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January 21, 2015

THIS WEEK:

Governor Samuel Kirkwood:

Five days from Iowa Governor Inauguration to Being Elected to U.S. Senate

BACKGROUND:

The 16th General Assembly convened at the Capitol in Des Moines on January 10, 1876, and adjourned March 16, 1876, a 67-day session. The Senate had nine Democratic members, 35 Republican members, and six Independent members. In the House of Representatives, there were 70 Republican members and 30 Democratic members. There were 150 members in the 16th General Assembly. Joshua Newbold served as the Lieutenant Governor presiding over the Senate. John H. Gear served as Speaker of the House of Representatives. Iowa's population at the 1870 census was 1,194,020.

Governor Samuel Kirkwood:

Five days from Iowa Governor Inauguration to Being Elected to U.S. Senate

From the Senate and House Journals

The inauguration ceremony for Governor Kirkwood, according to the journals, took place quickly and for the most part unplanned. The January 13, 1876, journal entry reveals some discussion between the House of Representatives and Senate concerning the use of the "Opera House" for inaugurating Governor-elect Kirkwood and Lieutenant Governor-elect Newbold. This was Kirkwood's third term although it

was a non-consecutive term. He had served as Governor from 1860 to 1864 and had been re-elected in 1875.



Samuel Kirkwood

The House of Representatives refused to concur with the Senate concerning the use of the Opera House, so at 11:30 that morning, a Joint Session convened in the House Chamber and immediately recessed until 2:00 p.m. It would seem the planning of the inaugural events took place in that short amount of time (if you interpret the journal literally). In two and one half hours, they informed the Governor and Lieutenant Governor elects of the plans, located a Reverend for the prayer, located a local band, and informed Chief Justice Cole of the ceremony.

At 2:00 p.m., the Joint Convention reassembled the Sergeant-at-Arms and announced the Governor and Lieutenant Governor elects, who took their seats as the Mechanics Band of Des

Moines played "Hail to the Chief."

The Inauguration Ceremony continued with a prayer by Reverend Dr. Murphy and music by the band playing "Listen to the Mockingbird" (perhaps a favorite song of Kirkwood or it may have been one of a few songs the band could play).

The Governor and Lieutenant Governor elects took their oath of office, administered by Justice C. C. Cole. Governor Kirkwood delivered his Inaugural address. The band played "Serenade." The Joint convention was dissolved at 3:50 p.m.

The lack of importance and planning given this inaugural could have been because the 16th General Assembly knew what was to happen in just a few short days.

On January 18, 1876, at noon, a Joint Convention convened in the Hall of the House of Representatives for the purpose of comparing House and Senate journals on the election of United States Senator. In those days the United States Senators were elected by the State Legislature.

The whole number of votes cast were 145 of which:

Samuel Kirkwood received 108

Shepard Leffler received 37

Samuel Kirkwood was declared the Senator elect from Iowa for the term of six years from March 4, 1877.

Within a few short days Samuel Kirkwood was sworn in as Governor and then elected to serve in the United States Senate.

When Kirkwood left to serve in Washington, Lieutenant Governor Newbold served out



John Gear

Kirkwood's term. We did not have a Lieutenant Governor from February 1, 1877, until the election of Frank Campbell as Lieutenant Governor in October 1877, taking office in 1878. John Gear was elected governor and also took office in 1878.



Joshua Newbold

