

OUR WAR GOVERNORS

MEN WHO PILOTED THEIR STATES IN THE WAR CRISIS.

The Armies of Single States Held the Balance of Power, and Leaders Like Morgan, Curtin, Andrew and Morton Placed Them in the Union Line.

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Each of the troops of the Union armies hailed from six of the northern states. These six states sent to the field over 1,700,000 men. Four of them sent over 500,000 men each. Each of the four states had under arms at all times a force equal to the number mustered under the Union banners on account of the great warfields of 1862. New York mustered and put into the field nearly 500,000; Pennsylvania, 385,000; Ohio, 313,000; Illinois, 250,000; Indiana, 195,000; Massachusetts, 146,000. These magnificent armies...

Suppose New York had taken a stand of that kind and cut off New England? If either Indiana, with its 300,000, or Ohio, with over 300,000, had joined hands with Kentucky what a stumbling block would thus have been cast in the way of a united north, and if the three greatest of the soldier-producing states—New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio—with their million actually put under arms and a million more in reserve, had declared for peace the north could not have made war at all. Yes, these great states were each nations in themselves, had armies of their own and could have made a respectable showing as things were in warring independent war. They need not have waged war at all, openly to have changed the whole aspect of the Union struggle.

The governors who rallied and marshaled their people on the side of the old flag were heroes in their spheres as truly as were the war president and the field commanders in theirs. Each was commander in chief of the state militia. There were factions and conservative elements to subdue or convert, legislatures to inspire and an undercurrent of persistent anti-war feeling to neutralize. When the crisis came on the 15th of April, all hearts stood still until the states had spoken, and for the time the several governors were masters of the situation. The technical legality of the president's call was questioned, but no matter about technicalities if the governors chose to recognize the call.

The first troops to reach Washington were the Pennsylvania and Massachusetts men, dispatched without a moment's useless delay by the famous "war governors," John A. Andrew and Andrew G. Curtin. In these two executives the extremes of Union sentiment were represented. Andrew was a radical, Curtin a conservative. Andrew's soldiers traveled farthest, were the best equipped and spilled their blood first. Curtin's men were nearest the scene of danger and reached there a day ahead of the Massachusetts boys, but they had been snatched up on the spur of the moment and hurried off without arms or equipments, anyway and anyhow, so that they got there to show the good will of the Pennsylvanians and their governor. Andrew had been at work for months. The day after he took the gubernatorial chair, Jan. 5, 1861, he sent out secret messages to the neighboring governors stating that he believed from advice from Washington that the national capital was in danger and that he would put the state militia on a war footing. He advised the others to do the same. When the president's call was issued, he had five regiments, one battalion and one battery ready to march.

For four years Andrew was a leader among northern governors in rallying supporters to the Union cause. He wrote the address issued by the governors to the people during the dark days of 1862. Yet his vehement Unionism and the passions of the hour did not blind him to the claims of justice. He advocated emancipation as sound policy, but he opposed arbitrary arrests for political opinions as an uncalculated trunnion. Curtin, who was later to vie with Andrew in warlike zeal and activity, was wholly unprepared for war when it came. He labored until the last to preserve tranquility. When that proved hopeless, he bent every energy to the prosecution



MORTON. CURTIN. KIRKWOOD. tion of the war. When the state was threatened by invasion, he convened the legislature and got authority to raise a corps for home defense. That was the origin of the Pennsylvania Reserve corps, which afterward made a famous record in the field. Curtin, like Andrew, was governor through the whole war.

In the west the dangers threatening the national capital were not the first questions after the fall of Sumter, but the defense of their own extensive border. Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa all lay contiguous to so-called border states, where the sentiment was divided and hostile feeling was believed to hold sway. Kirkwood of Iowa, Yates of Illinois, Morton of Indiana and Dennison of Ohio were the peers of Andrew and Curtin as leaders in the great uprising of 1861. Kirkwood answered President Lincoln's call for 75,000 militia by pledging "every fighting man in the state and every dollar of her money and credit." Yates, whose war nickname of Dick became a household word, converted the legislatures of Illinois on April 13, the day the Confederate guns opened upon Sumter. He had the forethought to garrison Cairo and forestall a Confederate movement for the seizure of that valuable position. It was from Yates that Grant received his first recognition and appointment.

Morton offered the president 10,000 soldiers and convened the Indiana legislature to secure authority for a war loan of \$2,000,000. The legislature afterward went back on the "war governor" and refused to receive his messages, but he in turn calmly ignored the legislature and borrowed money privately to carry the state bonds and

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pay expenses, throughout the war he was a champion of the Kentucky Unionists and gave them arms for home defense.

Dennison of Ohio held office but one year of the war period, 1861, yet he made a record that carried him into a cabinet position in Lincoln's second term. He placed McClellan in the field and secured his appointment as general. Dennison, like Morton and Yates, had a keen eye for the border. He urged the government within forty weeks after the outbreak to seize prominent points in Kentucky and secure control of its railroads in order to head off the operations of the Confederates. His advice in that direction was not heeded for months, but he succeeded better with regard to West Virginia. After obtaining McClellan's appointment to a Federal command in Ohio he secured the extension of the department so as to include West Virginia and promptly threw Ohio troops into that territory. During eight months of actual war he put into the field 105 regiments, and the state was credited with an excess above her quota of 30,000 volunteers. But the zeal of those governors whose states were in danger of invasion did not outrun that of those in territory remote from the hostile border. Washburne of Maine declared that the south had no right to secede without a change in the constitution and pledged all the "resources of the state in men and money" to support the Union. Washburne was the grandson of a Revolutionary soldier and a descendant of the first secretary of the Plymouth colony. He was in office from 1861 to 1863 and is known to history as Maine's "war governor." Goodwin of New Hampshire brought his state into line by raising \$300,000 private money and organizing 10 regiments. Goodwin was the first "war governor" of the state.

Rhode Island's first "war governor," William Sprague, marched to Washington at the head of a regiment.

Buckingham of Connecticut ordered the militia to put its ranks in war trim as early as January, 1861, and on his own responsibility purchased equipments for 5,000 men. When Sumter fell, he led off at a war meeting in Norwich with a fervid war speech and a subscription of \$1,000 to raise troops. He was Connecticut's only "war governor."

Fairbanks of Vermont worked up a Union demonstration as early as Jan. 8, 1861, by having salutes fired in the chief cities and towns of the state in honor of the old Union. He inspected the militia rolls and equipments and responded to the president's call in April with a regiment armed with borrowed rifles.

In New York Morgan was the first "war governor." He held office until January, 1863 and sent out 223,000 soldiers during that time. He also placed New York harbor in a state of defense. Seymour succeeded Morgan. While a private citizen he had exerted himself to raise soldiers. He was in the executive chair when Lee invaded Pennsylvania in 1863 and sent 12,000 militia soldiers fully equipped to Harrisburg ahead of Ohio, Delaware, New Jersey and Maryland. Pennsylvania, even, was behindhand in the matter. There were over 100 New York regiments in Pennsylvania during the Gettysburg campaign, and while the state was drained of volunteers and militia the draft riots broke out in New York city.

Far-off Kansas, the great war state, was led by Robinson, who organized the most of its regiments in 1862-3. Ramsey of Minnesota was the "war governor" until 1864, when he was succeeded by Colonel Miller, who was elected while at the front, sword in hand. Harvey of Wisconsin was the only "war governor" who "died in harness." He was drowned at Pittsburg Landing, where he went to direct an expedition for the relief of the wounded soldiers from Shiloh.

The brisk little soldier state of New Jersey was led by Governor Olden, who toiled night and day to keep his commonwealth abreast of the times. During his war term of 21 months he was absent from the capital only two days. Blair, the only "war governor" of Michigan, in January, 1861, promised the president the whole military power of the state to maintain "Liberty and Union, one and inseparable, now and forever." He summoned the legislature together by a proclamation on April 2, and, before it convened the May following, called out 1,000 volunteers.

The governors who assumed office after the great crisis of 1861 had passed took their share of the burden of keeping the ranks full and of holding the people to their task. Some of them missed fame; others shared it with their predecessors. In Maine Washburne was succeeded by Coburn and afterward came Corry. Berry and then Gilman took the chair in New Hampshire. In Ohio Todd and then Brough each had a term during the war period. Fairbanks of Vermont gave way to Holbrook, and Holbrook to Smith. In Wisconsin Salomon took the chair made vacant by Harvey's tragic death, and Lewis followed Salomon. In Iowa Stone succeeded Kirkwood in 1864, and in New Jersey Parker succeeded Olden.

Delaware had two governors in the war period, Burton and Cannon, and Rhode Island two acting in place of Colonel Sprague, Bertlett and Cozzens, and one regular incumbent, Smith, from 1863 to 1865. As between themselves there was glory enough to go around for the "war governors," but the people and history have forgotten too soon how the leaders to the great ship of state were piloted through the terrible storm of war.

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