

THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNORS OF ARIZONA

JOHN PHILO HOYT

BY EUGENE E. WILLIAMS

The Western Reserve in northeastern Ohio furnished the fourth governor of Arizona in the person of John Philo Hoyt, who was born on a farm three miles south of Austinsburg, Ohio, October 6, 1841. His parents, David and Susanah (Fancher) Hoyt, gave him the Biblical name of John. A member of his family states that John was not in love with farm work, but if set to a task he could be depended upon to finish it however much he might detest it. In his boyhood days he was a fat, chubby, rosy-cheeked lad whom his playmates called "Pork." When he went away to school he gave his name as John P. Hoyt. Later when asked what the "P" stood for he replied, "Philo," and Philo it always remained.

As a boy and young man he worked on his father's farm and attended school at the Grand River Institute at Austinsburg.

In 1862 young Hoyt enlisted in the Union army serving through the Civil War in the 85th and 87th Ohio Infantry, and the 2nd Ohio Artillery. During part of this time he was acting-quartermaster general. He was discharged from the army in the spring of 1866.

While in the army he employed every opportunity to study law. These studies enabled him to graduate from the Ohio State and Union Law College at Cleveland, Ohio, in July, 1867.

After graduation he was admitted to the bar and immediately went to Vassar, Tuscola County, Michigan, where he practiced nine years. During this period he served two terms as prosecuting attorney. In 1873 and again in 1875 he served as representative in the Michigan legislature, the last term as Speaker of the House.

W. A. Hoyt, a nephew, says that his uncle was a classmate of the son of Wm. M. Evarts, Secretary of State in Hayes's

cabinet, and that during the middle seventies Evarts used his influence to have Hoyt appointed to a diplomatic position at Vienna, but Hoyt refused.

Hoyt became interested in Arizona and on May 21, 1876, President Grant appointed him Secretary of the Territory. While serving in this capacity he codified the laws and prepared them for publication, receiving a fee of \$1,000.

When Safford's term expired the logical person to succeed him was the man who had so ably served the territory as Secretary and who had codified the laws. Recognizing his qualifications for the position, President Hayes appointed Hoyt governor, and he took the oath of office April 5, 1877.

The period of Hoyt as secretary and as governor of Arizona was a time of discovery, exploration, and development of the territory, although the problem of repelling attacks of the Indians was still unsolved. Events were constantly taking place that were of vital interest to the territory. Some of them are the following:

Tombstone: It was not many months after Hoyt became governor that a typical prospector, Ed Schieffelin, started on a prospecting trip. To go from any place that was not protected by force of numbers, or by a military force, was to invite death, or at least great hardships. The entire country was without settlers, water was scarce, and savage Indians lurked behind many a stone. It required a brave-hearted and hardy man to venture any distance from his fellow men alone. Such a man was Schieffelin.

As the prospector was about to start, someone in a jocular manner asked him where he was going. He responded that he was going in search of stones.

"Well, the only stone you'll find is your tombstone," was the encouraging rejoinder.

The warning was unheeded by the doughty prospector, for he persisted in his search until he discovered the mines which made him famous. He named his mine "Tombstone" and recorded his claim at Tucson, September 3, 1877.

Bisbee: About the time that Tombstone was discovered and developed another mining district was opened at Bisbee. Though devoid of the romance of discovery, and the notorious history of its neighboring town, the Bisbee district be-

came one of the greatest mining camps in the Southwest, and the largest producer of copper in Arizona.

Newspapers: It was during Hoyt's term that two of Arizona's leading newspapers, the *Salt River Valley Herald* and the *Arizona Silver Belt*, were established, although the *Arizona Miner* and the *Arizona Citizen* had long served the people as distributors of the news. All four of these papers or their successors are still important journals in the state.

The *Salt River Valley Herald* was the first newspaper in Phoenix. It was issued weekly and edited by Charles E. McClintock. The owners were Mr. McClintock, J. J. Gosper, Secretary of the Territory, and Charles W. Beach. This adventure presented its first issue in January, 1878. The following year its name was changed to the *Phoenix Herald*, and it became a semiweekly and later in the year a daily. It was afterward absorbed by the *Arizona Republican*, now the *Arizona Republic*.

The *Arizona Silver Belt* was the first newspaper in Globe and came from the press May 2, 1878. It was founded by Judge Aaron H. Hackney, who was its editor for twenty-one years.

Though Governor Hoyt may not have had a hand in these enterprises they reflected the prosperity of Arizona during his term of office.

On June 12, 1878, Hoyt was succeeded as governor by General John C. Fremont. It is said that the Secretary of the Interior requested Hoyt to resign in order that Fremont might be appointed to the position.

Shortly after leaving the governorship of Arizona Hoyt was tendered the governorship of Idaho. After investigation he was convinced that Governor Mason Breyman, whom he was to succeed, had been unfairly removed, and refused to accept the appointment. Not long afterward he went to Washington, D. C., and prevailed upon President Hayes to reinstate Breyman.

Leaving Arizona in 1879, Hoyt went to Washington Territory where he served as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court from 1879 to 1887. The latter year he was placed in charge of the Dexter Horton & Co. Bank at Seattle and was with the institution for some time. It was during this period

that he and Arthur A. Denney developed the Fremont tract which became a thriving addition to Seattle. In 1889 he was elected a delegate from King County to the Constitutional Convention of Washington, serving as president of the convention. From 1889-97 he again sat on the bench of the Supreme Court of Washington as Associate Justice. In 1898 Judge C. H. Hanford appointed him Referee in Bankruptcy where he served until 1914. During this period he was reagent of the University of Washington (1898-1902), and then Professor of Law in the same institution (1902-7). He also served as President of the Washington State Pioneer Association.

After withdrawing from business Judge Hoyt lived a quiet retired life in his east Seattle home where he died August 27, 1926.

His wife was Miss Lettie J. Lewis whom he married in 1869. They had three children: June, Harold F., and Arthur L.

