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NEW ENGLAND'S CHOICE FOR PRESIDENT

Personality of Senator John W. Weeks, Mentioned for Nation's Highest Office

Senate's Foremost Expert in Finance and Authority on Naval Affairs

A CERTAIN weekly publication recently asked: "Why Weeks, anyway?" and then went on to inquire editorially: "Are Massachusetts and New England really interested in Senator Weeks's candidacy?"

The best answer to the first inquiry, his admirers say, is: "Why not Weeks?" Folks in New England hold the junior Massachusetts Senator in very high esteem. They regard him as a very able man and qualified in every way to hold the office of President of the United States. And moreover, THE SUN's recent canvass shows that he is well and favorably known throughout the country and one of the favorites for the Republican nomination next year.

One of the strongest arguments for Mr. Weeks, in addition to the fact that he is probably the foremost expert on finance in the Senate, is that he is by early training and continuous study thoroughly acquainted with naval affairs, and unless the signs of the times are read wrongly, the next man to be Chief Executive of the United States will be obliged to devote a considerable portion of his time to the marine branch of our defenses. Mr. Weeks is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy. He had two years of work in the navy and spent ten years in the Massachusetts Naval Brigade, the last six of which were as commanding officers. During the Spanish war he commanded the second division of the auxiliary warships.

In answer to the second question, one can safely say that Massachusetts is really interested in Senator Weeks's candidacy, and moreover throughout New England the feeling is steadily growing that he can be safely entrusted with the great problems which are bound to arise during the next Presidential term. It is not exactly the time of year for New Englanders and their summer visitors to be discussing the next campaign, and it cannot be said that there has been any "spontaneous" demand for the nomination of Senator Weeks as yet. His movement has not been launched. He has not said he will allow the use of his name, but it is known that once he gives the word New England will go to the national convention ready to vote in a body for him.

John Wingate Weeks is just 55 years old, in the prime of life, a strong man mentally and physically. He is 6 feet 1 inch tall and weighs 230 pounds. He has served continuously in Congress since 1905 and since March 4, 1913, as Senator from Massachusetts. He is a native of Lancaster, N. H., the son of William D. and Mary Fowler Weeks, and a direct descendant of Leonard Weeks, one of the early New Hampshire pioneers.

Leonard Weeks came from England about 1650, and curiously enough, there is a house at Greenland, N. H., occupied by another J. W. Weeks, that was built by one of the Senator's ancestors of bricks brought from England. It was a dwelling and fort combined and is still in a sound and habitable condition.

The Senator's father cultivated land, but did other things as well. He was not a lawyer, but was Judge of Probate for many years, and none of his decisions was ever reversed by a higher authority.

As a boy Mr. Weeks worked on the farm, and at the age of 13 he gathered maple sap in the early spring, carrying it in buckets with a yoke over his shoulders. He studied morning and night, and when only 16 years old was teaching in the little district schoolhouse not far from his home.

He hoped to complete his education at Dartmouth College, but an accident resulted in his going to the Naval Academy instead. This is how Mr. Weeks happened to go to Annapolis, as he tells it himself:

"Walking three miles to the school one morning, from our home in the country to the village of Lancaster, I was halted by the Congregational minister. I wasn't acquainted with him, because my parents attended another church. His stepson had gone to Annapolis and had failed in the entrance examinations. Senator Henry W. Blair of New Hampshire therefore asked him to get some one else."

"The principal of the Lancaster Academy had mentioned me. So far as I knew there had never been a sailor in the Weeks family, and I had not thought of the navy as a profession. However, I went to Annapolis, was admitted and was graduated at the age of 21."

As a cadet at the Naval Academy he could put up a 112 pound dumbbell with his right hand and then kneeling on one leg could lift an 87 pound dumbbell with his left hand and slowly put it over his head. Another feat consisted in heaving 180 pounds, the equivalent of a barrel of flour, in the air, then lowering it to his shoulders and then raising again, arm high. By the standards of modern measurements Senator Weeks was unquestionably one of the strongest men in the United States at that time, and he still retains much of his unusual strength.

He was graduated from the Naval Academy in 1881 and spent two years at sea, serving on the U. S. S. Richmond. In those days there was no navy to speak of and more cadets were graduated at Annapolis than were needed. The ten highest men in Mr. Weeks's class of seventy received commissions, but he was not one of them and was mustered out of the service.

He went to Florida and did some surveying, running out the lines of the old Spanish grants under contract. He did not know anything about surveying, but needed the money to live on. Before long he was made land commissioner of the Florida Southern Railroad.

One morning while he was eating breakfast with a gentleman in Florida Mr. Weeks was introduced to his daughter, Miss Martha A. Sinclair, who had just arrived from the North. In 1885, or within a year, and the young woman were married.

Soon after the wedding a friend of the young man from Boston visited Florida and Mr. Weeks told him he meant to leave Florida because the climate was not suited to the health of his wife. A little later this friend wrote him the brokerage firm of Hornblower & Page in Boston



SENATOR JOHN W. WEEKS.

was being dissolved, owing to the death of Mr. Page, and that there might be an opening for him.

Mr. Weeks hurried to Boston, and although at that time he could scarcely distinguish between a share of common stock and a first mortgage bond he was impressed with the opportunity presented. He borrowed some money to enter the firm and it took the name of Hornblower & Weeks. A seat on the Boston Stock Exchange was pur-

chased, Mr. Hornblower acting as floor man while the junior partner kept the books and waited on customers in the office.

The firm had one clerk then, but he was also the errand boy. Within a few years the house prospered greatly and soon had offices in nearly all the large New England cities and at points in the West.

Love of the sea, which had been bred in Mr. Weeks

during his term at Annapolis, could not be squelched, and it was only natural that he should join the Massachusetts Naval Brigade, being a member for ten years, from 1890 to 1900. For the last six years he served as commanding officer of the organization.

When the Spanish war broke out he was appointed a Lieutenant in the volunteer army, commanding the second division of some auxiliary vessels, and was assigned to

assist in the protection of the Massachusetts coast. His command consisted of a miscellaneous collection of converted tugs, ferryboats, old yachts and a monitor or two left over from the civil war, but none of them ever fired a gun at an enemy ship because none appeared in the vicinity of Boston.

Senator Weeks began his political career in the city of Newton, a suburb of Boston, where he has always resided with his family. One evening a party of neighbors called on him and said it was his turn to serve as Alderman. He did not want the job very much, but consented to stand for election merely because his turn had been reached.

He continued in office for three years and was subsequently chosen Mayor of the city for two terms. He thought when the second term expired that his political work was over, but Congress was mentioned to him and it sounded very attractive. This was chiefly for sentimental reasons.

A great-uncle for whom he was named served in the War of 1812 and afterward was elected to Congress for several terms. Mr. Weeks thought of his Uncle John and accepted the Republican nomination in the then Twelfth Massachusetts district. He was elected in November, 1901, to the Fifty-ninth Congress by a plurality of 8,500, and took his seat in December of the following year.

During his first term in Congress he was a member of the following committees: Banking and Currency, Expenditures in the State Department. In the Sixtieth Congress he was a member of the same committees and the Committee on Agriculture. He supported the Aldrich-Vreeland currency bill and was a member of the conference committee which made material changes in it and added the important clause providing for the creation of the monetary commission, of which Mr. Weeks was appointed a member.

Mr. Weeks was reelected to the Sixty-first Congress, and was chairman of the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads. He took an active part in getting reported from that committee and enacted into law the bill establishing postal savings banks. He framed and had charge of the forestry bill enacted into law at that session.

He was reelected to the Sixty-second Congress, and introduced the bill for the protection of migratory and insectivorous birds, known when enacted into law as the Weeks-McLain bill. While a member-elect of the Sixty-third Congress he resigned to take his seat as Senator, March 4, 1913, in the Sixty-third Congress.

In every way Mr. Weeks has demonstrated his legislative capacity. When he was chairman of the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads in the Sixty-first Congress he was practically a new member. This committee makes annual appropriations of more than \$200,000,000, and when he brought in the bill for the first time there was much curiosity to see how he would get along with it.

His conduct won the admiration of the House and he defended it successfully at every point, the complicated bill being adopted by the Senate without an amendment. As a member of the Committee on Agriculture Congressman Weeks successfully managed the passage through the House of the White Mountain-Appalachian bill. He also managed the postal savings bank bill in the Republican caucus and in the House.

When naval matters have come up Mr. Weeks has always been ready to lend a hand to any project which met with his approval. He has always favored the development of our merchant marine.

In the Senate Mr. Weeks is a member of the following committees: Banking and Currency, Post Offices and Post Roads, Philippines, Coast Defences, Conservation of National Resources, Forest Reservation and the Protection of Game, Public Health and National Quarantine, Indian Depredations.

Among the important speeches he has made in the Senate was that on the Underwood-Simmons tariff bill when he referred to President Wilson's statement that a "Democratic tariff will whet the industrial wits," and added:

"Such a tariff is much more likely to sharpen the appetites of the workers than the wits of the employer, who in many cases, as can be easily demonstrated, is obliged to work his wits overtime in order to make a living under present conditions and rates of duty."

Another speech was on the currency bill. The subject of finance is one of which the Senator is a master, and he treated the measure exhaustively, securing the adoption of many important amendments.

He believes the railroads of the country cannot be properly administered without intelligent Government supervision, but he opposed the trade commission bill and the Clayton bill, his views being summarized in an address made at Chicago on December 8 last. He was heartily in favor of the establishment of a military reserve, an increase in the size of the army and the reorganization of the regular army to give the proper proportion of infantry, field artillery, cavalry, engineers, signal, sanitary troops, the needed ammunition and supply trains. Senator Weeks strongly opposed the shipping bill, so called, providing for the Government ownership of merchant vessels, and took a conspicuous part in that memorable fight.

Massachusetts feels that Senator Weeks is a big man and that such a man must be selected for the Presidency, not a geographical expression.

Several years ago Mr. Weeks aspired to create a fairy-land on top of a bleak mountain in northern New Hampshire. It was in the fall of 1911 that he began the work on Mount Prospect at Lancaster, his native place, and in a year's time he had crowned the summit of this 3,000 foot hill with a two-story lodge, which with its red tile roof can be seen for miles.

At this splendid country home Senator Weeks, his wife and two children are now passing the hot months.