

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Zylstra, Charles Jalte Senator _____
Represented Sioux County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 31 Jul 1891 Wierdum,riesland, Netherlands

2. Marriage (s) date place

Sarah Niedema 1912 married: Canton,
South Dakota.

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business He worked for the social security department until
entering the federal tax department.

B. Civic responsibilities _____

C. Profession Farmer; creamery business; electrical
merchandising and manufacturing, rural mail carrier

4. Church membership _____

5. Sessions served 45th General Assembly 1933

6. Public Offices

A. Local _____

B. State _____

C. National Employed by the federal revenue department in Des Moines and
Chicago.

7. Death 29 November 1946 - died in Chicago, Illinois

8. Children Adelbert C.; Meidas M.; Alvena L.; Pauline L.;
Bernice L.; Marian E.

9. Names of parents Alardus Zylstra

10. Education He was educated in the Netherlands

11. Degrees _____

12. Other applicable information Democrat

- In 1909 he came to Sevier County, Iowa from Holland.
- He died in a Chicago Hospital after a failed operation.
- He and his wife are both buried in a Chicago cemetery.
- During the depression he was an advocate of script money, a plan based on the theory that script currency would liquidate itself at the rate of 2% when tax on every transaction.
- In 1934 he ran for Governor, but failed in his attempt.

SIouxLAND:

A History of Sioux County, Iowa

State Historical Society
Des Moines, Iowa

63, 218

and a year in the Plymouth County jail. Caspar's sentence was similar, except that he was given only six months in the county jail. For both men, the penitentiary sentence was suspended upon good behavior. Dick Popkin was sentenced to six months in the county jail.

Other men who were involved in the Bradley affair included Lawrence Krause, Theodore Hartman, Albert Kaiser, Jack Sovoloski and Walter Ideker. All of these were given sentences varying from six months to thirty days in jail. The penitentiary sentences were suspended upon good behavior.

Jack Hemp, who lived on the Whitman farm in East Orange Township, was arrested on the Monday following the riot at LeMars by a detail of national guardsmen. He testified that he had taken no part in the affair in LeMars, but had remained in the background. Hemp was a leader in the Farmers' Holiday movement and had taken active part in the picketing near James in the fall of 1932. Charges against Hemp were dropped.

Another trial scheduled for the courtroom in Sioux County was supposed to try the cases of those men who had sought to stop court proceedings at Primghar. The trial was cancelled, however, when the men pled guilty. There were 15 men from O'Brien County, and 5 from Sioux in this group. All accepted suspended jail sentences and paid fines of \$50 since they had pled guilty to a lesser charge.

Wallace Short, former mayor of Sioux City and a socialist agitator, strongly urged the farmers to fight the cases out to the bitter end in the courts; but the men decided to accept the advice of their attorneys and enter the lesser plea, thus preventing what might have been a long and costly trial.³

Adding to the woes of farmers and townspeople in northwestern Iowa during the decade of the 1930's were several seasons of drought and cold. The dry spells brought unusually severe dust storms. Strong northwest winds carried soil from such distant places as Canada and the Dakotas—the so-called "dust bowls." The air became thick and heavy with red and brown dust so that often the sun was obscured for several hours. Sunday morning, November 12, 1933, a strong northwest gale swept great clouds of dust aloft

so that at Hawarden it began to get dark about noon and darkness covered all of Sioux County from 1:30 p.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Beginning in 1930 these remarkable events increased in frequency and intensity for the first half of the decade, sometimes reaching awesome proportions. During the spring of 1935, one such storm arose over Sioux County obscuring the sun and causing such darkness to fall over the land that some rural schools had to be dismissed at 11:00 a.m. Wind erosion caused much rich topsoil to be blown into ditches along the roadside, seriously depleting the fertile soil. Dust penetrated homes, schoolhouses, places of business and churches. Dust particles made breathing difficult for some persons and caused eye irritation for many. Livestock suffered along with man.

During the summers of 1935 and 1936 the midwest also suffered from unusual heat spells. Hot winds from the south dried up the fields of corn so that in some townships there was an almost total crop failure. It was said to have been the first of its kind in the history of Sioux County. During the first six months of 1935, the county received only ten inches of precipitation, less than five inches coming in the critical growing period of July and August. During the two following months, only three inches of precipitation was reported.

The hot summer of 1935 was followed by a long-to-be-remembered winter of 1935-36. By February 21, northwest Iowa had experienced forty-five consecutive days when the temperature did not reach 32 degrees. The average temperature that month averaged only a -1°, the coldest average stretch on record up to that time.

In most communities, coal supplies ran low because trains were not running for days. During February no trains arrived in Sheldon for one week. The snowfall that month was the heaviest in twenty-eight years. On February 19, eight bobsleds carrying seventeen men started out from Boyden to dig their way to Sheldon in order to obtain needed supplies. It took the men two and a half hours to dig their way through deep snow drifts. From January 1 to February 12, a total of 25.5 inches of snow had fallen in the Sheldon area.

For more than fifty years a banker at

Hawarden, E.V. Slife, has kept official weather records. He found that over a period of fifty years the average precipitation at Hawarden was 25.94 inches. The lowest amount of precipitation occurred in 1939 when only 14.41 inches was recorded. The heaviest amount, 39.74 inches, came in 1951. In 1965 the precipitation was 37.11 inches, but in 1971 only 19.71 inches was recorded at Hawarden.

Mr. Slife found that June is on the average the wettest month in Sioux County, with 4.28 inches. The least precipitation is received in January with an average of only 0.54 inches. December is a close second with an average of 0.82 inches, and February is next low with an average of 0.87 inches of precipitation.⁴

About the time when the depression was at its deepest in Sioux County, with scores of men out of work and money scarce, Charles J. Zylstra of Hawarden brought forth a plan designed to relieve the unemployment situation and provide funds for the people out of work. The plan was claimed to be good for business places also.

Zylstra took his idea to the Hawarden town council one day and asked them to authorize the printing of \$300 in scrip money in the form of one dollar certificates. Anyone receiving such scrip would affix his initials and the date on it. There was space for 36 stamps on the back of the certificate. Merchants purchased the stamps from the city. For each dollar coupon or certificate the city in turn received \$1.08. The eight cents paid for the printing of the coupons.

When the coupon had passed through 36 hands, it would be redeemed for \$1.00 in cash by the city, and when all 300 of these coupons had been stamped in full they would have done the work of an estimated \$10,800 in regular currency. The system helped those who were unemployed by allowing them purchasing power. From the hands of the workers the scrip money went to the merchants in town, who in turn used the money to pay their light and power bills to the municipal power company. The city put the coupons back in circulation by paying for labor done on the streets.

Nationwide publicity came to Hawarden and to Charles Zylstra following the adoption of this scrip money plan. The mayor of

Hawarden, B.T. French, City Clerk, Fred A. Gefke, the Chamber of Commerce president, S.Q. French, the town council, and the author of the plan, Charles Zylstra, were interviewed by scores of newspapers and magazine writers. Two national publications, *Liberty Magazine* and *Colliers*, carried special articles about the Zylstra Plan, and *Pathe News* sent a crew to Hawarden to film a story. The newsreel showed Charles Zylstra speaking before the town council explaining the plan, and workers were pictured receiving the scrip money and then going to the various stores paying their accounts.

Economists and others made trips to Hawarden to observe the operation firsthand. Dr. Irving Fisher, economist from Yale University, came and was favorably impressed with what he saw. He later urged the federal government to use such scrip to pay for the soldiers' bonus.

At the general election on November 8, 1932, Charles Zylstra won a seat in the Iowa House of Representatives. This was one of the few times that voters of Sioux County chose a Democrat, but Zylstra's victory was due largely to the publicity he received from his scrip money plan, and from the landslide victory of Franklin D. Roosevelt for the presidency.

While in the House, Zylstra introduced a bill designed to give county supervisors authority to permit town councils in their jurisdiction to establish the scrip money plan. Garrett Roelofs of Sioux Center, State Senator, introduced a similar bill in the upper house. After some compromises, the bill passed both houses. One amendment to the bill eliminated all mandatory provisions and made the issuance of the scrip purely optional on the part of the supervisors. The life of the plan was limited to two years where adopted. The bill as amended passed the Senate with only two dissenting votes. It passed the House by a count of 84 to 15.

The editor of the local Hawarden newspaper labeled the scrip plan "freak legislation," and the Sioux County Board of Supervisors would have nothing to do with it. Dr. Fisher of Yale, however, declared that the scrip idea would "give a big boost to the national economy without adding to the nation's debt, or

without the necessity of raising additional taxes."

The scrip plan with some modifications was said to have been used in some 3000 towns, townships or counties. Besides Hawarden, other Iowa cities using the plan were Waverly, Rock Rapids, Eldora, Clear Lake, Keokuk and Waterloo. Some towns in South Dakota also adopted the plan.

Although the Sioux County Board of Supervisors would not give its approval of the scrip idea, it did make every effort to reduce county expenditures, including the day by day operating costs. That they were successful is indicated by the fact that they cut \$211,000 from the operating expenses for the year 1932. Taxes for that year came to \$833,512 compared to \$1,050,379 the previous year. This amounted to a 20.64 per cent reduction in one year's time, and was the greatest percentage of reduction achieved in any of the 99 counties of Iowa that year.⁵

The election of November 8, 1932, took place at the time when the Great Depression had reached its lowest point. Franklin D. Roosevelt received over 22 million votes to about 16 million for the Republican candidate, Herbert Hoover, who sought re-election. The electoral college gave Roosevelt 472 votes to 59 for Hoover.

Many in Sioux County left the Republican party in that election, a marked change from four years before. In 1928, Hoover had a majority of 3539 votes over his Democratic opponent, Al Smith. In 1932, Hoover received 2227 votes less than Franklin D. Roosevelt. The big difference was no doubt due to the feeling that a change of administration was needed to bring about an improvement in the economy of the nation.

In Congress the Democrats obtained big majorities in both houses. It was hoped that Congress, under the leadership of Franklin Roosevelt, would take action to help agriculture and business alike. The 13 million unemployed in this country were looking to the new administration for help.⁶

Roosevelt took the office of President on March 4, 1933, and at once went into action. On March 6 all banks in the nation were closed for what was called a "Bank Holiday." On

March 9, Congress passed the Emergency Banking Act which provided for the reopening of the banks under specific arrangements which assured their sound condition.

Meanwhile, Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace and his department heads worked out a farm relief bill which passed Congress on May 12. It was called the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA). This law placed limits on the production of livestock and grains, which brought about rising prices for these products. Farmers were paid for staying within the guidelines set by the Department of Agriculture.

On the same day, Congress passed the Emergency Farm Mortgage Act, which halted foreclosures and provided government funding of mortgages. A month later a Home Owners Loan Corporation was created to refinance small mortgages on private homes.

The first three months of Roosevelt's administration were referred to by newspaper writers as "The Hundred Days." On the last day of March during these momentous days, Congress enacted the Civilian Conservation Corps, which was designed to provide work for young men between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one years who were unable to find jobs. In Sioux County a Civilian Conservation Corps was set up in Oak Grove State Park north of Hawarden. About twenty boys from Sioux County were stationed in this camp. The young men were employed in the park cleaning away the underbrush, planting trees, building shelters and tables, repairing the roadway and doing other useful things. Some of the boys assisted the county agent in setting up soil conservation fields aimed at providing erosion control.

On April 19 the President announced the abandonment of the gold standard, a decision which was approved by Congress in June. All citizens were ordered to turn in their gold coins and gold certificates to the government. They were to take them to their local banks. In the spring one bank in Orange City received \$10,000 in gold. Banks throughout the county all received gold coins and certificates. The County Treasurer took in \$4,400 in gold as payments for taxes.

In May Congress established the Federal



You searched for Charles Zylstra

World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918 Record about Charles Jelte Zylstra

Name:	Charles Jelte Zylstra
City:	Not Stated
County:	Sioux
State:	Iowa
Birthplace:	Netherlands
Birth Date:	31 Jul 1891
Race:	Caucasian
Roll:	1643355
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Refine your search of the World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918

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Ancestry.com. *World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918* [database online]. Provo, UT: Ancestry.com, 2005. Original data: National Archives and Records Administration. World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918. M1509, 4,582 rolls. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

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<http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=ww1draft%2c&gsfn=Charles&gsln=...> 7/26/06

Source: Iowa Territorial and State Legislators Collection compiled by volunteers and staff at the State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Des Moines, Iowa.

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Former Legislator Of Hawarden Dies

Charles J. Zylstra of Chicago, former well known resident of Hawarden, died in a hospital last Friday morning following an operation. He had been in poor health for some time.

Mr. Zylstra came to Hawarden from Holland when a young man and at one time was rural mail carrier. Later he was in business in Hawarden. During the depression he introduced script money in Hawarden and other towns in this territory. At one time he represented Sioux county in the lower house of the legislature. He is survived by the widow and six children.

Funeral services were held Monday in Chicago.

Alcester Child Critically Hurt

The condition of Curtis Sandvall, 3 1/2-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Wilton Sandvall of Alcester, was reported as "critical" Wednesday afternoon at the Hawarden hospital where he was taken Monday afternoon after being struck by a car reportedly driven by Miss Bertha Eckman of Alcester.

Mrs. Sandvall had taken lunch to her husband and when she walked into the field she left the boy in the rear seat of the car. In the meantime the boy got out of the car and was struck by the other vehicle.

The child suffered a fracture of the right leg and a basal skull fracture according to the attending physician at the Hawarden hospital.

Mrs. Sandvall is a niece of Joel Olson of Hawarden.

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1946

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ZYLSTRA, FORMER SIOUX COUNTY REPRESENTATIVE DIES IN CHICAGO

Charles J. Zylstra, former democratic state representative from Sioux County, died in a Chicago hospital on Friday, November 29 following an operation. Funeral services were held in Chicago. He is survived by his widow and six children, all living in Chicago.

Mr. Zylstra came to Sioux County from Holland when a young man. At one time he was rural mail carrier, and later went into business in Hawarden. In 1931, in the depression, he was elected to the state legislature as one of the first democrats ever elected from Sioux County. He gained a great deal of publicity at that time as an advocate of script money, a plan based on the theory that script currency would liquidate itself at the rate of 2 percent sales tax on every transaction.

In 1934 Mr. Zylstra ran for Governor in the democratic primary and made a very good showing. He

Board The Goat At John Kroon

Archibald, the Civic Club goat, is in for a comfortable winter in a warm barn on good feed. The club Tuesday night decided that he would be sent to the John Kroon farm, and that the absent members drawn from the hat would each pay \$1.50 for its keep. It can fairly be assumed that a penalty of \$1.50 for being absent is better than taking care of a stinking goat.

This month will have five weeks between meetings so five names were drawn: Richard Kroon, Martin Moeller, Eben Brink, Art V.d. Berg, and Garrit De Mols. Special mention should be made about the fact that Art V.d. Berg's boys are tickled to have the goat around—maybe the club should give it to Art's boys.

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29 Vets Take Farm Course

The Veterans Training Class met Monday night and established that night as their regular meeting time.

With 29 Veterans present the meeting got under way with Mr. Laird explaining the program to men who were there for the first time.

At the executive committee meeting last Thursday evening Neal J. Mol was chosen chairman. He presided over the meeting Monday night in getting a group approval on topics for discussion in their classes. These topics will be set up currently seasonal, which will bring more interest from the group on the subject at hand.

The problem at hand arises from limitations on size of classes and teaching time. A class is specified to include 20 veterans. Sioux Center has the only Vocational Agriculture department in Sioux County and that is desired for the program.

Now, if the number of veterans desiring this training, increases there will have to be something done to localize the training classes. Each community must cooperate in giving these fellows a chance to make up for what they lost out on while in service.

If any community has anything to offer for this purpose please notify Mr. Laird at Sioux Center high school.

Redeker Injured In Denver Factory

The Jongewaard relatives received word the past week that Mr. Lou Redeker of Denver, Colo. had been in an accident there and had received a fractured leg. The accident happened in the factory where he is employed. He is a patient at the Porter hospital at Denver and expects to be hospitalized for about ten days. His leg has been put in a cast and he will be unable to work for about three months.



CHARLES J. ZYLSTRA

then worked for the social security department until entering the federal tax department.

During recent years Mr. Zylstra has been employed by the federal revenue department in Des Moines and Chicago.

Hawarden Plays Here Fri. Night

BEAT R.V. 40 TO 19

The Sioux Center Indians won their fifth straight game Friday by defeating the Rock Valley Rockets there, 40 to 19.

The Sioux Center hoopsters kept their opponents from scoring by displaying a good tight defense which afforded Rock Valley with only long shots.

Lehudis started the scoring for Sioux Center with a set-up shot. De Wit followed with two in a row. The game started out to be a close one but the McCormick men soon found the range and carried the brunt of the battle till the end of

