

Maurice Maschke Dead of Pneumonia; Active in G. O. P. Politics 40 Years

POWER MET TEST UNDER M'KISSON

Grocer's Son Worked Quietly, Strengthened Fences With Senator Burton.

(Continued From First Page)

contracts, deeds, mortgages and surveyors' maps. There were few clues to guide the searcher through unrelated masses of documents. A good searcher knew where to look; a poor one didn't.

Mr. Maschke was a good searcher. He was a man of distinctly intellectual tastes, although they were accompanied by a wide streak of earthiness. He used his intellect for practical ends. Title-searching, politics and bridge were the main occupations of his life.

In 1895 his family went to Europe, where Mr. Maschke's brother, Dr. A. S. Maschke, wanted to take post-graduate work in surgery. Maurice was invited to go but preferred to

stay here and continue his work. He lived in a small apartment downtown and spent his off hours with the poker playing, racy group of men to be found in the resorts of the district.

Soon afterward he began to share an apartment with Fred L. Taft, the father of Kingsley A. Taft, former state representative. The senior Taft was a close political associate of Robert E. McKisson, formerly mayor and determined to be mayor again. Taft was his campaign manager.

Mr. Maschke wanted to go into politics, but Maschke refused to be persuaded. He was too interested in making money, in playing cards, in attending the theater, in clothes, in food, in attending parties with his friends, he said.

He Met McKisson—and Started Upward.

"It's more fun than anything you'll ever get a chance to do," Taft told him. "Besides, if you get into politics and are smart enough you'll get an 'in' at the Court House. You'll get a lot more business."

Mr. Maschke went with Taft to meet McKisson, a good-looking, demagogic, dynamic, suave individual who was said by his friends to be one of the great political figures of the city. McKisson liked him and agreed to become a precinct worker in the McKisson organization.

His precinct was home ground. It was heavily Jewish. Everyone knew him and everyone liked him. Soon he became a precinct captain. It was remarked that he was smart, hard working, plausible and that he meant what he said. His entire political code was that when it was in his later years. It was "Be loyal and grateful to your friends and compromise with your enemies when it is politically expedient to do so."

Mr. Maschke fitted unostentatiously into the political picture. He was at home in the saloons where most political business was transacted but he was not out of place in a parlor, as many of his more blatant co-workers were.

Suddenly Became Boss.

McKisson was elected mayor and his organization controlled the city. Mr. Maschke was made a deputy county recorder under Fred Saal and from this post he crept quietly to the leadership. When he became boss no one knew. The city awoke to the fact some time in 1908.

"He was always smart," a friend, who saw his rise to the post of boss, related. "But you couldn't pick out any one thing he did and say that's where he started to get power. He was obviously a comer, but you never knew that what he had done was important until long afterward. He had the gift of picking people I guess more than anything else."

Mr. Maschke was in the background when McKisson and Mark Hanna clashed in the memorable fight over the United States Senate seat which President McKinley

wanted Hanna to have but which McKisson had had the audacity to try for. The fight culminated in the buying of members of the Ohio Legislature, which appointed senators by both. McKisson lost by a few votes. He lost more than the senatorship because the fight on Hanna cost him the great bulk of the Republican following in the city. He was defeated for mayor by the veteran Democrat, "Long John" Farley, in 1909.

For several years Mr. Maschke was lost in the changing patterns of political alignments. He was in all elections, he participated in all the forays, battles, brawls of the Hanna-McKisson quarrel, but he was part of a movement and not quite an individual.

He Won for Friend by a Grimace.

His facility in manipulating people even in his earliest days is illustrated best by a story he told of himself. "Saal was running for re-election as recorder," he related. "I was his opponent, well known, liked and had three sons, all well known and liked. The four lived in the same precinct and I was sent there on election day to try to get a few votes for Saal. 'I didn't know very many people in the precinct and when I got there I found Saal's opponent and his sons and a lot of friends driving voters to the polls. I saw them all getting out the vote, all right. There wasn't very much I could do all by myself.'"

"I stood as close as I could to the booth. When voters came by I'd work my face into the most piteous expression I was capable of and say, 'Oh, mister, won't you please vote for me. I've just got to get one vote in this precinct or it means my job.'"

Saal carried the precinct.

Very Early in the Century Mr. Maschke was boss of his own precinct and one adjoining, heavily populated by Negroes.

By an alliance with "Starlight" Boyd, the Negro political boss, Mr. Maschke became boss of two more. Absolute dominance of the four precincts made a powerful factor in party councils and at county conventions.

Won "Starlight's" Loyalty.

How Mr. Maschke began his alliance with Boyd isn't definitely known except that Mr. Maschke threw his four precincts behind a Boyd candidate in a strategic election and won "Starlight's" undying gratitude.

One of Mr. Maschke's closest friends is "Starlight," used to say, baring his two gold teeth in his famous ear-to-ear grin. "I don't know anyone who is more my friend than Mr. Maschke."

The McKisson-Hanna feud dominated Cleveland, to the continued disorganization of the Republican party, even after the death of Hanna.

The disorganization, promoted by the success of Tom L. Johnson, who kept City Hall the lone Democratic office.

Mr. Maschke was a McKisson man but he eventually sidestepped his alliances with the McKissons without baring himself to charges of "ingratitude and disloyalty." He accomplished the transfer through Theodore E. Burton, then a young Congressman, who had studiously avoided embroiling himself with either faction.

Burton, astute, grave, intelligent but lacking in the usual personal graces which make for success in politics, eventually emerged as one of several young leaders whose ambition it was to turn the Hanna machine and the McKisson machine into one organization. Burton succeeded ultimately, although the others failed.

Maschke and Burton Joined in Stratagems.

For many years thereafter Burton was the real head of the party here, although his right arm was Maschke. It was difficult sometimes to tell where Burton began and Mr. Maschke left off.

From 1894 to 1907, when Burton left Washington at the request of President Theodore Roosevelt to run for mayor of Cleveland against Tom Johnson, the flaming Democrat, Burton and Maschke worked out several little stratagems which served as notice to party workers generally that new hands were beginning to hold the reins.

One of the things Burton did at Mr. Maschke's suggestion was to offer a resolution at the 1905 state Republican convention at Dayton that the convention cordially endorse President Theodore Roosevelt and less cordially Senators Foraker and Dick.

Foraker and Dick at that time controlled the party in the state. To state Republicans they ranked very close to the Devil and it was the ranker of heresy for a young Republican congressman, a rather dull-seeming one at that, to mention their names with phrases like "less cordially."

Lukewarm in Mayoralty Race.

The offer of the resolution was only a slight incident in the convention, which was as tumultuous as all state conventions were then, but it helped to create a different impression of Burton. It wasn't thought before that he would have courage enough. When Burton was persuaded to run for mayor it was thought that Maschke would come forward eagerly to assist his friend.

"I'm against it," Mr. Maschke said at a meeting of party leaders. "Johnson is still strong. Burton can't get votes enough in the right places to beat him."

Republican leaders were astonished. Later they were patronizing as Burton began his campaign with every seeming chance of success. Mr. Maschke kept his own opinion and refused to have any leading part in the campaign although he advised Burton and worked for him.

Burton took a 10,000-vote licking from Johnson. The Republicans were astonished, none more so than Burton.

The defeat did Burton no real harm and he went on to the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, in one of which he had a seat for the rest of his life, except for a six-year period between 1914 and 1920. Burton became a "statesman" and devoted himself to "constructive matters." Politics he largely to Mr. Maschke, whose reputation for shrewdness and knowledge grew nightly with the spread of his prophecy.

Advice Helped Burton Win Senatorship.

It was Maschke who pushed Burton into the senatorship. Burton, disheartened by his defeat for mayor, contemplated quitting politics.

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"Don't do it!" said Maschke to his statesman friend. "The very people who voted against you for mayor would be for you for senator. (He was right in the case of the Plain Dealer, which fought Burton.) Taft's paign for mayor and supported his fight for senator.) Besides, this is the right time. Senator Foraker is through, and the state will resent Charles F. Taft's attempt to be elected merely because his brother is the new president."

So, managed by Maschke, A. N. Rodway, and John H. Orgill, who had "friends" throughout the Legislature, Burton went to Columbus and addressed the Legislature (which then named the senators).

Maschke was right about Foraker. That senatorial war horse had been badly hurt by Theodore Roosevelt's break with him and by the revelation that the Standard Oil had been a "client" of his.

Foraker stayed just long enough to split the Cincinnati organization between himself and P. J. H. Taft, who had named President William H. Taft's campaign for the White House. And at the psychological moment the Burtonites "dared" the president-elect to come out in behalf of his brother. President Taft refused to take a hand, and the Legislature swept Burton to an overwhelming triumph—a triumph which was one of Maschke's greatest, too.

When Burton went to Washington as senator, Mr. Maschke was his accredited mouthpiece here. Maschke was something more. He was "Republican boss" and it began to dawn on many individuals that he had been for some time.

Political writers for the newspapers, with whom Mr. Maschke was always on the friendliest of terms, even though most of the papers spent a large part of their time denouncing him, helped Maschke to become the recognized boss. They acclaimed him in such phrases as "a rapier in the dark," until belief grew to a legend years later, that Maschke almost never went wrong.

Mr. Maschke did go wrong several times but he usually went wrong with eyes open. Defeat usually could be traced to individuals who won the Maschke support because they were friends and invoked the code of "everything for a friend."

Mr. Maschke usually knew they would be defeated because he was one of the shrewdest election prophets bred in his lifetime in Cleveland.

When Maschke had been established as boss for several years he would never let a man run if he didn't think he had a chance to win. He was more careful of picking friends. But if a friend's son or brother, his young manhood or his early political days asked a favor it was almost never refused.

Loyal in Scandal.

Maschke's indictment in the treasury scandal of 1932 was ultimately traced to his code of "everything for a friend." Alex Bernstein, son of "Ozzy" Bernstein, who helped Maschke in his early days, got into trouble as chief deputy county treasurer.

Mr. Maschke was told of a shortage in the county treasury, he said on the witness stand. He not only signed a note for \$120,000 to help pay the money back, but permitted Bernstein to be named county treasurer for ten months, a rather precarious position for a man who had had one serious, admitted shortage.

"The Bernsteins had always been my friends," Mr. Maschke said. "I couldn't do anything else."

Mr. Maschke was acquitted by three judges, sitting en banc, who said there was nothing in the evidence to connect him with the taking of money from the treasury. He lost prestige in the city, however, from which he never really recovered.

County Prosecutor P. L. A. Lieghey, now appellate judge, ridiculed Mr. Maschke's contention in court that he helped pay money back out of friendship. Lieghey maintained that no one would pay a large sum of money without having been in some way responsible for the original shortage.

Friends said, however, that Mr. Maschke was entirely capable of doing such a thing. As a matter of fact, Mr. Maschke did not know that the county treasury shortage which, it developed, was over \$500,000, was due to embezzlement. He was told, and to his later regret he

believed what his friends told him without making any investigation of his own, that there was a deficit in the treasury because Bernstein had accepted some bad checks from taxes from a man who died before the checks could be made good.

Ran His Boss for Mayor—and Won.

After Burton's defeat at Johnson's hands the Cleveland Republicans resigned themselves to watching Johnson in control at City Hall forever. In 1909, when the time came to select a new candidate for mayor Republicans said despairingly that there wasn't much use in spending money to get a candidate's name printed on campaign literature.

Mr. Maschke astonished them by saying he had a man who could beat Johnson.

"It's my boss," he said to his inquirer.

His "boss" was Herman C. Baehr, a smiling but rather stolid gentleman who came from one of the West Side German families, who had been elected county recorder and who had appointed Mr. Maschke as his chief clerk.

The Republicans guffawed. Baehr could hardly make a speech and they couldn't conceive of a campaign being run from a German turnverein, where Baehr was a popular figure, and in his element.

"Baehr will win," Mr. Maschke said positively. "Johnson has been running for eight years. That's too long. The people would be glad to elect someone else if they had half a chance. Baehr will get votes on the West Side where Johnson always had his strength."

The Republicans shook their heads, but they remembered Maschke's prophecy of Burton's defeat. They told him to go ahead.

The Prophet.

The campaign that followed was without precedent. Baehr was ultimately reduced to making three-minute appearances, in which he smiled his beaming smile and read from manuscript someone had prepared for him. He loved people, he said, and it was true. He did love people.

The heavy campaigning was done by young orators who preceded and followed Baehr.

Johnson made his usual brilliant campaign. He thought so little of Baehr that he stopped campaigning three days before the election, although he was the first to know that normally the last three days of a campaign are the most important. He left town.

"Not a chance," the Democrats said, smiling, as Baehr continued his amiable rounds.

Baehr defeated Johnson decisively. For twenty years following when Maschke made a pronouncement his auditors usually said, "Yes, sir."

In 1910 Maschke was appointed county recorder to succeed Baehr and held office for ten months, when he was elected to the position.

In 1911 he was appointed United States collector of customs by President Taft, who was within a few months of going out of office.

Political Strategy Helped Nominate Taft.

The greatest of all the political strategies executed for Maschke literally swung the G. O. P. presidential nomination from Theodore Roosevelt to William Howard Taft in the 1912 split, and was perhaps the cause of the Bull Moose defection, since Roosevelt justified his third party because he had been "robbed" of the party nomination at Chicago. Maschke's part of it was accomplished without due attention four months before the convention, right here in Cleveland.

The Roosevelt-Taft fight divided Republican brother against brother and helped Maschke's election. Maschke stuck with Taft, being a "regular" at heart, but many of his party councilors such as Walter D.

Meals, James K. Garfield and John D. Fackler went with Roosevelt. To avoid political bloodshed, Maschke proposed that his Bull Moose friends concentrate on the primary popular vote and let agreedly "acceptable" Republicans named by him run for delegate to the county convention without contest.

The Bull Mooseers agreed, feeling they would win everything in this red-hot Roosevelt territory. So Maschke men got the county convention seats—and voted as Maschke designated for a resolution to instruct the county delegation to the state convention for Taft. By the margin of these Cleveland delegates, Maschke, the Ohio convention voted to instruct the state delegates at large for Taft—regardless of Roosevelt's victory in the Ohio popular vote. And almost by the margin of the eight Ohio delegates at large, the national convention chose Taft over Roosevelt.

Maschke's reward was appointment by President Taft to the customs collectorship, emblem of party leadership locally.

When his appointment as collector of customs was finished Maschke never again attempted to hold office, beyond party office. He became formal party leader, ultimately formed a law firm and made a fortune, which later shrank in the depression of 1930-34.

The turn of the political wheel and the ascendancy of the Democrats began about 1922 to dim Mr. Maschke's luster. No man could have stemmed the Democratic tide but his followers, like all followers, began to murmur against his leadership. In addition the criticism of the Maschke machine politics, rounded like all machine politics on patronage and the control of slum wards, began to occupy greater prominence. One by one, henchmen of the powerful machine

were accused in graft revelations. Some were convicted. Some weren't.

The net result in the public mind, regardless of the truth or falsity of the charges, was that, as newspapers had been maintaining for several years, "Maschkeism" was corruption.

Miller Dealt Blow.

The beginning of the discrediting of the Maschke machine was in 1922 when Ray T. Miller was elected county prosecutor, the office that all machines try hardest to control. Miller made a tremendous record as prosecutor, using the Maschke group as the most available fodder.

Miller convicted Councilman Thompson (Continued on Page 1, Column 1)

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