17 Cresset, May 21, 1897, January 21, 1898.

18 Cresset, May 29 (quoting Kingman Leader-Courier), June 12 (quoting Kiowa Review), 19 (quoting Claflin Leader and Mail and Breeze), 26 (the Cresset was helping Simpson because the Index was helping his enemies), July 3 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Star), 10 (quoting Anthony Weekly Bulletin), 17, see also Index, June 17, July 22, August 12, 1896.

19 Cresset, July 17, 1896; Index, July 15, August 5, 1896.
The Democratic and People’s party combination carried the state, electing the Governor and controlling the Legislature; Jerry Simpson ran behind Bryan in both Harper and Barber counties and trailed eight fusion nominees in his home county. 20 Governor-elect Leedy announced in December the appointment of Harry Landis as warden of the state penitentiary at Lansing. 21

The incoming administration and Legislature began another round of vicious internecine quarreling. The term of Peffer in the United States Senate was ending, and many Kansans were determined that there would be rotation in that office at least; Peffer had tried to be both Populist and protectionist and had fought against fusion. Jerry Simpson was quoted as saying: "Peffer reminds me of a little bull I have down on my ranch in Barber county. He is ambitious enough, but so far he has failed to put any marks on the herd." 22 Senator Peffer was replaced by state Senator W. A. Harris,

20 Index, November 11, 1896; June G. Cabe and Charles A. Sullivant, Kansas Votes, National Elections, 1859-1956 (Lawrence: Governmental Research Center, University of Kansas, 1957), 22, 133.

21 Index, December 23, 1896; Cresset, December 18, 1896.

22 Cresset, January 29, 1897; see also Cresset, January 22, 1897; Wichita Kansas Commoner, February 4, 1897; Index, December 23, 1896, January 6, 13, 27, 1897; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, June 26, December 18 (quoting Topeka Advocate), 1896.
Leavenworth, after a protracted struggle in caucus. Simpson was spending considerable time in Topeka, lobbying and securing rewards for his friends and dealing retribution to his enemies. The struggle for privilege, preferment, position, and pelf became a mad scramble. The Atchison Globe said it had never been so bad under any previous administration, and the Topeka State Journal warned:

LOUD CATERWAILING
of Despicable Seekers After Place and Pelf
May Soon Turn
Popular Approval to Popular Disgust.

23 Cresset, January 22, 29, 1897; Wichita Kansas Commoner, January 21, 1897; Index, December 16, 23, 1896, January 6, 27, 1897; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, January 1, 22, 1897; Topeka Advocate, January 6, 27, 1897. Leavenworth Times (weekly) February 18, 1897, quoted the Chicago (Illinois) Tribune on the long bearded Peffer:
Slowly and sadly he'll pull down his vest
When the 4th of March has found him,
And gloomily start for the boundless west
With his whiskers wrapped around him.
Wichita Kansas Commoner, January 17, 1901, implied that Simpson backed Senator Harris, thereby making an enemy of Senator L. P. King, Cowley County, see page 178 below.

24 Cresset, January 1 (quoting Wellington Daily Mail), 22, 29 February 5 (quoting Pratt Republican) 12, 19, 26, March 5 (quoting Wellington Daily Mail), 12, 1897; Wichita Kansas Commoner, January 21, 1897; Index, January 13, 27, February 24, 1897; Topeka State Journal, January-March, 1897; Mail and Breeze, February 12, 1897.


26 Topeka State Journal, January 20, 1897.
Confusion continued in the capital. Ex-Governor Lewelling, again a state Senator and now a state Railroad Commissioner, was accused of graft and bribery; and some People's party members of the Kansas House of Representatives were voting consistently with the Republican minority.27

While the Legislature enacted a number of reform measures (i.e. a textbook law and a measure regulating stockyards), it failed to pass laws to decrease interest rates and to tax notes and mortgages, did not submit amendments providing for initiative and referendum; and the compromise measure to empower the Railroad Commission to set freight rates (sponsored by Senators Harris and Lewelling) which was passed by Republican votes was vetoed by Governor Leedy.28 A cartoon in the Topeka Mail and Kansas Breeze pictured the Democratic-Populist Missouri and Kansas Legislatures as two small boys:

Missouri Legislature: "What's you bin doin' over at your house?"
Kansas Legislature: "Nothin'. What's you bin doin'?"
Missouri Legislature: "Nothin'".29

27 Index, February 10, 24, March 3, 10, 14, 1897; Cresset, February 19, 26, March 12, 26, 1897; Wichita Kansas Commoner, March 11, 1897; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, passim, 1897; Kiowa Review, February 24, March 10, 1897; Topeka Advocate, February 10, 24, March 3, 17 (edited by W. A. Peffer), 1897.

28 Mail and Breeze, February 12, et seq. 1897, November 4, 1905; Topeka Advocate, February 10, 24, March 3, 1897; Topeka State Journal, February 17, 24, 25, 26, March 6, 9, 1897.

29 Mail and Breeze, March 19, 1897.
Another facet of the multi-sided factional struggle flashed into public view. The relations of Jerry Simpson with the Barber County Index had deteriorated progressively since 1892, and during 1896 Simpson had attempted to secure the removal of the editors. The Index was a loosely organized partnership, and the editors could be discharged on one month's notice. 30

Jerry Simpson departed for Washington early in March, 1897, to attend a special session of Congress. Three days later a suit was filed in his name in Barber county Probate Court asking for the appointment of a receiver for the Index. It was charged that the paper was being operated in an extravagant manner and that new shares had been sold without the consent of Simpson as a partner. These actions endangered his investment of $420, and he feared that insolvency would result in a judgment against him for debts of the partnership. McKay, as a partner, was named as a defendant. 31

30 Cresset, September 13, 1895, May 15, June 26, July 3, 17, 1896, January 29, February 12, March 19, 1897; Index, December 18, 1895, February 3, 1897; Topeka Daily Capital, March 21, 1897.

There was a noticeable cooling toward Simpson in the Index during 1896 and an increased attention to Landis and McKay. The Cresset was happily reporting the progress of the factional dispute; the Index never mentioned it; but the present writer, reading the Index first, deduced the story almost exactly as the Cresset told it.

31 Index, March 10, 17, 1897; Cresset, March 19, 1897.

Jerry Simpson wanted the endorsement of the twenty-two Populist members of the federal House of Representatives for Speaker, Topeka State Journal, January 16, 1897; but the empty honor was given to John C. Bell, Colorado, who had been the party leader in the 54th Congress, Topeka Advocate, March 24, 1897.
Three days later Judge McKay made a brief appearance in Medicine Lodge between trains. He claimed to have disposed of his Index stock and therefore to be able to judge the case. He heard and granted a motion to discharge the receiver. The case was continued for nearly two years, involving many People's party leaders of the district, before it was dismissed. The ruffled Index did not directly attack Simpson but almost ignored him in both its personal and political columns except for reprinting a few derogatory rumors about him without vigorously denying them.

In April, 1897, the Barber county People's party central committee met and resolved that:

Certain parties are attempting ... by the wrecking method ... to bring the standing and credit of the Barber County Index into disrepute and to control its politics and to use up its profits by means of a receivership ... The only motive ... seems to be an aggrandizement of certain ambitious persons ... without taking into consideration the welfare of the people.

The party county convention in September passed resolutions praising the state officials but ignoring the Congressman.

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32 Index, March 17, May 5, 1897; Cresset, March 19, April 9 quoting Mail and Breeze), May 21, 1897; Topeka Daily Capital, March 21, 1897.

33 Index, May 5, 12, 19, October 13, December 15, passim, 1897, May 25, 1898, February 22, 1899; see also Cresset, March 19, April 9 (quoting Mail and Breeze), 16, May 7, (quoting Hutchinson News) 21, October 8, December 17 (commenting on an Index stab at Senator Harris and Simpson), 1897.

34 Cresset, May 21, 1897.

35 Index, September 8, 1897; Cresset, September 10, 1897.
2. Against Simpson First and Last

The young Lester Simpson had won $300 in 1896 election bets, according to Republican report; Lester denied it.\textsuperscript{36} The People's party supporters were jubilant in spite of their lack of national success.\textsuperscript{37} Jerry Simpson believed that the series of debates had brought his 1896 victory.\textsuperscript{38}

Just as rumors had circulated about the plans of Simpson in 1894 and 1895, Chester I. Long now became the center of gossip. He was going to move to Hutchinson; he was trying to secure the appointment as Consul General in Mexico; or he was going to run for Governor. Long denied the stories, saying he was going to stay in town and run for Congress again.\textsuperscript{39} He busied himself with his law practice and distribution of Republican federal patronage and relaxed by fishing at Elm Mills on the Medicine river with prominent Kansas Republicans.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{36}\textit{Index}, November 18, 1896 (quoting \textit{Eagle}); \textit{Kiowa Review}, November 18, 1896 (quoting \textit{Eagle}).

\textsuperscript{37}\textit{Index}, November 4, 11, 18, 25, 1896.

\textsuperscript{38}\textit{Index}, December 9, 1896.

\textsuperscript{39}\textit{Index}, November 25, December 16, 1896, March 17, April 28, May 5, December 1, 22, 1897; \textit{Cresset}, April 23, 1897.

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Cresset}, May 28, June 11, August 6, 13, October 15, November 12, 1897; \textit{Index}, May 5, August 4, 11, 1897; \textit{Wichita Kansas Commoner}, June 24, November 18, 1897; \textit{Kiowa Review}, May 19, 1897.
Simpson told an Oklahoma newsman that since the election he had been hanging around the depot, waiting for the "advance agent of prosperity" who was expected on every train. His interest in his farm revived during the winter; he purchased more than 200 head of Oklahoma cattle. Between and during his various trips to the Kansas capital during the 1897 Legislature Jerry Simpson continued to enlarge his herd. He bought more than 100 head in Barber county, and the Cresset reported that he returned from Topeka with five thoroughbred Shorthorn bulls from the herd of Senator-elect Harris. Jane and Lester Simpson remained in Barber county, taking delivery on another blooded bull the Congressman purchased on his way to Washington and operating the ranch until his return in July.

Jane Simpson was making improvements in the ranch home. There was no cellar, and another room was added so a cellar could be built.

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41 Woodward (Oklahoma Territory) News, December 14, 1896; Woodward, Oklahoma Territory, Livestock Inspector, December, 1896; see also Index, December 9, 1896; Kiowa Review, December 9, 1896.


43 Cresset, January 1 (quoting Wellington Daily Mail), 8, 22, 29, February 12, 19, March 5, 12, 1897; Index, February 3, 10 (quoting Wellington People's Voice), 2b, March 3 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Star), 10, 1897; Topeka State Journal, February 9, 1897.

44 Cresset, March 19, June 11, 25 (quoting Anthony Weekly Bulletin), July 16 (quoting Mail and Breeze), 30, 1897; Index, March 3, June 9, 16, August 4, 1897; Kiowa Review, August 4, 1897.
under it. A large water tank was built over the addition; a hot water tank was added to the kitchen range; hot and cold water pipes were installed; a bath room and closet were arranged. The Simpson water plant was the best in the county, and the farm had all the modern facilities of city life except electric lights.

While Jerry Simpson labored in Washington making laws, George Washington McKay was busy in the hinterlands attempting to unmake the lawmaker. McKay circulated through the district and journeyed to Topeka and Lansing lining up opposition to the Congressman. On the eve of Simpson's return home McKay spoke out in Newton:

"I don't like Simpson, he isn't honest. He does not believe what he says or else he goes back on it whenever desirable ... Simpson will not be the populist nominee (in 1898). His own county will repudiate him." McKay then entrained for Lansing to visit Warden Landis.

With both protagonists on the field the struggle began in deadly earnest. The secretary of the Harper county People's party invited Jerry Simpson to speak at the county convention. McKay and his protegee, Senator A. J. Titus, began the collection of proxies which would enable them to control the county committee and force withdrawal of the invitation. When the committee met Jerry Simpson also

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45 Cresset, June 11, August 20, 1897, March 2, 1900.

46 Cresset, July 30, 1897 (quoting Hutchinson News); see also Cresset, March 26, April 9, 16, May 7 (quoting Hutchinson News), 21, June 18 (quoting Topeka Daily Capital), July 16 (quoting Mail and Breeze) 30, 1897; Wichita Kansas Commoner, July 29, 1897; Pratt Pratt County Union, March 25, April 29, July 1, December 2, 1897; Kiowa Review, August 11, 1897 (quoting Eagle); Topeka Advocate, March 24, 1897.
attended. The Judge accused the Congressman of: 1) trying for
election to the Senate in 1891, 2) helping elect Senator Palmer
in Illinois in 1891, 3) voting against the anti-option bill,
4) working for Harris for Senator in 1897, 5) keeping whiskey
in his room in Topeka during the 1897 Legislature, 6) lobbying
against the farmers' interests in the 1897 Legislature, 7) slandering
Senator Titus. Simpson reportedly entered pleas of: 1) guilty,
2) guilty (as part of a massive trade with the Democracy which
included the election of Senator Kyle in South Dakota), 3) demurred
(it was not a good bill), 4) guilty, 5) nolo contendere("it was
good whisky"), 6) not guilty, 7) not guilty (but he was willing
to say the things of which he was accused; they were true).\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{47}Cresset, September 16, 1898 (quoting Mail and Breeze); see
also Cresset, September 3, 10, 1897; Harper Sentinel, September 3,
10, 17 (quoting Eagle), 1897; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, September
3, 1897. Senator A. J. Titus was elected to the seat vacated by
Harry Landis in 1896; both were serving as Clerk of District Court
at the time of their nomination, which raises the question of whether
District Judge McKay was their political mentor.

Cresset, June 5, 1896 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Star
interview with McKay), gave as reasons for the McKay opposition to
Simpson: 1) Simpson had been three times a candidate; Populists
believed in rotation in office; 2) Simpson had alienated Democrats
by allegedly seeking the Senate seat in 1893, almost preventing the
election of John Martin; 3) Simpson had voted against the anti-option
bill.

Investigation by the present writer would indicate that an
impartial verdict on the seven McKay charges might be: 1) not guilty,
see footnote 16, page 1470 above; 2) guilty of being an accessory,
see paragraph below; 3) guilty, with extenuating circumstances;
4) guilty, see page 1471 above; 5) not guilty, by reason of insufficient
evidence; 6) guilty of lobbying, whether against the farmers' interests is outside the scope of this study, see pages 1470 and 1476
above and page 185 below; 7) guilty, Topeka State Journal, March 10,
1897.

(Continued on next page)
The committeemen and proxies voted 12-10 to withdraw the invitation. Simpson returned home snarling that, "The d----d Harper populists would find that a campaign without Jerry Simpson would only happen once."\(^\text{48}\)

The Barber county convention, September 4, 1897, was also controlled by the anti-Simpson groups. A combination of the Socialist and Silver Republican wings of the party spurned fusion with the Democrats. The chairman called for a motion to adjourn without inviting the Congressman to address the meeting, but "the delegates called for Mr. Simpson quite earnestly, but not with that wild abandon and strength of lung power as of yore." Simpson

\(^\text{47}\text{(Continued from preceding page)}\) In 1891 an Associated Press story from Springfield, Illinois, quoted Simpson: "If a farmer can be elected (Senator), I am for a farmer, of course; but if a farmer cannot be elected, I freely confess and hope the Senator will be a democrat," Cresset, February 6, 1891. The next week (February 13, 1891) the Cresset announced the election of Senator Kyle in South Dakota, adding: "What effect the Illinois situation had on Dakota is not definitely known." Pierre (South Dakota) Daily Capital, February 17, 1891, quotes the Free Press (probably of Pierre) as saying Palmer was elected in Illinois forty minutes before Kyle. (This was not true.) It had taken forty ballots for the South Dakota Legislature to reach a decision; the Illinois deadlock was resolved after more than 100 ballots. Simpson appeared at Springfield "in the role of log roller extraordinary." Negotiations had been going on between Pierre and Springfield for ten days, see Chicago, Illinois, Semi-Weekly Inter-Ocean, February 12, 1891. For the Illinois fight see Semi-Weekly Inter-Ocean, February 2 - March 12, 1891, especially February 19, 1891 (quoting Huron, South Dakota, Huronite); the Illinois Legislature consumed more than three weeks after Kyle was elected; see Pierre Daily Capital, January 27 - February 17, 1891, especially February 12, 1891.

\(^\text{48}\)Cresset, September 3, 1897. Anthonly Weekly Bulletin, September 3, 1897, reported the vote as 12-8.
remarked about the Harper county committee without mentioning any names, reported that Nebraska had fusion, recommended fusion for Kansas, and recounted a few funny stories. The Medicine Lodge Cresset had "never heard Mr. Simpson make so poor a speech and under such adverse circumstances." The bad position "made the task hard for him. Perspiration stood out on his brow."49

The dissidents consolidated their organization across the state. The Leavenworth county convention, controlled by an "army of penitentary guards" commanded by Warden Landis, rejected fusion, snubbed Senator Harris, and resolved condemnations of Governor Leedy. Jerry Simpson went to Sedalia and other Missouri towns to speak at county fairs. He returned briefly to Barber county and then went to Topeka, where he told an Eagle correspondent:

The Republicans are certain to carry my county this fall. There is no chance for the populists to win. Some of the foolish pops of Barber county have got it into their head (sic) that it is time to quit monkeying with the democrats and they have put up a (straight populist) ticket. The regular old time fusion crowd has also named a ticket. With the populist vote divided the republicans can't help but

49 Cresset, September 10, 1897; see also Index, September 8, 1897; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, October 1, 22, 29, 1897.

50 Associated Press dispatch in Cresset, September 24, 1897; see also Kiowa Review, October 8, 1897.
win. We never had more than 100 votes as a margin, any-
how, and I am sure the (straight populists) will get
enough votes to do us up. 51

Although Jerry Simpson had some small fish to fry in south-
west Kansas, his attention was diverted to much larger fish else-
where. There were 30,000 people in Wichita to see and hear William
Jennings Bryan at the fairgrounds in the afternoon and the auditorium
in the evening. Simpson introduced him both times, making references
to him as the next President. Simpson was invited to make a trip to
New York to help Henry George campaign for Mayor, but instead he
decided to speak in Sedgwick county, Arkansas City, Guthrie, Oklahoma
Territory, and in various places in the seventh district -- but not
in his home county. He and Long came home on the same train, just in
time to vote. 52

On November 3, 1897, the Index editorial page was headed by a
sick chicken instead of a crowing rooster. Two days later the rooster
crowed over the election results in the Cresset. The Cresset listed a
few of the reasons for Republican success in Barber and Harper counties:

51 Cresset, October 8, 1897 (quoting Eagle, September 30, 1897). The Cresset had delayed a week before printing the story to allow Simpson time for a denial which he never issued. See also Cresset, September 24, October 1, 15, 1897; Index, September 22, 1897.

52 Wichita Kansas Commoner, October 7, 14, 1897; Cresset, October 15, 22 (quoting Hutchinson News), November 5, December 10 (quoting Hutchinson News), 1897; Harper Sentinel, November 12, 1897 (quoting Great Bend Tribune); Pratt Pratt County Union, October 21, 28, 1897.
the two year old Populist factional fight, separate Democratic
tickets in both counties, Simpson's friends supported the Democratic
nominees. Chester I. Long announced definitely that he was going
to be a candidate for Congress, not for Governor, and went fishing.
Jerry Simpson made plans to ship cattle to Kansas City.

Senator Harris and Representative-at-Large Botkin announced
detailed plans to the Wichita Kansas Commoner for the new session of
Congress. Representative Simpson said, "I have no settled policy
... except to fight the Republicans whenever I think them in the
wrong." Judge McKay and Senator Titus charged the Populist county
Clerk of Harper county with criminal libel; he was a Simpson supporter.
The jury quickly found him not guilty but spent two days deadlocked
11-1 in favor of finding the complaintants guilty of malicious
prosecution.

53 Index, November 3, 10, 1897; Cresset, November 5, 1897;
see also Cresset, November 26 (quoting Kingman Leader-Courier),
December 10 (quoting Hutchinson News), 1897; Index, December 15,
1897; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, October 29, November 5, 12
(quoting Manchester (Oklahoma Territory) Journal), 1897; Kiowa
Review, November 3, 17 (quoting Manchester (Oklahoma Territory)
Journal), 1897.

54 Index, December 1, 1897; Cresset, November 12, 1897;
Wichita Kansas Commoner, November 18, 1897.

55 Cresset, November 12, 1897.

56 Wichita Kansas Commoner, December 23, 1897; see also
Kiowa Review, January 26, 1898.

57 Cresset, December 21, 1898, January 28, February 4 (quoting
Mail and Breeze), 1898; Harper Sentinel, December 24 (quoting Hutch-
inson News), 1897, January 7, 21 (quoting Eagle), 1898; Anthony Weekly
Bulletin, January 7, 14, 21, 1898; Kiowa Review, January 26, 1898.
The Congressman returned briefly to Kansas in March, 1898, meeting with his district campaign committee and tightened his political fences in Harper and Barber counties. He told the Cresset there would be no war with Spain and predicted Congress would adjourn late in spring.\textsuperscript{58} In Congress, Jerry Simpson was crossing swords with advocates of a protective tariff. He discovered that Representative Dingley, instead of patronizing home industry, was wearing a hat with a London label; and Simpson ridiculed him upon the floor of the House.\textsuperscript{59} Other Simpson tactical \textit{maneuvers} suddenly appeared bad strategy however.

Simpson was not a nationally minded statesman; his viewpoint was provincial; he was not in Washington to legislate for a nation which was growing into a major world power but was in the capital to give voice to the economic protests of his constituents. From the time he first entered Congress he established a record of opposition to Army and Navy appropriation measures. Although his voice was raised in sympathy for the Cuban rebels, his vote continued to be against the armed forces; and in April he was recorded among the

\textsuperscript{58}\textit{Index}, March 16, 1898; \textit{Harper Sentinel}, March 11, 1898; \textit{Cresset}, March 18, September 2 (quoting \textit{Kansas City (Missouri) Journal} and \textit{Topeka State Journal}), 1898; \textit{Kiowa Review}, March 16, 1898; \textit{Pratt Pratt County Union}, March 10, 1898 (quoting \textit{Washington (District of Columbia) Times}).

\textsuperscript{59}\textit{Anthony Weekly Bulletin}, February 11, 1898.
"Nays" on the resolution authorizing the President to intervene in Cuba.

The coming of war and the rising nationalism made this position appear unpatriotic, and it also kept Congress in session into the summer, preventing him from campaigning. Jerry Simpson volunteered his services to Governor Leedy as a Colonel for a Kansas regiment, but the Governor turned him down, saying his place was in Congress; Simpson threatened to join the Navy. Lester Simpson, twenty years old, did not go to service however.

The prolonged absence provided opportunity for maneuvering by McKay and campaigning by Long. Warden Landis threw the support of his Barber county organization to Simpson, but the Judge and Senator Titus denied rumors of a compromise and continued their efforts against the Congressman. The game of encouraging opposition within the party was being played by both factions. An attempt was made in the Harper county convention May 7 to push through a resolution against third terms for judges, and the Populist judicial

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60 Cresset, April 15, 29 (quoting Mail and Breeze), May 13 (quoting Hutchinson News), June 3 (quoting Congressional Record), July 29 (quoting Congressional Record and Washington (District of Columbia) Times), September 16 (quoting Congressional Record and Hutchinson News), 1898; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, September 8, 1898; Kiowa Review, April 20, 1898.

61 Cresset, July 22, August 5, 1898; Index, July 20, 1898; Wichita Kansas Commoner, July 21, 1898.

62 Anthony Weekly Bulletin, May 27, 1898; Index, June 1, 1898; Cresset, May 27, June 3, 1898; Kiowa Review, June 8, 1898.
convention May 17 took twenty-three ballots before renominating McKay. 63

The Barber county convention met May 14, exactly one week after the stormy Harper county convention. A minority report was brought in by the resolutions committee recommending "that the delegates selected to the congressional convention be instructed to cast their votes against Jerry Simpson first and last." The majority report was adopted without debate, and the dissidents protested they were gagged. 64

May 19, two days after the judicial district convention the Congressional convention at Hutchinson renominated Simpson by acclamation; and June 7 the Democracy added their endorsement. Simpson was still in Washington. 65

McKay was having some trouble securing Democratic support; and, when he finally received endorsement September 24, the Populist Secretary of State ruled that it did not constitute a nomination and denied him a position in the Democratic column on the ballot. 66

63 Cresset, January 14 (quoting Kingman Leader-Courier), 21, February 1, 18 (quoting Hutchinson News), March 18, April 29, May 13, 20, 1898; Index, May 25, 1898; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, May 13, 20, 1898; Pratt Pratt County Union, May 19, 1898.

64 Index, May 18, 1898. The amused Cresset, May 20, 1898, reprinted the Index story verbatim so that it could not be accused of partisan misrepresentation; see also Kiowa Review, May 18, 1898.

65 Index, May 25, June 8, 15, 1898; Cresset, May 20, June 10, 1898; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, June 9, 1898; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, May 27, June 10, 1898; Kiowa Review, May 25, 1898; Pratt Pratt County Union, May 26, 1898.

66 Harper Sentinel, October 7, 14, 1898; Cresset, October 7, 1898 (quoting Topeka Daily Capital); Kiowa Review, October 5, 12, November 2, 1898.
Simpson returned to his district in the middle of July. The Index was more obvious than ever in ignoring him while supporting McKay. The campaign opened August 6 when Long and Simpson addressed the Sunday school and Old Settlers picnic for Barber and Pratt counties at Ferguson's grove ten miles north of Medicine Lodge.

The candidates began their tour of picnics, conventions, opera houses; Simpson was devoting special attention to attacks on the Republican press and to criticism of the McKinley administration conduct of the war. Long and his party press continued charging that Simpson had voted consistently against defense measures. Both candidates were laid up in Medicine Lodge with sickness in mid-September. They had been distracted in their campaigning, Long by the death of his mother in Nebraska, Simpson by a trip to Colorado to speak once in Denver and to inspect unoccupied range land in Eastern Colorado.

67 Anthony Weekly Bulletin, May 27, 1898; see also Index, May 25, July 20, 1898; Cresset, July 22, 1898; Pratt Pratt County Union, August 25, 1898 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Star and Topeka Daily Capital); Kiowa Review, June 15, July 6, August 3, 1898.

68 Index, July 27, August 10, 1898.

69 Cresset, August 12, 19 (quoting Hutchinson News), September 2 (quoting Eagle) 9, 16 (quoting Hutchinson News), 30, October 7 (quoting Newton Kansan), 14 (quoting Wellington Daily Mail, November 18 (quoting Hutchinson News), 1898; Index, September 7, 21, 1898; Wichita Kansas Commoner, August 11, 18, 25, September 1 (quoting Eagle), October 20, 27, November 3, 1898; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, September 15, October 6, 13 (quoting Hoisington Dispatch) 20, 1898; Anthony Weekly October 14, November 4, 1898; Emporia Weekly Gazette, October 13, 27 1898; Pratt Pratt County Union, September 8, October 6, 13, 1898.
The fusion forces attempted to keep their factional fight out of the public eye. A week before the election Senator Titus stood on the same platform with Jerry Simpson at Harper and denied that McKay and Simpson were fighting each other; but the Republican Harper Sentinel was able to find many People's party voters and even a few office holders in Harper county who would allow themselves to be quoted as being for Simpson but against McKay. 70

The two candidates closed their campaigns in Medicine Lodge, Long on Saturday afternoon, Simpson with a night meeting election eve. Long had better weather, but both meetings were well attended. 71 A Republican candidate for Congress carried Barber county for the first time in a decade. Simpson was defeated by 1,788 votes, carrying only twelve counties, eight of them in the central portion of the district and only Harper and Sedgwick in the eastern third. 72 Barber county

70 Harper Sentinel, October 21, November 4, 1898; Cresset, October 21, 1898; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, November 4, 1898; Pratt Pratt County Union, May 26 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Times), November 3 (quoting Pratt Pratt Republican), 1898; Kiowa Review, September 28, October 26 (quoting Anthony Republican), November 2, 9, 16, 1898.

W. F. Brown, Populist state Representative from Pratt county, "went over to the enemy (recommending) the election of Chester Long," Pratt Pratt County Union, November 3, 1898 (quoting Pratt Pratt County Republican).

71 Index, November 9, 1898; Cresset, November 11, 1898.

72 June G. Cabe and Charles Sullivant, Kansas Votes, National Elections, 1859-1956 (Lawrence: Governmental Research Center, University of Kansas, 1957), 137; Office of the Secretary of State, Abstracts of Election Returns, Microfilm reels 6 and 7. See also Topeka Advocate and News, November 9, 1898.
gave Republican majorities to the Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Congressman-at-Large, Clerk of District Court, and County Attorney candidates and Populist majorities to the Governor, district Judge (McKay), Probate Judge, county Superintendent, and county Commissioner candidates; in Harper county Simpson ran well ahead of McKay and the rest of the ticket, McKay was narrowly defeated. 73

The Cresset hoped "the Hon. Jerry Simpson and Judge G. W. McKay get some satisfaction out of the result." 74 The Anthony Weekly Bulletin and Harper Advocate among the People's party press blamed the factional fight for the defeat, and the Weekly Bulletin suspended publication the next spring, disillusioned at failure of its attempts to unite the various anti-Republican elements of the county. 75 Jerry Simpson gave a different explanation to the Wichita Kansas Commoner:

The Republicans worked the war racket on us and captured some of our people. Others were captured by the prosperity racket, for it is so easy to attribute good or bad times to the party in power in Washington. And then others, believing it would be impossible for the Republicans to defeat the Democrats and Populists combined, stayed away from the polls.

73Index, November 9, 1898; Anthony Weekly Bulletin, November 18, 1898; Pratt Pratt County Union, November 10, 17, 1898; Kiowa Review, November 9, 16, 1898.

74Cresset, November 11, 1898.

Money was not the issue this time and we lost because the whoop la business happened to be on the other side. As for myself I will seek office no more.76

A Kansas City Star reporter found Simpson on his ranch, run down from campaigning, in considerable pain with an ulcerated sore throat. He was hugging the base burner in his comfortable library while Jane was in town shopping and getting the mail and Lester was rounding up cattle.

"I guess it was my turn to lose," Jerry said philosophically, pointing out that he and Long had been taking turns. He regretted not being in Congress primarily because it would be the most evenly divided House in many years, and it would be exciting with the margin so close. "Still, there will be other Congresses." He was asked if this meant he would be a candidate in 1900. "I don't mean to say that I am in the race for Congress again. I simply am not out of it."

As for the reason for defeat, "In my case the tail went with the hide" when the rest of the ticket went down. Patronage and the lack of it also hurt. "We are a race of politicians in Kansas," he said. For 1900 he wanted fusion, Free Silver, and Bryan. In the meantime he would remain on the farm where Jane had been carrying all the load, but he felt the battle must go on; "The old guard dies but it never surrenders."

"Now Jerry, I hope you are not getting ready to run for Congress

76Wichita Kansas Commoner, November 17, 1898.
again," interrupted his wife, who had just returned from town. "That's the way you talked when you were beat (sic) in 1894, you know. I don't see for the life of me why a man wants to go to Congress."

"I guess it is the crank in him," Jerry replied. "He always wants to do something else. He is not satisfied with a good thing. But Jane, set your fears at rest."

"For two years," the reporter suggested.

"Yes, only for two years, for if he is not running for Congress he will be doing something else in politics," said Mrs. Simpson. "He has a great ambition to build up the party. Jerry used to spend every dollar we made to build up the party."

There was a shout from outside the house, and Jerry ran to the window. "Hello, there," he said, "the cattle are out. That's trouble." He ran from the house, ending the interview.77

77All material for the preceding eight paragraphs, including quotes: Kansas City (Missouri) Star, November 13, 1898. Portions of this interview were reprinted in the Cresset, November 18, 1898, and Wichita Kansas Commoner, November 24, 1898.
CHAPTER VII

THE PEOPLE LIVE IN RUTS

Although the Simpson plans for the future were not definite in the winter of 1898-1899, there were a number of possibilities in addition to running for the House of Representatives again. Retirement to the ranch was possible; the Kansas City Star reporter had estimated the total value of the ranch and stock as $25,000, all debt free. The farmhouse, while not the largest, was the most modern in the county. There were 640 acres leased in addition to the 820 acres owned by Simpson. ¹ The Topeka State Journal heard a rumor that he was planning to make the race for Governor in 1900.²

1. Home for Two Years

There was unfinished business to be cared for before the Congress met; Simpson left Barber county two days after Christmas. George Washington McKay was preparing to contest his defeat as district Judge before the state Senate, still Populist controlled. The Legislature was in special session to pass railroad legislation

¹Kansas City (Missouri) Star, November 13, 1898; see also Medicine Lodge Cresset, November 18, 1898 (hereinafter cited as Cresset).

²Cresset, November 25, 1898 (quoting Topeka State Journal).
before the Republicans regained control.3

"I don't believe McKay will contest," said Simpson in Topeka. "We had a middling honest election down our way. There are no big towns in the judicial district, and the farmers did not perpetrate any frauds." He grinned; "Of course, they perpetrated a huge joke on all of us by voting against us, but that is not a crime." He felt it would be impossible "to convince a populist senate that election boards controlled by honest old populists would commit any fraud in order to help elect a republican judge." McKay did contest, but the case was delayed until the closing week of the regular session when Senator Lewelling moved to strike it from the calendar; only Senator Titus voted in the negative.5 The youthful Titus was being mentioned as a possible nominee for Congress in 1900.6

Simpson continued his Washington opposition to expansion and defense expenditures. His remarks about an Army appropriation bill

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3Cresset, December 23, 30, 1898, January 6, 1899 (quoting Hutchinson News); Barber County Index, January 4, 1899 (hereinafter Index).

4Cresset, January 6, 1899 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Journal).

5Cresset, January 6 (quoting Hutchinson News and Anthony Republican), 13, 20, February 3, 10 (quoting Hutchinson News), 1899; Index, January 4, 18, February 8, 1899.

caused Congressman Joe Cannon to say that if the Simpson speech had been delivered in the Philippines he would have been subject to a drumhead court martial and firing squad. Simpson replied that "to be shot at in Manila is better than to be shot here by an old muzzle loading brass Cannon." Long was also in the national capital, opining that Simpson was through politically.

Meanwhile, back on the ranch the problem was lack of feed for the cattle. There would be no grass until mid-April, and the Simpsons lost thirty-eight head during March. Jerry Simpson stopped in Chicago to address a single tax club on the way home and then paused again in Wichita. He was planning to make speeches in other states, reportedly penning a book, If the Devil Should Come to Congress, and considering the publication of a newspaper.

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7 Associated Press dispatch in Wichita Kansas Commoner, March 2, 1899; see also Cresset, February 10, March 3 (quoting Topeka Mail and Kansas Breeze), 10, 1899.

8 Cresset, February 17, 1899 (quoting Washington (District of Columbia) Post); Index, February 8, March 15, 1899.


10 Cresset, March 17, 24, 1899; Wichita Kansas Commoner, March 23, 1899; Index, March 15, 1899.

11 Cresset, March 24, 31 (quoting Marion Record), April 28, 1899; Wichita Kansas Commoner, April 6 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Times), 13, 27, 1899; Index, April 12, 26 (quoting Wichita Daily Eagle (hereinafter Eagle), 1899.

Ignatius Donnelly of Minnesota, an anti-fusion Populist, wrote: "Jerry Simpson has written a book entitled If the Devil Came to (Continued on next page)
2. Jabs of the Bayonet

The tabloid Jerry Simpson's Bayonet was launched from Wichita May 8, 1899, by Simpson, B. E. Kies, and Frank A. Peltret. It was printed on the presses of Kies' Kansas Commoner and edited by Peltret, a former editor of the Washington (District of Columbia) Post. Twelve thousand samples were sent out; but there was to be no Bayonet charge, readers had to pay in advance to obtain subsequent issues.

The new weekly opened with a blast at Speaker Reed; "by far the greatest man in the Republican party . . . he has gloried in making men fear rather than love him . . . Reed is not an honest man, from a political standpoint" because he actually did not believe in his party's principles. It also fired shots at the President ("Blood on McKinley's Hands") and Cy Leland, boss of Kansas Republicanism. One of the features was two columns of anecdotes, some political, a few vulgar.

\[11\] (Continued from preceding page) Congress. Nonsense, Jerry; he has been there all the time; he came there one time without any socks and they say he has now retired to a large stock farm in Kansas." Wichita Jerry Simpson's Bayonet, May 8, 1899 (hereinafter Bayonet), replied: "Ignatius as usual is off in his facts. If Jerry Simpson ever writes a book it will be entitled: 'How the devil came to Donnelly, agreed to give him the presidency and afterward gave him the loud ha, ha.'"


\[13\] Bayonet, May 8, 1899; see also Wichita Kansas Commoner, June 1, 1899 (quoting New York (New York) Journal).

\[14\] Bayonet, passim; this feature decreased in importance in later issues.
There was no attempt to cover Sedgwick county news; and, although Kansas was the primary interest, the news stories, columns, and editorials ranged across the nation and world for subject matter. There is little internal evidence that Simpson was himself a contributor or editor; and his movements would indicate that he spent little time in Wichita. Either Dave Leahy or Victor Murdock recalled Peltret as "a remarkable prodder (who) stung like a rattlesnake." The Bayonet, they thought, "made more enemies for Jerry Simpson -- enemies that lasted -- than he made in all his campaigns himself. Some of them have been awful [sic] bitter." 16

An example of the vicious journalism was the reply to an Atchison Globe comparison of Simpson and Ingalls: "A clown always attracts more attention than a statesman." The Bayonet slashed back: "It is passing strange that the editor of the Globe continues to nurse his sap-head in obscurity." 17 On the occasion of the suicide of ex-Congressman B. H. Clover, the Bayonet remembered that the deceased had "sold himself" to the Republicans. "Such men ... are always to be found ... floating on the high tide of every reform movement. They are the scum which comes to the surface. They are

15 Bayonet, passim.

16 Obituary in Eagle, October 24, 1905; the present writer believes that the author of these lines was probably Dave Leahy.

as inevitable as horse flies, mosquitoes, or any other pest." The return of Clover to the G.O.P. had been like "the dropping of decayed tissue, which if not dropped might serve to decay its sound members." Such barbs were usually unsigned.

The publication did not attract much advertising and offered successive rate reductions to induce subscriptions. There were persistent rumors that it was to be moved to Topeka; Kies sold his interest in both the Bayonet and Commoner in September, 1899, and moved back to Michigan. In May of 1900 Peltret assumed complete control, and the Simpson name was dropped from the masthead.

The paper did not markedly reflect the Simpson attitudes on the tariff and single tax, but it campaigned for initiative and referendum, continental but not overseas expansion, fusion, four year terms for Congressmen and a single six year Presidential term, regulation of trusts and railroads, nomination of United States Senators by state conventions, and -- after Peltret became sole

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18 Bayonet, January 8, 1900; see also the attack on Representative Sibley of Pennsylvania (February 12, 1900), the reply to Ignatius Donnelly (footnote 11, page 164 above).

19 Cresset, June 23, September 15, 1899, June 1, 1900; Wichita Kansas Commoner, September 14, October 5, November 16, 1899; Bayonet, August 14, October 2, December 25, 1899, May 21, July 30, August 13, September 17, 1900, passim. The advertising which the Bayonet did attract was primarily cards of hotels across Kansas which conceivably could have been traded for lodging by Bayonet subscription agents.
editor -- Jerry Simpson for United States Senator. The last issue of the Bayonet, September 17, 1900, devoted a page to an appeal for subscribers. Peltret had written, upon the occasion of becoming sole owner, that "the genuine reform editor is usually so earnest that he cannot bring himself to dilute his medicine ... the masses of the people (have a natural reluctance) to setting the instruments they call their minds, to seriously thinking." He echoed the Hank Heisermann opinion of the 1890 election and the People's party; the people "live in ruts and object to the man who tries to force them out, regardless of his good intentions."

3. A Fat, Asthamatic Pug Dog

Jerry Simpson was not a man who communicated readily through words in the impersonal black and white of the printed page; his

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20 Bayonet, May 29, August 28, 1899, January 8, 22, March 19 (quoting Great Bend Barton Beacon), April 16, 23, 30, May 7, May 28 (quoting Larned Tiller and Toiler), June 25, 1900, passim; see also Wichita Kansas Commoner, August 10, 1899.

21 Bayonet, September 17, 1900.

22 Bayonet, May 21, 1900; see above pages 162 and 163.

Cresset, May 19, 1899, had commented on the first issue of the Bayonet that it "would have been hot stuff eight or nine years ago, and the serfs of the period would have fallen over each other to get their name (sic) on the subscription list."

Emporia Weekly Gazette, May 25, 1899, reported that one copy of the Bayonet had been in the Corner Book Store, Emporia, for a week without a buyer and predicted the paper would "bust and cost Jerry Simpson the earnings of five years of hard labor with the jawbone of a donkey."
forte was public speaking; and his activities during 1889 and 1900 included more orating than editing. When he appeared in Emporia on May Day, 1899, an allusion to his sockless condition was made by the man who introduced him. Simpson began his speech by cracking jokes about his pedal nakedness and then launched into a serious discourse on the history of the Dutch Republic, moralizing on the dangers of imperialism. The Emporia Gazette observed that his "short-cropped mustache, combed by sand-burrs of countless seasons, is becoming grizzled. He is not shabby, but he doesn't seem to lose much sleep thinking about his dress. Still, he has thought ravenously on politics and he has a very strong voice for saying what he thinks."²³

Early in June both Simpson and Long addressed the Trans-Mississippi Congress at Wichita;²⁴ Simpson appeared later in June in Eldorado;²⁵ and he was probably speaking at other points across the state. The Bayonet was acting as a booking agency for his lectures.²⁶ He delivered the Independence Day oration at Oklahoma City while

²³Emporia Weekly Gazette, May 4, 1899; see also Cresset, May 5, 1899.
²⁴Cresset, May 26, 1899; Index, May 31, 1899.
²⁵Emporia Weekly Gazette, June 22, 1899.
²⁶Bayonet, July 21, 1899.
Representative Long was addressing the Medicine Lodge celebration. Simpson arrived home July 5, in time to deliver an anti-expansion speech on cattlemen's day. 27

In south-central Kansas the McKay-Simpson imbroglio was continuing. The ex-Congressman had been asked by an Eagle reporter in March if he thought the former judge had returned to the farm; he replied: "I don't know and I don't think anybody particularly cares where McKay is or what he is doing." 28 The vendetta was not finished, however; while Simpson was occupied on the road, McKay was busy in Barber county. 29

In May the Populist county committee, under the influence of McKay, had opposed fusion; but the July meeting was controlled by the Simpson supporters; and in the fall convention the McKay-Index faction was defeated by the Democratic faction led by Simpson. McKay was fighting fusion unsuccessfully in his home county. 30

Simpson became sick while at Excelsior Springs, Missouri, in August and went to Kansas City and then Chicago consulting specialists and -- incidentally -- addressing a State street crowd from an open

27 Cresset, July 7, 1899; Index, July 12, 1899.

28 Cresset, March 24, 1899 (quoting Eagle).

29 Cresset, April 21 (quoting Kingman Leader-Courier) May 26, June 2 (quoting Topeka Mail and Kansas Breeze), July 7, 1899.

30 Cresset, May 26, June 23, July 7, August 11, September 15, October 13, 1899; Index, October 11, 1899.
barouche on the merits of the Henry George single tax plan.  
While in Illinois he also spoke at the Chautauqua at Petersburg and made a pilgrimage to the ground that Lincoln walked at Old Salem.  

Simpson returned to Kansas early in September, 1899, to aid in combining the People's party and Democratic votes toward electing a joint ticket. The Barber county convention resolved to "reaffirm our former allegiance to the Honorable Jerry Simpson." The Socialist element bolted and put up their own ticket. Simpson lectured the convention on trusts, prosperity (a result of famine in Australia and India), expansion, and told them that the opposition parties had forced McKinley into war. "It is like a story of Champ Clark of Missouri," he said. "(Clark) had a Chester White sow. He had to pull her ears off to get her to the trough and then pull her tail off to get her away. That's like McKinley and the republican party in war."  

The Simpson campaign against expansionism was met by public

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31 Cresset, August 11, 18, September 8, 1899; Index, August 16, 1899; Bayonet, August 21, 1899.

32 Bayonet, August 21, 1899.

33 Transcript of speech, probably from shorthand notes by Chester I. Long and/or his private secretary Ralph Faxon, in Cresset, October 13, 1899; see also Cresset, September 15, 1899; Index, October 11, 1899; Wichita Kansas Commoner, September 28, 1899.
demonstrations of disapproval. In Wichita, old soldiers yelled "take him out", "put him out", and "traitor"; and in Osborne a crowd of hecklers followed him to his hotel. Representative Long, more in tune with the times, was a leading defender of the administration policy of repression in the Philippines. The Simpson efforts were broadly diffused across the state; Long concentrated upon the seventh Congressional district. He returned home only to vote and then left for Washington. The 1899 election produced an overwhelming Republican victory in southwest Kansas.

In July two carloads of the Simpson cattle had been shipped to Kansas City. An auction sale was planned for late October to dispose of 275 head, but bad weather interfered with attendance; and only 140 were sold. Jerry Simpson and another former Populist Congressman, M. S. Peters, were planning to go into the livestock commission business.

34 Wichita Kansas Commoner, September 28, 1899; see also Emporia Daily Gazette, October 9, 1899; Index, October 11, 1899.
35 Emporia Daily Gazette, October 7, 1899.
36 Cresset, October 13, 20, 27, 1899.
37 Cresset, September 13, October 13, 20, 27, November 10, 1899; Index, July 12, August 23, October 25, November 8, 1899; Emporia Daily Gazette, October 7, 9, November 4 (quotin Iola Register), 1899.
38 Cresset, November 10, 17, 1899; Index, November 8, 1899.
39 Index, July 12, 1899; Cresset, October 6, 27, 1899.
40 Cresset, November 24, 1899.
Christmas night, as he drove home from Medicine Lodge, Simpson swerved his team to avoid a mud hole, and his buggy struck the corner of a fence. He was thrown out, breaking a tooth and cutting his lip. \(^{1}\) Jerry and Lester Simpson occupied themselves supervising the wintering of their cattle and hunting together on rough land in some of their leased pasture. \(^2\) At night the ex-Congressman played checkers with his wife. He indulged himself in one of his favorite vices, Jane's mince pies. The winter herd consisted of 350 Herefords and Shorthorns; they grazed during the day, ate kaffir night and morning. One hundred calves were in corrals feeding on kaffir and Indian corn. \(^3\)

Representative Long, in Washington for the winter session, was enjoying good press relations with Kansas newspapers. His private secretary, Ralph Faxon, was reporting capital news for both the *Wichita Eagle* and *Hutchinson News*, and the stories were widely copied in the weekly press. \(^4\) Only four Representatives in the Fifty-Seventh Congress listed themselves as Populists. \(^5\) Jerry Simpson went to Chicago in February for an anti-trust conference. \(^6\)

The question of the Simpson intentions in 1900 was resolved

\(^{1}\) *Cresset*, December 29, 1899, January 5, 1900.

\(^{2}\) *Cresset*, January 26, 1900.

\(^{3}\) *Cresset*, March 2, 1900.

\(^{4}\) *Cresset*, December 8, 1899; *Bayonet*, December 11, 1899.

\(^{5}\) *Cresset*, December 15, 1899.

\(^{6}\) *Cresset*, February 16, March 2, 1899.
in February when he announced that he would be a candidate for election to the United States Senate when the new Legislature met in 1901. He proposed that the Populist state convention declare the party choice for Senator when it chose the candidates for state executive offices.\textsuperscript{47} The situation in the seventh Congressional district was confused. Candidates appeared in both the People's and Democratic parties who desired the fusion nomination, and both parties had men wanting nomination without fusion.\textsuperscript{48}

Apparently the announced candidate for the Senatorial toga kept his hands off the contest for nomination to the lower house, but a former wearer of judicial ermine injected himself into the middle of the Congressional campaign. George Washington McKay voiced opinions on the race in the seventh district although he held his tongue about Jerry Simpson.\textsuperscript{49} When the Barber county People's party convention met the last day of March to name the delegations to the various district and state conventions, McKay was in Medicine

\textsuperscript{47}Index, February 14, 1900; Cresset, June 30, 1899 (quoting Topeka Daily Capital), February 16 (quoting Hutchinson News), April 6, 13, 1900; Bayonet, March 19 (quoting Great Bend Barton Beacon), April 16, 1900; Wichita Kansas Commoner, December 21, 1899.

\textsuperscript{48}Wichita Kansas Commoner, December 7, 21, 1899; March 29, 1900; Index, February 28, 1900; Bayonet, April 2, 16, 1900; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, April 6, 1900.

\textsuperscript{49}Wichita Kansas Commoner, March 29, 1900; Cresset, February 16, 1900 (quoting Hutchinson News); Bayonet, April 23, 1900.
Lodge. He talked to nearly every delegate. The convention did not endorse the Simpson candidacy nor did it name him as delegate to any other convention. Simpson was absent, touring the sixth district.

The seventh district Populist convention met in the opera house in Great Bend April 17 (delegates of the district Democracy gathered in Workman hall a few blocks away). Claud Duval of Hutchinson, a fusion-minded Democrat, led on the first ballot for the People's party nomination; but I. P. Campbell, Wichita, a radical Populist, won on the twenty-third. Angered, the Democrats nominated Duval and then adjourned sine die, rejecting or tabling motions which would have made compromise possible. Long was renominated by acclamation the next day at Hutchinson; the press of the district, regardless of party, believed him the favorite for reelection.

The next convention was a state meet at Clay Center to select delegates to the Populist national convention. The atmosphere was more peaceful; barrels of buttermilk refreshed the delegates and spectators. William Jennings Bryan appeared, and the enthusiastic

50 Cresset, April 6, 13, 1900; Index, April 4, 11, 1900.
51 Cresset, April 13, 1900.
52 Great Bend Barton County Democrat, April 20, 1900; Wichita Kansas Commoner, April 19, 1900; Bayonet, April 23, 1900; Index, April 25, 1900; Cresset, April 20, 1900; Great Bend Barton Beacon April 20, 1900.
53 Index, April 25, 1900; Great Bend Barton County Democrat, April 20, 1900; Bayonet, April 30, 1900; Cresset, April 20, 1900.
gathering endorsed his candidacy, sending Jerry Simpson as one of the Kansas delegation to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. At the People's party Presidential convention Jerry Simpson played the part of laugh maker and wit, was undamaged by bandwagons rolling over him. Bryan and Charles A. Towne of Minnesota were nominated.

Simpson returned to fight his battle for Senatorial endorsement by the state nominating convention and to lend his hand to fusion efforts in the seventh district. He had already traveled widely soliciting personal support. Fusion was essential to his success, but splits in the sixth and seventh districts would have to be surmounted. The southwest Kansas situation deteriorated steadily; the strife increasing in bitterness. Simpson secured the endorsement of the Index for his Senatorial bid July 18, 1900.

54 Bayonet, April 16, 30, May 7, 1900; Wichita Kansas Commoner, April 26, 1900; Index, May 2, 9, 1900; Cresset, May 4, 1900; Clay Center Times, April 26, 1900.

55 Wichita Kansas Commoner, May 17, 1900; Bayonet, May 14, 1900; Index, May 9, 16, 1900.

56 Wichita Kansas Commoner, June 14, 21, 1900; Bayonet, April 16, 30 (quoting Larned Tiller and Toiler), June 25, 1900; Cresset, April 13, May 4, June 1 (quoting Eagle and Larned Eagle-Optic), July 13, 27, 1900; Index, July 18, 1900.

57 Index, July 18, 1900; see also Cresset, July 20, 1900. The Index had evidently warmed somewhat toward Simpson; his suit against them had been dismissed the previous year at his request. The Index was defending itself against a criminal libel charge following printing of accusations made by Carrie Nation against the county Attorney after her saloon smashing raid in Kiowa; the suit was eventually dismissed; see Index, June 6, 13, 20, 27, July 4, 11, October 10, 1900.
The state nominating convention of the People's party convened in Fort Scott late in July, being called to order by blows of a gavel made of wood Simpson had taken from the grocery where Lincoln had worked in Old Salem, Illinois. Simultaneous gatherings of Democrats and Silver Republicans were also in town. This was the place Jerry Simpson's Senatorial ambitions would meet the test of party approval -- which would be subject to the ratification of the voters who would select the Legislature. Convention nomination which served as instructions to legislative candidates was being used in other states, but it was a new idea in Kansas.

Simpson was appointed to the order of business committee, and by one vote, it recommended a program which included the nomination of a candidate for Senator (after Simpson threatened to bring in a minority report if he could not get his plan in the majority recommendations). When the committee report was presented to the convention, two state Senators moved to strike the item. They would not be bound, they said; although they admitted convention nomination and direct election would be superior to legislative selection.

Simpson advanced to the speaker's stand. He noted that the leading opponents were candidates for the legislature, continuing: "I will not say that the smallness of their pay as members of that body has anything to do with their attitude and that they want to be
in a position to pick up what they can on the side." He moved the previous question. 58

L. P. King, state Senator from Cowley county, was on his feet. "I rise to a question of personal privilege."

Simpson replied, "A question of personal privilege will not lie unless something personal to the gentleman has been said."

"The motives of senators have been questioned," shouted King.

"The gentleman must confine -- "began Simpson, but he was overwhelmed by cries of "Sit down! Sit down! King! King!"

"I won't sit down and you will hear me," screamed Simpson, white with rage, shaking his fist at the howling delegates.

When the vote was taken the Senatorial nomination was stricken from the order of business, 372-149. Simpson faced the delegates and admitted defeat somewhat ungraciously. "We have met the enemy and we are his'n. I want to congratulate the convention that there are 149 delegates here who believe in Populist principles." 59

58 T. A. McNeal in Topeka Mail and Breeze, July 27, 1900; see also Fort Scott Daily Monitor, July 25, 1900; Topeka State Journal, July 23, 25 (stenographic text), 1900; Salina Daily Republican-Journal, July 25, 1900; Kansas City (Missouri) Star, July 26, 1900; Emporia Daily Gazette, July 28, 1900 (editorial: "Waning of Jerry"); Wichita Kansas Commoner, July 26, 1900 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Times, July 25, 1900); Bayonet, July 30, 1900; Index, July 25, August 1, 1900; Cresset, July 27, 1900; Hutchinson News, July 25, 1900 (stenographic text); Topeka Daily Capital, July 25, 26, 1900; Eagle, July 25, 1900. See footnote 59 below.

59 Topeka State Journal, July 25, 1900; see also all sources cited in footnote 58 above. The Mail and Breeze quotation was used above because the accusation of susceptibility to bribery was less direct; charity to Simpson and the Legislature dictated its use; the Topeka (Continued on next page)
T. A. McNeal, observing the proceedings, thought that even if the Populists regained control of the Legislature, they would not elect Simpson as Senator. He had "no more chance than a fat, asthmatic pug dog in a race with a full grown and active jack rabbit." 60

4. Leaving the County of Statesmen

Following such a defeat many men would have given up the fight, but Jerry Simpson went ahead with a plan of helping local candidates as part of his personal campaign. The day after the convention closed he was invited to speak in the grandstand during the races at Fort Scott. Handbills advertised him, and an immense crowd gathered.

The mayor introduced Simpson, who opened his speech by complimenting the people of the city; there was cheering and some confusion. He went on to say he had not seen a Republican since he had come to town (intending to add that politics had been in abeyance during the convention). The crowd took exception; there was a "series

59(Continued from preceding page) State Journal text was utilized for the remainder because it was more detailed. Hutchinson News, July 25, 1900, also has a stenographic account, less detailed than either of those quoted in the text.

60 T. A. McNeal in Topeka Mail and Breeze, July 27, 1900.

61 Bayonet, August 20, 27, September 3, 1900; Index, August 1, 22, 29, October 3, 10, 24, 1900; Wichita Kansas Commoner, August 9, 16, 30, October 4, 18, 25, 1900; Emporia Daily Gazette, September 6, 1900; Cresset, August 24, 31, October 19, 1900; see also Topeka State Journal, July 23, 1900.
of calls, hisses and other forms of disapproval." The demonstration lasted ten or fifteen minutes, making it impossible to continue. Simpson turned angrily to a negro at the corner of the stand who was keeping up a continual yell and asked him what he was yelling for. According to Simpson the young man replied, "you go to hell you s-- of a b--.--." They grappled briefly, falling to the floor of the platform, before the mayor threw the negro off the stand. Police made several arrests, but the mob overpowered them, freeing the prisoners. Simpson tried a second time to speak but was again hooted down. There was a strong suspicion that the demonstration was organized and planned by negro rowdies. 62

Simpson went to Shelby, Illinois, the first week of August to debate Congressman Dolliver of Iowa on the paramount issues of the campaign. 63

Representative Long was in Colorado fishing with Kansas's Governor Stanley; he returned to Kansas July 28 to begin his campaign.

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62Fort Scott Daily Monitor, July 27, 1900; see also Fort Scott Daily Monitor, July 28, 1900 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Times); Topeka State Journal, July 27, 1900; Topeka Daily Capital, July 27, 1900; Eagle, July 27, 1900; Topeka Mail and Breeze, August 3, 1900; Wichita Kansas Commoner, August 2, 1900 (quoting Kansas City (Missouri) Times); Bayonet, July 30, 1900.

63Wichita Kansas Commoner, August 9, 1900; Index, August 8, 1900; Cresset, August 3, 1900.
against the divided opposition, meeting Campbell, the Populist
candidate, in a debate at Tribune. Long was still using the
technique of presenting a list of questions for his debate opponent
to answer. (Late in the campaign Long was badly bruised in a rail-
road accident at Colwich.)

Campbell and Duval, the Democratic nominee, were both
campaigning like men eager to fight to the finish. But many other
Populists and Democrats, remembering that fusion had produced their
victories, regretted the split. Both candidates were demanding that the
other man quit the race; but local organizations (possibly influenced
by Jerry Simpson) began to call for the withdrawal of both and the
calling of a new convention. The candidates finally agreed, and a
fusion convention at Hutchinson nominated Duval. Many Populists,
the disappointed Campbell among them, declared they would support
the Republican party.

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64 Cresset, July 13, 20, August 3, 10, September 7, 28, October
19, 1900; Index, July 18, August 8, 1900; Bayonet, September 3, 1900;
stenographic text of speech by Long at Garden City, Hutchinson News,
September 8, 1900; Tribune Greeley County Republican, August 17,
1900.

65 The role of Simpson in this fusion effort is not easily deter-
mined, although his movements through the district coincided geographically
and chronologically with some of the steps in the process. Bayonet, April
23, 30, June 25, August 20, 27, 1900; Wichita Kansas Commoner, June 14,
21, August 9, 16, 23, September 13, 27, October 25, 1900; Great Bend
Barton County Democrat, April 20, 1900; Topeka Daily Capital, November
27, 1900; Hutchinson News, September 11, 12, 1900; Index, April 25,
August 8, 22, 29, September 26, October 24, 1900; Cresset, April 20,
June 1 (quoting Eagle and Larned Eagle-Optic), August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31,
September 14, 21, October 19, 1900.
As a significant political force the People's party was finished. Although the gubernatorial candidate on the joint ticket nominated at Fort Scott was a populist, the general pattern was that the third party was swallowed by the Democracy, those who could not go along returning to Republicanism. The Sioux Falls nominee for Vice President withdrew and the Democratic candidate took his place on the People's party ticket. The fusion forces, after a sixteen hour clash in Medicine Lodge in mid-August, denied renomination to Senator Titus. The Democrats absolutely refused to have anything to do with him. The convention endorsed Simpson for the United States Senate.

Jerry Simpson was permanent chairman of the August meeting in Topeka which notified Bryan of his nomination by the People's party.

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66 *Hutchinson News*, September 3, 1900 (fusion in Edwards, Ford, Pawnee counties); *Wichita Kansas Commoner*, May 17, July 12, August 6, October 4, 1900; *Bayonet*, April 16, May 14, July 9, August 13, 27, 1900; *Index*, February 21, 28, May 16, July 18, 25, August 1, 8, 15, 1900; *Cresset*, April 13, July 13, August 3, 10, 17, 24, September 7 (McKay was backing the Prohibition party), November 2 (McKay and Titus opposed Populist candidates in Harper county), 1900.

A story, quickly denied, quoted John Breidenthal, fusion nominee for Governor: "Jerry Simpson is knocking because I would not agree to help him out in his scheme to have the convention nominate a senator. I have worked day and night to help that fellow; now he has turned an ingrate. But he's a dead one and can't do any damage." He was also quoted as blasting Senator King of Cowley county and ex-Governor Lewelling, *Cresset*, August 3, 1900. The denial appears in *Index*, August 8, 1900, indicating the *Kansas City (Missouri) Journal* originated the fake story.

67 *Cresset*, August 10, 17, November 2, 1900; *Index*, August 15, 1900.
Simpson asked those with umbrellas to lower them so others could see. The crowd of 10,000 stood three hours in the blazing sun and then filed by the stand to shake hands with the speakers. 68

The election produced victory for the Republican party. Even the Kansas farmer seemed to have caught the fever of imperialism. Representative Long, a leading advocate of administration policy, won reelection by 1,519 votes, although he ran behind McKinley; Long carried his home county, for the second time, by fifty-three votes, thirty-five less than his 1898 majority over Simpson. 69

Two weeks after the election Lester Simpson was married to Gerlie Kelley in Lipscomb, Texas. Her parents had lived for a number of years in Barber county but were now in the cattle business in the Panhandle. 70 During the summer Jerry Simpson had been negotiating to

68Bayonet, August 27, 1900; Cresset, August 24, 1900.

69June G. Cabe and Charles A. Sullivant, Kansas Votes National Elections, 1859-1956 (Lawrence: Governmental Research Center, University of Kansas, 1957), 24-25, 137, 151.

State Democratic chairman Jo Mack Love blamed the defeat on fusion and promised straight Democratic nominations in 1902, Cresset, November 16, 1900. The 1901 Legislature, Republican controlled, changed the ballot law to prevent a name appearing as the nominee of more than one party.

In Barber county the fusion candidate for the lower house was apparently elected, as was the fusion candidate for Senator. But votes from the Dodge City soldier's home (counted in the Senate race) and from servicemen in the Philippine Islands swung both races to the G.O.P. The Republican Legislature voted to pay the salary of both candidates from Barber county, but the Populist refused the money, Index, November 14, 28, December 19, 1900, January 2, February 6, March 6, 1901; Cresset, November 9, 1900, January 4, 11, 1901.

70Cresset, November 23, 1900; Index, November 21, 1900; Annie L. Diggs, The Story of Jerry Simpson (Wichita: Jane Simpson, 1908), 185-189.
sell his ranch, and the deal was closed in November, the 1,360 acres going for $8,000. Possession was to be given the next March. Simpson was negotiating for land in Kearny county. Lester and the Simpson stock would be moved to the new ranch while Jerry and Jane would go to Kansas City to engage in the livestock commission business.  

The Republican caucus in the new Legislature voted by acclamation to award the Senatorial office to J. R. Burton, a decision they had cause to regret. There had been considerable maneuvering prior to the caucus, the names of McNeal and Long being among those mentioned. Long announced that he was a candidate for the Senate seat falling vacant in 1903. (The fusion votes for Senator were given to Democrat David Overmyer.) Simpson and his partner in the livestock

71 Index, August 15, November 21, 28, 1900; Cresset, November 23, 30, December 7, 14 (quoting Topeka Mail and Breeze), 1900.

The Simpson land holdings included, in addition to the 800 acres owned in 1898, 560 more purchased since that time; See Appendix I, Deed Records.

72 Cresset, November 30, December 28, 1900, January 11, 1901; Index, January 9, 23, 1901.

Holton Recorder-Tribune, October 26, 1905, regretted Jerry Simpson had not lived to represent New Mexico in the Senate. The Republican paper had been "opposed to have (sic) him represent Kansas, but he certainly would have been an immense improvement on J. Ralph Burton."

73 Wichita Kansas Commoner, January 17, 1901. The first ballot in the fusion caucus was David Overmyer - 11, Simpson - 8, Senator L. P. King - 8, John Breidenthal - 6; J. G. Johnson - 5, Webb McNall - 5, M. A. Householder - 3, Dave Leahy - 2. On the sixth ballot Overmyer led Breidenthal 29 - 19. The fight was between Simpson and King, but both released their votes to Overmyer. See pages 177 and 178 above.
commission business, ex-Congressman M. S. Peters, were in Topeka lobbying against an anti-oleomargarine bill.74

Jerry Simpson gave up his plans for the ranch in Kearny county. The new plan was for Lester to open a branch of the livestock commission company in Wichita. Father and son began to wind up their stock operations, visiting Sharon, Kansas, and Woodward, Oklahoma Territory, and planning a two day sale.75

The sale attracted a large crowd, the farm implements bringing $461.50, the 300 cattle $7,223.50. The economic condition of Barber county was indicated by the fact that only one note,

74Cresset, January 18, February 1, 1901.

75Cresset, February 1, 8, 15, 22, 1901; Index, January 30, February 6, 13, 1901; Wichita Kansas Commoner, January 24, 31, 1901. There is no indication as to the reason for the change in plans; Haskell and Hamilton counties were also considered as possible locations, see Cresset, December 14, 1900 (quoting Topeka Mail and Breeze); Santa Fe Monitor, November 29, December 6 (quoting Hutchinson News and Meade Globe), 1900; Syracuse Journal, November 30, 1900 (quoting Lakin Kearny County Advocate); Lakin Kearny County Advocate, November 29, 1900. Lakin Investigator, 1900, did not mention the Simpson visit there nor did the Kearny County Advocate, 1901, notice the change in plans.

The Woodward, Oklahoma Territory, visit was the only occasion the writer found in which Simpson made any reference to Carrie Nation. In responding to the welcoming speech Simpson told the convention "the peculiar conditions in Kansas, now, caused him to come down in Oklahoma to miss the hatchet -- you all know of -- and the dry weather? there." The speech was "one ceaseless round of laughter." He spoke again, on the third day of the gathering, about "Feeder markets and Value of Special Sales." He was "everywhere, meeting everybody." Woodward, Oklahoma Territory, Livestock Inspector, March 1, 1901.
for a small sum, was signed; cash was paid for all the rest.
Jerry Simpson had purchased a house in Wichita, and he and Jane,
Lester and Gerlie moved there following the sale.76

The Medicine Lodge Cresset sincerely regretted losing Jerry Simpson from the county. It wished him good fortune but could not "help feeling that he will some day regret leaving the county of statesmen."77

76Cresset, February 22, March 8, 22, 1901; Index, February 13, March 6, 1901; Wichita Weekly Eagle, May 10, 1901; Wichita Kansas Commoner, February 21, 1901.

77Cresset, November 23, 1900.
CHAPTER VIII

THE REAL DEMON

Wichita in 1901 was showing promise of development. It could not be compared to the interstate metropolis at the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers, but it rivaled Topeka; and it had outstripped Emporia, Newton, and Hutchinson. Tulsa was non-existent, Oklahoma City not yet important; Guthrie did not show promise even to residents of the Territory. Wichita, like Kansas City, served as the market place for rural areas outside the state in which the city itself was located. Like Kansas City it was becoming important as a livestock market, and the Union Livestock Commission Company of Kansas City had good reason to have a Wichita branch.

1. No Bophillus Bovis

Jerry Simpson and his wife moved into their new home at Nineteenth and Main, and Jerry began his work as a middleman between producer and consumer. He advertised in the Wichita Kansas Commoner: "Jerry Simpson asks his friends to ship their hogs to Wichita Livestock Commission Co."¹

¹The advertisement quoted ran on page one of the Wichita Kansas Commoner, April 14 - August 1, 1901; see also news items in Wichita Kansas Commoner, January 24, 31, February 21, 1901; advertisement in Woodward, Oklahoma Territory, Livestock Inspector, February 15, et seq., 1901.
Simpson and Long, together with Simpson's predecessor in Congress, S. R. Peters, "traveled together over the burning sands and pricking thorns" to membership in the Scottish Rite degree of Masonry in Wichita in April. They could total twenty years of service in the House of Representatives between them.²

There was opportunity for controversy in the cattle business, and Jerry Simpson did not avoid it. He went to Kildare, Oklahoma Territory, south of Arkansas City, on the first Sunday in May and bought three car loads of fine, fat butcher cattle. The 1901 Kansas Legislature had passed a quarantine law requiring all cattle from the Territory to pass a Kansas inspection on crossing the state line. Simpson was confronted with what he called "this latest piece of foolish legislation, which will work a severe hardship on all cattle interests." The Santa Fe put the cars on a siding at Arkansas City; Simpson was told he would have to locate the inspector, who was somewhere in Sumner county. As he told the story: "I started on a hot trail after this important personage." After two hours of telephoning and more of waiting, the inspector arrived, peeked through the slats of one car, and solemnly declared no "Bophilius Bovis." "I knew that before he did, and was glad that he agreed with me." The train to Wichita had gone; but the Santa Fe used a special engine to push the cars to Mulvane, where they were

²Medicine Lodge Cresset, April 19, 1901, see also April 26, 1901 (hereinafter cited as Cresset).
put on a regular train. The "comic opera inspection business" had consumed twenty-four hours and cost Simpson more than $50.  

He suffered other annoyances and reverses. In May his adolescent nephew (son of J. F. Simpson, Medicine Lodge) ran away from home and was arrested as a vagrant in Wichita. Jerry was robbed of $35 and a railroad pass in Kansas City in June. In July the Dold packing plant in Wichita burned to the ground, causing Simpson to close the Wichita commission office. He investigated the possibilities of new land in Oklahoma but decided it was no better than Barber county. In August he was uninjured but inconvenienced by a train wreck.  

Late in August Simpson spoke at a two day picnic at Lake City, Barber county, and then went to Kingman for a three day cattlemen's celebration.

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4. *Medicine Lodge Barber County Index*, May 22, 1901, (hereinafter *Index*).  
5. *Cresset*, June 14, 1901.  
7. *Cresset*, July 26, August 9, 23, 1901; *Index*, July 14 (quoting *Wichita Democrat*), 21, 1901.  
8. *Cresset*, August 9, 1901 (quoting *Hutchinson News*).  
9. *Index*, September 4, 1901; *Cresset*, August 30, 1901; *Wichita Kansas Commoner*, September 5, 1901 (quoting *Kingman Journal*).
He appeared before the crowded grandstand riding on the rear seat on top of a stagecoach featured in a simulated robbery. The spectators recognized him and called for a speech; he replied, "This is no time for speech making -- it's too serious."\(^{10}\)

2. The Terminus of the Rock Island

"A big healthy, fat and saucy boy baby graced the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lester Simpson at Wichita . . . Wednesday, December 11."\(^{11}\) The grandfather "treked over the hot sands" December 17 at Salina to become a member of the Arabic Order of the Mystic Shrine and then visited Medicine Lodge to buy light hogs from Tom Murphy and Lewis Balding.\(^{12}\)

In January the Topeka Herald reported that Jerry Simpson was quietly working to secure a nomination for Congress in 1902. The same Legislature which had quarantined Oklahoma cattle had also astutely altered the Australian ballot law (allegedly the changes were the work of Representative Long) to prevent any person appearing as the nominee of more than one party. The Democratic chairman was declaring there would be no fusion.\(^{13}\)

\(^{10}\)Wichita Kansas Commoner, September 5, 1901 (quoting Kingman Journal).

\(^{11}\)Index, December 18, 1901.

\(^{12}\)Cresset, December 20, 1901, see also December 21, 1901; Index, December 25, 1901.

\(^{13}\)Cresset, January 24 (quoting Topeka Herald), February 7 (quoting Kiowa Review), 1902; Index, January 29, August 13, 1902; Wichita Kansas Commoner, January 30, February 6, 1902.
Simpson was otherwise occupied, however; he was speaking to a Wichita Livestock Association meeting. Lester Simpson swore a warrant charging his errant cousin Frank with stealing harness.14 Jerry and Lester were planning, and in March executed, a move to Roswell, New Mexico Territory, "at the terminus of the Rock Island extension" where they had purchased 480 acres three and a half miles from town and were planning to raise blooded stock "in the midst of a splendid grazing country."15

Representative Long was renominated effortlessly and was marshalling his minions in contests for legislative seats to secure votes for United States Senator in spite of opposition by the Republican Governor.16 Jerry Simpson, carrying a roll of money "as big around as a ball bat for daily use," visited Helena, Montana, in May;17 and he was in Barber county for four days in August buying horses; but the Index denied that he was aiding in the Kansas campaign.18

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14 Index, February 5, 1902; Cresset, February 28, 1902.

15 Wichita Kansas Commoner, March 20, 1902; see also Index, March 20, 1902 (quoting Wichita Beacon).

16 Index, March 12, July 16, November 5, 1902; Cresset, June 13 (quoting Wichita Eagle), 20, 1892; Wichita Kansas Commoner, August 14, 1902.

17 Index, May 7, 1902 (quoting Wichita Beacon).

18 Index, August 13, October 22, 1902; Cresset, August 15, 1902.
In September he appeared in Emporia in a railroad passenger coach without seats which was filled with farm products from Chaves county, New Mexico Territory. The car was on exhibition on the tracks just west of Commercial street.\textsuperscript{19}

In January, 1903, Representative Long received the Senatorial toga at the hands of the predominantly Republican Kansas Legislature, winning over two other Congressmen and the Governor.\textsuperscript{20} The special election to fill the vacant seat in the lower house was set for May. Victor Murdock, now editor of the \textit{Wichita Eagle}, visited Medicine Lodge and closeted himself with Senator-elect Long. Four candidates were nominated: a Republican (Murdock), a Democrat, a Populist (who was named without his consent and who ran only to maintain the integrity of the People's party), and a Socialist (a Barber county farmer). Murdock did not campaign but did visit Barber county again to establish his solidarity with Long. He won easily; the Barber county vote was typical: Republican - 482, Democratic - 246, Populist - 57, Socialist - 46. With the issue announcing the returns the \textit{Index} rejoined the Democratic fold. Murdock's majority in the district was 8,867, larger than either Long or Simpson had ever received, in spite of a light total vote.\textsuperscript{21} The Congressman-elect returned to go fishing with the

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Emporia Daily Gazette}, September 12, 1902.

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Cresset}, January 23, 30, 1903; \textit{Index}, January 28, 1903.

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Index}, March 11, April 1, 8, 15, May 27, June 3, 1903; \textit{Cresset}, January 30 (quoting \textit{Wichita Eagle} comment that any ambitious Kansas politician should move to Medicine Lodge), March 27, April 3, 10, 17, May 29, June 26, 1903.
Senator-elect on the Medicine river, catching only one four inch bullhead. Governor LaFollette of Wisconsin was visiting Kansas, making progressive speeches to enthusiastic Republicans.

Jerry Simpson visited friends in Woodward, Oklahoma Territory, in March; but the Cresset implied that he had not been in Barber County. He had taken no part in the campaign. Jerry (now a land agent) and Jane were enjoying splendid health in Roswell, Lester Simpson reported in October when he and his wife spent a week in Medicine Lodge with his wife's sister.

3. A Grain of Wheat

Although the Republican party in Kansas was victorious, it was hardly harmonious. Governor Bailey declined to seek a second term in 1904 because of a "bitter factional fight." The Populist party in Barber county, deserted by its Socialist wing and Democratic adherents, voted itself out of business. The national People's party convention nominated the extremist Tom Watson for President.

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22 Cresset, June 26, 1903.
23 Index, July 8, 1903.
24 Woodward (Oklahoma Territory) News, March 6, 1903; Cresset, March 13 (quoting Woodward (Oklahoma Territory) News), October 9, 16, 1903; Index, October 7, 1903.
25 Cresset, February 5, 1904.
26 Index, February 10, 17, 24, July 13, 1904; Cresset, February 26, 1904.
party Populism was dead; its vital force, reform, was taken from it by the younger men in the old parties; the younger Populists followed, leaving only a few old men whose sentimental and emotional attachments forbade them any affiliation with Republicanism or Democracy, no matter how progressive.

Jerry Simpson may have been sentimental privately, but in public affairs he was a realist. A Topeka dispatch in March reported that he was out of politics and would not be a candidate for Senator if New Mexico were admitted as a state; but in August he announced that he was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for territorial Delegate.

He expertly began rounding up delegates to the Las Vegas convention. His chief opponent for the nomination was George P. Money, son of a United States Senator from Mississippi. The Republican Las Vegas (New Mexico Territory) Daily Optic began to vilify Simpson as if he were already face to face with a G. O. P. nominee, quoting the Democratic El Paso (Texas) News that Simpson was "the craziest of Kansas populists," and editorializing:

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27 *Index*, March 9, 1904.


29*Daily Optic*, August 15, 1904 (quoting *El Paso (Texas) News*).
Jerry Simpson expects to run his campaign for congress on ridicule. Well he may. He long ago made himself one of the ridiculous objects of the nation. He has achieved a notoriety that is founded wholly on the ridiculous.\(^{30}\)

The effort in local organizations to secure endorsements and delegates continued, with Money securing an edge.\(^{31}\) The outnumbered Simpson forces plotted a \textit{maneuver} to stampede the convention (as had been done by Simpson at Great Bend in 1890 and Bryan at Chicago in 1896).\(^{32}\) On convention eve the elder Money, dignified by the senatorial toga, spoke in the opera house; a band played; and then Jerry Simpson rose:

\begin{quote}
(He was) in fairly good forensic trim and made a happy-go-lucky, oft-time humorous and taking speech (lacking) dignity, logic and breadth. (It was) at times ... close to the line of demarcation between eloquence and rant, (But he) closed in great good humor with himself and everybody else.
\end{quote}

The \textit{Daily Optic} said, "his audience listens always," and found that there was "a grain of wheat hid in bushels of chaff."\(^{33}\)

Although Simpson ran ahead at first when the alphabetical roll of counties was called, he was defeated 117-36 and himself moved to make the nomination of Money \textit{unanimous}. It is doubtful

\[^{30}\textit{Daily Optic}, \text{August 13, 1904.}\]
\[^{31}\textit{Daily Optic}, \text{August 22, 23, 25, 1904.}\]
\[^{32}\textit{Daily Optic}, \text{August 25, 1904.}\]
\[^{33}\textit{Daily Optic}, \text{August 26, 1904.}\]
if he had any idea that he would win; he had been a Democrat only one year. 34

Simpson lent his voice and exerted his influence in the campaign, however — in Oklahoma Territory, at Pond Creek, Alva, Ingersoll, and Cherokee, where he spoke in the Christian church, the overflow crowd listening through the windows. 35 The Populist candidate for United States Representative ran third in Barber county, two votes ahead of the Socialist and 852 behind Victor Murdock. 36

4. An Occasional Longing

In December, 1904, Jerry Simpson made a stopover in Medicine Lodge on his return to Roswell from the national capital. He had

34Daily Optic, August 26, 29 (quoting Denver (Colorado) Republican); see also Index, August 31, 1904; Cresset, September 2, 1904.

A different version of the convention story, which would have Simpson losing by only one vote, appears in an obituary in Topeka State Journal, October 23, 1905, purportedly quoting from an interview in Chanute; but the daily Chanute Tribune, May 8, 1905, and Topeka Daily Capital, May 10, 1905, reporting (from internal evidence) the same interview do not mention it.

35Index, November 9, 1904 (Long also spoke at Alva); Topeka State Journal, January 29, 1910; Annie L. Diggs, The Story of Jerry Simpson (Wichita: Jane Simpson, 1908), 205 (hereinafter Diggs, Story).

36Index, November 16, 1904. The combined Socialist and Populist vote in the district was 13,818, while the Democratic nominee polled 119,568 and Victor Murdock received 35,598, June G. Cabe and Charles A. Sullivant, Kansas Votes, National Elections, 1859-1956 (Lawrence: Governmental Research Center, University of Kansas, 1957), 149.
been lobbying in the interests of the Territory. In April, 1905, he and Long arrived in Wichita on the same train from the east, and while they waited for their westbound connection, "somebody suggested a joint debate but neither of the statesmen seemed willing." They talked together of old times. Long was homeward bound from his Senatorial duties; Simpson was going to Amarillo, Texas, to speak at a cattlemen's convention, while his wife visited old friends in Barber county. He had started a sheep ranch near Roswell.

Senator Long also had a guest, Fourth Assistant Postmaster General Joseph L. Bristow; the Cresset called the visit social, saying Bristow was not looking for votes for United States Senator.

Simpson was now working for the DeFreest-Draper Land Company of Chicago. He told a convention of the Modern Woodmen of America at Nevada, Missouri, that he had quit politics and started wearing

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37 Cresset, December 30, 1904.
38 Cresset, April 28, 1905 (quoting Wichita Star).
39 Cresset, April 28, 1905; Index, April 119, 1905.
40 Cresset, May 5, 1905.
41 Wichita Kansas Commoner, October 26, 1905; Topeka State Journal, October 23, 1905; Dighton Lane County Journal, October 26, 1905; Cresset, October 27, 1905; Diggs, Story, 200-201.
socks. He praised Theodore Roosevelt and the Missouri and Kansas Congressmen for daring to tackle Standard Oil and praised Missouri for going Republican — although he was still a Democrat.

May 2, 1905, Simpson was in Kansas City with a group of prospective settlers on their way to the Pecos valley and "received the usual attention from the newspaper reporters." He said he was no longer in politics because a territory had no politics. He was nostalgic:

I confess to an occasional longing for a good hot campaign of the brand we used to have here in Kansas. When the papers fill with accounts of the clash of armies elsewhere, the old spirit arises in me, and I sniff the smoke of battle and paw the earth. But to no purpose.

He didn't think the chances for New Mexico statehood were good until Democrats gained power in Washington; Republicans feared the West. He praised Roosevelt and the Reclamation Act and disclosed that he was making fortnightly trips leading settlers to Roswell. He lashed out again at Standard Oil.

May 8, Jerry Simpson was in Chanute, "brown as a berry, good natured as ever." He looked good and felt good; the years had dealt

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42 Emporia Daily Gazette, April 29, 1905.
44 Hutchinson News, May 3, 1905.
kindly with him. "It comes from having a good conscience," he said. He thought that the principles of Populism were, like John Brown's soul, still marching on. He had more words of criticism for John D. Rockefeller. He was recognized by a farmer, shook hands, then broke loose again. 46

The Populist party had converted Roosevelt and Taft. "If Roosevelt had made the speeches he is making now four years ago he could not have been elected constable in the most ignorant precinct on Long Island," he said, opining "they are all coming our way."

He predicted:

You can't any more stop the progress of Populist principles than you can stop the periodical visits of the grasshoppers or the locusts. They have called the Populist party the "hard times" party, and that is what it is . . . We are all going to be capitalists or peons and as I have never experienced the joys of being the first, I expect I shall land in the latter class.

He bemoaned the facts that many old Populists had become plutocrats and the remainder had allowed the Republican party to steal their principles. 47

Senator Long was experiencing difficulties with automobiles; attempting to reach Wichita he was bogged down and had to walk a mile in the rain and flag down a Rock Island train. Representative

46 Chanute Tribune (daily), May 8, 1905.

47 Topeka State Journal, October 23, 1905. Different versions of the interview and comments on it appeared in Chanute Tribune, May 8, 1905; Topeka Daily Capital, May 10, 1905; Topeka State Record, May 27, 1905 (quoting Topeka Daily Capital); Kansas City (Missouri) Star, October 23, 1905; Wichita Kansas Commoner, October 26, 1905.
Murdock gallantly rescued two ladies from drowning in the Pacific near Los Angeles.\textsuperscript{48} In mid-summer Mrs. Long was entertaining the daughter of the president of the Santa Fe and the daughter of the state Treasurer; reform minded Governor Hoch was attempting to oust the Treasurer, whose home was Paola, where both Long and his wife had grown up.\textsuperscript{49}

5. His Time is Short

Jerry Simpson had not been a well man for ten years, when he had become sick during his second term in Congress. His 1900 campaign for the Senate had drained his energy, and his declining health was one reason for moving to Roswell.\textsuperscript{50} While preparing for the move he was packing a large box and, reaching over too far, fell into it in such a manner that he suffered a severe strain in his chest.\textsuperscript{51}

One day in the spring of 1905 he was fixing a little shed in the rear of his unpretentious home on south Main street in Roswell. As he nailed down the last board and laid down the hammer he told his wife, "Jane, I have done the last work I will ever do."\textsuperscript{52} He consulted local

\textsuperscript{48}Index, May 24, 1905; Cresset, May 26, 1905.
\textsuperscript{49}Index, July 5, 26, 1905.
\textsuperscript{50}Diggs, Story, 200-201; Wichita Daily Eagle, October 24, 1905 (hereinafter Eagle); Kansas City (Missouri) Star, October 23, 1905; Topeka Daily Capital, October 24, 1905.
\textsuperscript{51}Topeka Daily Capital, October 24, 1905.
\textsuperscript{52}Eagle, October 24, 1905.
doctors about the pain in his chest and saw specialists in Chicago while on a business trip for the land company. The final diagnosis was aneurism, dilation of the arteries. In July he was seriously stricken while in Roswell; the Cresset and Topeka State Journal headlined "His Time is Short", both papers going on to print columns of the kind of material held in file for obituary use.

The ex-Congressman fought back, showing tremendous will power and in September was able to go for a short drive in the streets of Roswell. His voice was gone, and he was shockingly emaciated; but he was making progress, although doctors said complete recovery was out of the question.

Late in September Jerry, Jane, and Lester Simpson left Roswell for Wichita. Jerry was quite low when they left, but the excitement of travel acted as a stimulant upon his nervous system and effected a temporary improvement. He entered St. Francis hospital cheerful but weak; only a few of the scores of people who called were admitted to his room, among them Congressman Murdock and his secretary, Dave

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53 Eagle, October 24, 1905; Dighton Lane County Journal, October 26, 1905; Topeka Daily Capital, October 24, 1905.

54 Cresset, July 28, 1905; Topeka State Journal, July 26, 1905. Index, July 26, 1905, reported he was "at the point of death," but held back from printing a full biography.

55 Index, August 9, September 13, 20, October 11, 1905; Cresset, August 4, 1905; Eagle, October 4, 1905; Wichita Kansas Commoner, October 5, 12, 1905.
Leahy. The report of the physicians changed from "serious" to "hopeless''.

Jane Simpson questioned the justice of his suffering, but he told her, "It is all right . . . the laws of Nature have been violated some time, and Nature will punish disobedience to her rules." He knew he had little time to suffer and consoled his wife, "Never mind, Jane, I will be with you always." He then told her his ideas about the future: The body would return to the elements out of which it was created; as to the soul he was uncertain. His doctor interpreted his philosophy to mean that when the body died it would be as the electric current turned off or as the candle snuffed out; the soul in the future would have no knowledge of things done during mortal life. Father Downing, the hospital Chaplain, visited him daily; but their conversations remained social and superficial.

Sunday morning, October 22, after a week during which friends and family had been encouraged by a brighter eye and stronger voice, Jerry Simpson suffered a hemorrhage (his third) and his doctors advised the family death could be expected momentarily. His marvelous vitality enabled him to live twenty-four hours longer, protesting that he wanted to sit up. Early Monday morning he told the assembled family -- Jane,

56 Eagle, October 4, 1905; Index, October 11, 25, 1905; Cresset, October 27, 1905; Diggs, Story, 212-214.

57 Wichita Kansas Commoner, October 12, 19, 1905.

58 Eagle, October 24, 1905.

59 Kansas City (Missouri) Star, October 23, 1905; Topeka Daily Capital, October 24, 1905.
Lester, Gerlie, and four year old Jerry Junior: "It has been a joke heretofore! I am up against the real demon now, but everything is alright (sic) and I am easy." At 6:05 a.m. October 23, 1905, Jerry Simpson died.

6. Here Halt the Quick

Flags in Wichita and Medicine Lodge flew at half mast.

Hundreds filed by as the body lay in state. More than 2,000 attended the Masonic funeral and followed the procession to Maple Grove cemetery. There was no minister; the funeral oration was delivered by Congressman Victor Murdock:

Here halt the quick and here the dead progress. He has gone out alone far in the deep darkness "where for each one of us a grave is hidden."

When he was dying Horace Greeley murmured, "Fame is vapor, popularity an accident, riches take wings, those who bless today will curse tomorrow. Only one thing endures -- character." Jerry Simpson had character.

Senator Long had paused in Wichita a few hours, accompanied Representative Murdock to view the remains, and called upon the widow; but he did not stay for the funeral, going on to Emporia where he was to

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60. *Eagle*, October 24, 1905. See also *Index*, October 25, 1905; *Cresset*, October 27, 1905; *Wichita Kansas Commoner*, October 26, 1905; *Kansas City (Missouri) Star*, October 23, 1905; *Topeka State Journal*, October 23, 1905; *Topeka Daily Capital*, October 24, 1905.

61. *Kansas City (Missouri) Times*, October 23, 1905; *Cresset*, October 27, November 3, 1905; *Index*, November 1, 1905; *Eagle*, October 26, 1905.

62. *Eagle*, October 26, 1905; *Index*, November 1, 1905.
introduce Senator Dolliver of Iowa, the chief speaker at a political meeting.

Jane Simpson was doubly bereaved; three days after the death of her husband, her mother passed away in Topeka. Jane went to Holton for the funeral, but Lester and his family visited briefly in Medicine Lodge and then went to Roswell to liquidate the Simpson properties, planning to locate in Texas. Jane Simpson had purchased a house in Wichita and would make her home there.

The widow had no letters to remember her husband by; the estate was not large and her most cherished personal remembrance was a black boy necktie. Like her husband she had never been formally religious, and Jane Simpson became converted to spiritualism. During the winter of 1905-1906 she met Dave Leahy (a staunch Roman Catholic) on Water street in Wichita. "It is rather remarkable, but here you are," she said. "Jerry talked with me last night. He is in the spirit world. He said for me to see you and get you to write his life." Leahy indicated his skepticism and begged that he was too busy. Jane was convinced of the genuineness of her vision. "The

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63 The Eagle, October 26, 1905; Emporia Daily Gazette, October 25, 26, 1905.

64 Index, November 1, 1905; Cresset, November 3, 1905; Eagle, October 21, 28, 1905.

65 Dave Leahy in ElDorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915; Dave Leahy in Eagle, September 21, 1933; Eagle, May 17, 1908; Index, May 20, June 17 (quoting Eagle), 1908.
best evidence . . . is that I have found you," she said. "I came straight from the other side of town without any definite plans. Jerry simply led (sic) me and here I am." Leahy expressed his gratification that Jerry Simpson still had confidence in him but suggested Mrs. Annie L. Diggs as a biographer. 66

The Story of Jerry Simpson by Annie L. Diggs was published in 1908. It was a product of Hobson Printing Company, printers and binders, Wichita; but the publisher and copyright holder was Jane Simpson. The widow hoped to satisfy a demand for the biography and at the same time realize a profit. 67 The original price was $1.25; a used copy was purchased by the present writer in a Wichita bookstore in 1957 for $1.50.

Jane lost her mortgaged home; although unwilling herself to become a supplicant, she allowed Leahy to appeal in her behalf to Chester I. Long, who obtained a place for her in the Masonic home at Dodge City. 68 She died in 1933, leaving her husband's bow tie to Leahy; the last conversation they had was the only one at which she did not report on spirit communication with her husband. 69

66 Dave Leahy in ElDorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915; see also Eagle, September 24, 1933.

67 Annie L. Diggs, The Story of Jerry Simpson (Wichita: Jane Simpson, 1908); Index, April 29, 1908.

68 Dave Leahy in Eagle, September 24, 1933; and July 15, 1934.

69 Dave Leahy in Eagle, September 24, 1933.
Chester I. Long died in 1934. He had been defeated for renomination in 1908 by Joseph L. Bristow, becoming in his own opinion the first victim of the primary law. Leahy recalled that neither Long nor Simpson cared particularly about their popularity in Medicine Lodge, and Leahy thought that "Mr. Long considered popularity a liability." 70

Victor Murdock, after five terms in Congress, was not a candidate for renomination as Representative in 1914. He was Chairman of the national committee of the Progressive party in 1915 and 1916. He went to Europe briefly as a war correspondent. Murdock was appointed to the Federal Trade Commission by President Wilson in 1917; he served seven years, three years as chairman, resigning in 1924 to edit the *Wichita Eagle* until his death in 1945. 71


Jerry Simpson was a controversialist. Dispute, debate, disagreement, altercation, and contention were the driving forces of his life after he moved to Barber county. Dave Leahy testified that neither Simpson nor Long was well liked in their home community: "Neither strived to be popular . . . Jerry had a combatative disposition." Leahy's opinion in 1888 was that T. A. McNeal had the brightest political future in the county (McNeal later became State Printer).²

Nearly twenty years after the event Leahy remembered the personal bitterness of the 1896 Newton debate:

Mr. Long, very tastefully dressed and groomed as if for a reception, sat easily upon the platform, a perfect type . . . of the class which Jerry sought to associate him with -- the plutocracy.

Both of them were residents of the same small town -- Medicine Lodge. Jerry belonged to the crowd in that town that sat on the curb, smoked cob pipes and whittled the boards of grocery boxes. Long belonged to that small and semi-exclusive class that held county offices or places in the directory of the banks -- those who got their linen laundered in Wichita. The rivalry of their respective castes was sharp and they intensified their rivalry in politics with it.


² Simpson announced his plans for his last session of Congress: "I have no settled policy . . . except to fight the Republicans whenever I think them in the wrong," Wichita Kansas Commoner, December 23, 1897.

² Dave Leahy in Wichita Daily Eagle, July 15, 1934 (hereinafter cited as Eagle).
They brought out this basic class division that day in Newton; and Long was so worn out by the terrible sarcasm that he retired to bed immediately after the meeting. 3

Jerry Simpson was at his best when he was in motion, when he was attacking. Some could arouse admiration in an audience; many might mobilize a mob to make over the status quo; but the "Sockless Socrates" simply said in a loud, clear voice what the people had felt within themselves but had been unable to bring to the verbal level. Only a "plain, unpretentious farmer, a good speaker" could do this. 4

1. Nature and Nature's Laws

It can be established that Jerry Simpson was not conventionally and formally religious. The writer advances the following theory: Simpson, bitterly angry at the fate or providence which so tragically took the life of Hallie Simpson (Chapter I) revenged himself on God by denying the existence of God.

3 Dave Leahy in ElDorado Daily Republican, January 18, 1915; see page 127 above. The present writer suspects that this interpretation of the class antagonisms of Medicine Lodge and the reported versions of the Newton debate which indicate its public airing (Eagle, September 25, 1896; Hutchinson News, September 25, 1896; ElDorado Daily Republican, January 18, 1915; ElDorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915) were all written by Leahy. The story (probably by Leahy) in Kansas City (Missouri) Times, September 25, 1896, does not mention the intrusion of personalities; nor does the Republican Newton Kansan, September 21, 1896; although the Populist Newton Harvey County Banner, September 25, 1896, says Long was "pale with anger and passion when he attempted to reply."

4 Dighton Journal, September 18, 1890.
T. A. McNeal commented that Simpson was naturally a radical in religion as well as politics:

Before he became especially interested in politics he was known to his acquaintances as a "free thinker" or infidel. He had accumulated a number of books defending his views, such as Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason," Huxley, Ingersoll. He loaned them to a family by the name of Jesse to read, but shortly afterward most of the Jesses were converted by an evangelist and decided that the first thing they ought to do was make a bonfire of Jerry Simpson's books, which they did.5

This denial of the Almighty by Jerry Simpson was modified by his activities in Masonry. The writer speculated for a time that this was a social activity, or that it was a cynical political operation; but continued research unearthed evidence indicating that it may have had a profound personal purpose.6

In 1890 his supporters likened his beliefs to those of the Unitarians. Dr. E. H. Galloway, attending at the deathbed, and Victor Murdock, a frequent visitor, searched for words to describe the quest of a man for a soul which he could neither quite acknowledge nor quite deny.7 On only one occasion did the writer find any mention

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5 T. A. McNeal, When Kansas Was Young (Topeka: Capper Publications, Inc., 1940), 204 (hereinafter McNeal, When Kansas Was Young).

6 See pages 188, 190, and 203 above.

7 Medicine Lodge Barber County Index, December 28, 1887, September 17, October 15, 29 (quoting Wichita Beacon), 1890 (hereinafter Index); Medicine Lodge Cresset, June 20, 27, 1889, April 19, 26, December 20, 1901 (hereinafter Cresset); Eagle, October 21, 26, 1905.
of Simpson attending church; on the eve of the 1896 campaign he attended services of the Presbyterian and United Brethern groups in LaCrosse.  

Annie L. Diggs, writing in the Simpson biography authorized by his widow, summarized his beliefs: "Life is good; Church creeds are a misfit; I love my fellow men."  

The spiritualism of Jane Simpson, and her messages from her husband reflect the progress of mortality into limbo, still searching for immortality.

2. Madonsonloge

Jerry Simpson could not spell; he had an aversion to writing. Three short letters in the Archives of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka contain eleven misspelled words. One of them has five misspellings in a total of thirty-eight words; and the present writer is unable to say with certainty whether Simpson wrote his return address as "Medicine" or "Medisine Lodge". Another letter

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8Cresset, May 1, 1896 (quoting LaCrosse Chieftain). See page 119 above.

9Annie L. Diggs, The Story of Jerry Simpson (Wichita: Jane Simpson, 1908), 17 (hereinafter Diggs, Story).

10Index, May 20, June 17 (quoting Eagle, May 17, 1908), 1908; Dave Leahy in ElDorado Weekly Republican, January 22, 1915; Dave Leahy in Eagle, September 21, 1933.
February 14, 1892, declined to write a 500 word magazine article, pleading insufficient time. 11

Published, signed articles by Jerry Simpson appeared rarely in the press. 12 If Simpson wrote frequently for *Bayonet* during the time he published it he did not sign the material. The present writer suspects he gave oral instructions to his associate, Frank A. Peltret, who then turned out finished copy. Jane Simpson was widowed without a single letter in her husband's handwriting. She told Dave Leahy that she had taught Jerry all the spelling he knew. 13

He was not, however, unfamiliar with good writing. William Allen White reported:

He was smart. He had read more widely than I, and often quoted Carlyle in our conversations, and the poets and essayists of the seventeenth century. His talk ... was

11 Letter, Jerry Simpson to F. Nelson, Bute (sic), Montana, August 19, 1896; letter, Jerry Simpson to L. Bastisk, Partridge (Kansas?), April 20, 1892; letter, Jerry Simpson to "Editor Voice", New York, New York, February 14, 1892; all in Archives of Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka. See also McNeal, *When Kansas Was Young*, 200; Diggs, *Story*, 98.

See above pages 2 and 3 (meeting of Jerry Simpson and Jane Cape) and 59 and 60 (the Madisonlodge story).


13 Dave Leahy in *Eagle*, July 15, 1934. Jane Simpson was not herself a remarkably good speller, see the account of the first encounter with her husband, pages 2 and 3 above.
full of Dickensian allusions, and he persuaded me to try Thackeray, whom I had rejected until then.\[14\]

Victor Murdock also testified to Simpson's knowledge of Victor Hugo, Dickens, Burns, Shelly, Thomas Paine, and his rather inexplicable habit of quoting frequently and approvingly from Thomas Carlyle's *French Revolution*.\[15\]

3. Pure Politics

Senator John J. Ingalls reportedly once remarked, "Purification of politics is an iridescent dream."\[16\] The popular conception


See also McNeal, *When Kansas Was Young*, 204 (Simpson read Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*, Huxley, and Ingersoll); Diggins, *Story*, 17 (listing Dickens, Carlyle, Scott, Burns, Shakespeare, Hugo, Shelly, the Bible, and Thomas Paine in that order); Dave Leahey in obituary on *Eagle*, October 24, 1905 (Henry George, Alexandre Dumas).

In Congress Simpson quoted Carlyle and Henry George and Goldsmith's "Deserted Village":

> Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey, Where wealth accumulates and men decay.


See above accounts of Simpson campaign speeches, especially the 1896 series of debates with Chester I. Long (pages 124 and 130), for references to Simpson allusions to classical authors and economists.

\[16\]The authenticity of this quotation was a political issue, and the present writer is unable to verify it.
of the Populist party is that it was a mass movement for purification of politics. If this is true it was doomed at the outset; the people cannot be organized by appealing to ideals; cohesion is produced by self-interest.

Many in the Alliance movement were devoted to purification of politics; these were the doctrinaire idealists: Mary Elizabeth Lease, William Garrison, George Washington McKay, Andrew Jackson Titus, Ignatius Donnelly, Tom Watson. Others were reformers who felt so strongly about substituting right for might, reason for emotion, that they were impotent when confronted with a situation in which the only recourse was might and emotion; Governor Lewelling failed in such an hour. There were men in the party, however, who could meet Republicans on their own terms and defeat them, men like Senator W. A. Harris and Jerry Simpson.

Simpson revealed himself before a Kansas City Star reporter in 1898. His wife had said, "I don't see for the life of me why a man wants to go to Congress."

"I guess it is just the crank in him," Jerry replied. "He always wants to do something else. He is not satisfied with a good thing."18

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17 See above pages 81 - 82, 122 (particularly footnote 45, Chapter V), 134 - 167 (particularly footnote 11, Chapter VII).

18 Kansas City (Missouri) Star, November 13, 1898. See also Jerry Simpson's statement of a legislative program in 1897 quoted in footnote 1, page 207 above.
This was a man who loved pure politics: struggle over government for the sake of the battle itself more than for any ends to be gained, either purification or pecuniary. Dave Leahy reported that neither Simpson nor Long ever used public position for private profit although both had opportunities.19 Amid the many charges of graft in the partisan press, the present writer found only two worthy of consideration. The first was the sharp dealing connected with the construction of the Medicine Lodge water ditch in 1888; the other is the reported acquisition of blooded cattle from Senator Harris in 1897. The first, while somewhat unethical, was not a serious matter; the second, under unverifiable circumstances, must remain unjudged.20

Another popular belief is that Simpson was elected to Congress largely as a result of Republicans calling him "Sockless".21 Simpson was elected to Congress in 1890 because he appealed to the self-interest of a majority of the voters of his district. The appeal was made in a manner calculated to attract and hold attention; but no campaign before the public, no matter how conducted, could swing a majority to vote so decisively against their self-interest and then

19Dave Leahy in Eagle, July 15, 1934.

20See pages 18-20, 147 above.

21See page 76 above. Among those spreading this version one of the most amusing and interesting accounts is Chester I. Long, "McFlimsey for Congress", The Kansas Day Club, Addresses (Hutchinson: W. Y. Morgan, 1901), 32-35.
repeat their vote two years later.  

Simpson also revealed himself to Tom Reed. "Will you tell me." Reed drawled, "why you are a Populist."

"For the same reason," said Jerry, "that you are a Republican. A majority of the people of our respective districts are of our way of thinking."  

If Jerry Simpson ever stood for any principle it was his position on the tariff:

I am a free trader -- absolute. I am not one of those men who are ready to compromise with wrong. Either a thing is right or it is wrong.  

But in the 1896 debate at Wellington he admitted he was not pushing

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22 The explanation of the triumphs and defeats of Simpson and the Populist party might be summarized in four quotations:  
Victor Murdock wrote in 1891: "The only hope of the Alliance is in grasshoppers or a crop failure." Eagle, April 8, 1891.  
Simpson himself echoed this identification of plagues and Populism in 1905: "You can't any more stop the progress of Populist principles than you can stop the periodical visits of the grasshoppers or the locusts. They have called the Populist party the 'hard times' party, and that is just what it is," Topeka State Journal, October 23, 1905.  
The Republicans promised prosperity if McKinley won in 1896. Three weeks after election an Oklahoma newspaper reported a Simpson jest that he had been hanging around the depot waiting for the "advance agent of prosperity" whom he was told was coming on every train," Woodward, Oklahoma Territory, Live Stock Inspector, December, 1896.  
Following his defeat in 1896 Simpson explained that the voters "were captured by the prosperity racket." He attributed defeat to improving economic conditions and -- incidentally -- explained his earlier victories: "It is so easy to attribute good or bad times to the party in power in Washington," Wichita Kansas Commoner, November 7, 1898.

23 Eagle, October 24, 1905.

The Simpson passion for free trade was publicly proclaimed during his first session in Congress when he and five other Representatives availed themselves of the privilege of extending their remarks in the Congressional Record, inserting thirty-nine pages of text, making Henry

(Continued on next page)
free trade because the Supreme Court had declared an income tax unconstitutional and revenue must be collected from some source.  

In the final analysis the thing that makes Jerry Simpson outstanding among the reformers of the American scene at the turn of the century is not his integrity, his intellect, nor his ideals, but his humor. Most reformers lack a capacity for laughter; they are serious, single-minded, and dull. Jerry Simpson was a reformer with a sense of humor. He told Victor Murdock:

Normally Kansas is what Kansas is traditionally. Right now (during the 1890's) Kansas is abnormal. We reformers are fighting for a mud ball as big as a boulder; what we permanently win will be no larger than a diamond, but it will be a diamond.  

25 (Continued from preceding page) George's Protection or Free Trade a public document, see United States Congress, Congressional Record, 52d Congress, 1st Session (Washington, District of Columbia: Government Printing Office, 1892), XXIII, Appendix, 102-1140. Simpson displayed a similar predilection toward the Henry George single tax plan, see pages 48, 164, 171, above.

26 Frank A. Peltret wrote on becoming editor of the Wichita Bayonet, May 21, 1900: "The genuine reform editor is usually so earnest that he cannot bring himself to dilute his medicine."

27 Murdock, Folks, 102.
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B. SECONDARY DOCUMENTARY

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   - Annual Cato City Journal, 1890 (F)
   - Annual Enterprise, 1890, 1900 (R)
   - Annual Clark County Enterprise, 1890 (R)
   - Annual Advocate, 1890 (Independent)
   - Annual Gazette, 1896 (R)

   Note: The above records were used in special daily editions.

Letter in parentheses following date indicates a change in political affiliation in preceding years: D = Democratic, P = Populist, R = Republican. Further mention to name only if a source was used extensively or if there are some unusual circumstances requiring special notation. Source identification indicated all newspapers are available only in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.
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Anthony Republican, 1890 (R).
Arkalon News, 1890 (R). See Footnote 76, page 64 in text.
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Arkansas City Canal City Dispatch, 1896 (Free Silver).
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*Letters in parenthesis following dates indicate a strong political affiliation in preceding years: D - Democratic, P - Populist, R - Republican. Further comment is made only if a source was used extensively or if there was some unusual circumstance requiring special notice. Unless otherwise indicated all newspapers are available only in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.
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**Claflin Barton County Banner**, 1892 (R).

**Clay Center Times**, 1900 (R).

**Clearwater Sun**, 1890 (R).

**Coldwater Western Star**, 1890, 1892 (D).

**Conway Springs Star**, 1890 (R).

A remarkable sense of humor in political reporting.

**Dighton Idea**, 1896 (R).

**Dighton Journal**, 1890 (R); **Dighton Lane County Journal**, 1905.

**Dighton Lane County Herald**, 1890 (R).

**Dodge City Globe-Republican**, 1890, 1896 (R).

An October 8, 1890, editorial pointed out a basic inconsistency in a Jerry Simpson speech: he had advocated more government by the people and increasing the power of the government. This paradox has remained unsolved by later generations of liberals and socialists.

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**Eminence Garfield County Call**, 1890, 1892 (R).


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This was an important reform journal. The paper and its publishers merit more attention than has heretofore or herein been given to them.
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2. Kansas Daily Newspapers*

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*Letters in parenthesis following dates indicate a strong political affiliation in preceding years: D - Democratic; P - Populist; R - Republican. Further comment is made only if a source was used extensively or if there was some unusual circumstance requiring special notice. Unless otherwise indicated all newspapers are available only in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.
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*Letters in parenthesis following dates indicate a strong political affiliation in preceding years: D - Democratic, P - Populist, R - Republican. Further comment is made only if a source was used extensively or if there was some unusual circumstance requiring special notice. Unless otherwise indicated all newspapers are available only in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.
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APPENDIX

The writer felt that information on the Simpson land holdings in Barber county could best be presented in tabular form in an appendix. The Simpson home was on 320 acres in Sections 11 and 12, township 32 South, range 11 West of the sixth principal meridian, five miles East of Medicine Lodge, two miles North and three West of Sharon; this land was purchased in 1886. The other land, three miles to the North, was purchased between 1887 and 1900, much of it in 1900; it totaled approximately 1040 acres, mostly range land. The transactions are presented in chronological order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Legal Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Record</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 27, 1886</td>
<td>S(^{1/4})NE(^{1/4}) 11, 32, 11</td>
<td>$1500</td>
<td>Deed Record L, 463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 6, 1886</td>
<td>SW(^{1/4}) 12, 32, 11</td>
<td>$1500</td>
<td>Deed Record 19, 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(This completed the purchase of the 320 acres.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 29, 1887</td>
<td>NE(^{3/4}) NW(^{3/4}) 26, 31, 11</td>
<td>$1100</td>
<td>Deed Record P, 344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2, 1887</td>
<td>SW(^{3/4}) 23, 31, 11</td>
<td>$1100</td>
<td>Deed Record P, 343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 6, 1893</td>
<td>NE(^{1/4}) NW(^{1/4}) 22, 31, 11</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>Deed Record 3, 160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 12, 1900</td>
<td>NE(^{1/4}) 23, 31, 11</td>
<td>(Estimated $100)</td>
<td>Patent Record J, 63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 21, 1900</td>
<td>NW(^{3/4}) 23, 31, 11</td>
<td>$350</td>
<td>Deed Record 19, 94.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 5, 1900</td>
<td>SE(^{1/4}) 23, 31, 11</td>
<td>$320</td>
<td>Deed Record 18, 123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 6, 1900</td>
<td>NE(^{3/4}) 22, 31, 11</td>
<td>$350</td>
<td>Deed Record 18, 121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 560 acres purchased and patented in 1900 increased the Simpson holdings at the time he was also considering leaving the county, see page 172 above. The land was sold in one transaction profiting $1180 (ignoring improvements and inflation) over purchase price.

January 4, 1901 (all above) $8000 Deed Record 19, 192