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CATRON INTERVIEWED.

New Mexico's Delegate Gives Elkins a Character.

Catron Talked Freely to a West Virginia Newspaper Man While he Was East Recently.

Hon. Thomas B. Catron, delegate elect from New Mexico, the leading attorney of the territory and formerly attorney general and United States district attorney, was in this city this week. Being asked by a reporter about the election in New Mexico, he replied that it was "carried by the republicans, and that his majority was 2500." And added that he was the first republican delegate elected in eight years.

Being asked what was the prospect for the admission of New Mexico as a state, Mr. Catron said: "This brought me east, and I am glad to find the prospects so good. I do not think there is any doubt about the passage of the bill. New Mexico is clearly entitled to admission. It should have been admitted twenty years ago when Mr. Elkins was our delegate. He made the most able and exhaustive speech on the subject that has ever been made, and carried the measure though both the house and the senate by two-thirds vote, but the bill received an amendment in the senate, there was no time to take it from the speaker's table in the house, and the measure was lost."

"By the way," the reporter asked, "since you have mentioned Mr. Elkins' name, how long have you known him? I see he is now a candidate for a seat in the United States senate from West Virginia. Tell me some thing about his life in the west, his standing as a lawyer, citizen and business man out there."

Mr. Catron replied: "I have known Mr. Elkins intimately for more than thirty years. We graduated in the same class at the Missouri university. In college Mr. Elkins was studious, and a hard worker, popular with the professors and students; though the youngest man in the class, he took the highest standing. He began life without anything but his education and profession. During his residence in New Mexico I was intimately associated with him. Mr. Elkins enjoyed the largest practice of any lawyer in the territory, and was considered, up

to the time he moved to West Virginia, one of the ablest lawyers in the west. He also practiced law in Washington after going out of congress, both before the supreme court of the United States and in the departments. Mr. Elkins was president of the first national bank of Santa Fe for thirteen years, during which time it enjoyed unexampled prosperity and success. It was then one of the most successful banks in the west."

"What official position did Mr. Elkins hold while he resided in New Mexico?"

"He was a member of the legislature, district attorney, attorney general, United States district attorney under President Johnson and Grant, and was twice elected to congress, the last time while he was in Europe, and in the face of declination to be a candidate. In all these positions Mr. Elkins acquitted himself with ability and honor. I think it may be fairly said that Mr. Elkins, during the time he lived in New Mexico, was the most popular man in the territory. He was esteemed, respected and admired by members of his profession, and the people in general. He was an exemplary citizen, public spirited and exerted a wide influence in public affairs. When he was made secretary of war by President Harrison, there was rejoicing all over New Mexico at his promotion. The leading business men of Santa Fe, without distinction of party, the board of trade, chamber of commerce, all the federal and territorial officers joined in a hearty telegram to him of congratulation. After his marriage to Miss Davis, now nearly twenty years ago, he always claimed West Virginia as his home. He began his investments in West Virginia in 1879, and has never voted elsewhere."

"I notice in connection with his candidacy that some of the opposition papers are attacking him and making some insinuations or charges against him during his stay in New Mexico, especially in connection with Mexican land grants and the star route cases."

Mr. Catron replied: "Yes, I have seen some of these statements. They were also made in a vague and general way about the time he was appointed secretary of war. Mr. Elkins, however, never took any notice of them. Mr. Elkins was confirmed by the senate immediately and without objection. Had there been any foundation for these charges, this would have been impossible. Indeed,

nobody believed them, nor do they now."

The reporter asked: "Do you know anything about these insinuations or charges against Mr. Elkins, and if there is any foundation for them?"

Mr. Catron replied with some emphasis: "I know there is no truth in them and no foundation for them whatever. I will state further, and every member of the bar and every good citizen of the territory who lived there then will bear me out in saying that during the time of his residence in New Mexico, Mr. Elkins was never guilty of any wrong doing, irregularity or impropriety in the practice of his profession or in private life, and no reputable person will be found to say that he did. It is so easy to make vague and general charges against public men, and especially men of positive convictions like Mr. Elkins, about matters claimed to have occurred more than twenty years ago, and 2000 miles away. I have often thought that Mr. Elkins should make some denial of these insinuations, but he said he had no answer for mere generalities."

Mr. Catron further replied "that there is no foundation for the charge about star route matters. During the time Mr. Elkins resided in Washington, after his second term of congress, he practiced law for two years, and while doing so he became the attorney for a number of western corporations and people, among them mail contractors and corporations engaged in transporting the mails, and as attorney, argued their cases before the department, and, when it was necessary, in the courts, but he never had any interest directly or indirectly in any contract for carrying the mails; he simply discharged the duties of attorney in connection with the interests of his clients, as any other attorney would have done, and nothing more, and neither the postmaster general nor the attorney general, nor any other official of the government, ever claimed that he was even in any way guilty of any irregularity in connection with the star route matters, or Mexican land grants."

The reporter asked: "How about the Mexican land grants?"

"I am very glad you ask this question, as I am able to set this matter at rest. Mr. Elkins, during his residence in New Mexico, purchased a number of Mexican land grants, but in no instance did he do so except where there was a good title, and where the grant had been con-