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CAMDEN LIBERALS FEEL BLUE

Stephen Parnall Sturgis Turned Down In East Kent

RICHARD L. GOSNELL IS THE CHOICE OF THE CONVENTION

Three Candidates were Running For The
Position and All were Confident ---
Sturgis Disappointed

GOSNELL MAY BE LOAD TO CARRY

Mr. Sturgis Goes Farther And Says that Candidate Looks
Like a "White Elephant" --- More Spicy Talk
From Enthusiastic Delegates

Possibly the most hotly contested fight for the position of standard bearer for the Liberal party ever witnessed in East Kent, took place in Ridgeway yesterday. A convention was called for the purpose of selecting a candidate to contest the riding in the next Provincial election against Philip H. Bowyer, M. P. P., who now so ably represents that constituency in the Legislature. It was a very good convention. It was attended mostly by delegates, and all parts of the riding were very well represented. There were not many delegates appointed, however, and thus the audience by no means filled the hall—in fact the hall was not half filled. There seemed to be no complaint on that score, however, and all seemed to be satisfied with the representation.

It was recognized from the start that there were at least three men in the field who were willing to go into an election fight against one of the most popular and able representatives that a constituency ever had, and it turned out at the convention that although there were several men named for the honor, the fight dwindled down to the three recognized rivals. These were ex-Warden Stephen Parnall Sturgis, of Dresden; Richard L. Gosnell, of Blenheim, and Walter Ferguson, of Thamesville. It was very interesting to watch how the events transpired.

STURGIS CONFIDENT.
A Planet representative met Mr. Sturgis at the O. P. R. depot in Chatham at nine o'clock yesterday morning. A friendly conversation ensued on the way out to Ridgeway and Mr. Sturgis was asked if he would be the candidate. He turned out to be marvellously correct. No, no, he would not be the candidate, in fact, he would not even be an aspirant for the position. He had too much to do at home, and he did not have the time to devote to it. This was his answer, in spite of the fact that he had just a few days ago made a canvass of almost the entire constituency, asking for support towards securing the nomination. The reporter, knowing this at the time, indulged in a quiet smile. Finally, after Mr. Sturgis had been told how his name had been heralded abroad as the only man who would win, he admitted with characteristic modesty that he was in the race and—well, he was pretty sure that he was going to carry the day at the convention. He didn't want to blow—he never does—but he was feeling very confident—not only of carrying the convention, but of winning the election too. He had his little band of delegates from Dresden along with him, looking after their tickets, both on the train, and at the hotel in Ridgeway. They were all corralled in the smoker, and evidently knew what it was up to them to do, and they were armed to the teeth with arguments why their man should get the nomination. Everything looking rosy, and The Planet representative was almost on the point of asking Stephen Parnall if he had a photograph handy in his pocket, thinking it would be a good move to publish the cut of the man who was going to represent East

Kent in the next Provincial Parliament.

STURGIS IS KNOCKED.
The first jolt came at Blenheim. The Planet saw a number of delegates at this point, while waiting to make connections. He unsuspectingly asked one of them what Stephen's chances were, and the delegate laughed. Moreover, he called over a few of his friends to enjoy the joke. They all laughed. This was funny. One look at the beaming countenance of Stephen Parnall, however, and The Planet was reassured. There couldn't be any mistake. Those Blenheim fellows must be all wrong.

THE WIRE HUM.
Upon the arrival at Ridgeway the fun commenced. All three candidates immediately mingled with the delegates, and by the time the convention started, their best work had been done, and the race was on to a bitter finish. Ferguson was supported by a strong following from Oxford and Thamesville, Sturgis had the north and Gosnell the south. It was not hard to see that there was considerable dissatisfaction in the ranks. The party seemed to be split up in factions, all working against each other, and although the nomination was not unanimous, it was not doubtful from the talk on the street after the meeting, if the factions are really welded together. In fact the talk was very much the opposite.

THE NOMINATIONS.
It was long after one o'clock, the appointed hour, before the convention opened. When President Ferguson called the meeting to order, it was an anxious lot of men who faced him. It is only fair to say that there was no caucus. The man chosen was not chosen by any executive of men, but he was the choice of the whole party in convention. If there was any mistake, it cannot be placed at the doors of any appointed body of men. The party as a whole are to blame. There were no preliminaries. The President, after calling the meeting to order, asked at once for nominations, and they resulted as follows:

STEPHEN PARNALL STURGIS—Nominated by Mr. Forshee, seconded by Capt. Ribble.

RICHARD L. GOSNELL—Nominated by Mr. Young, seconded by John Cochrane.

ANGUS GILLANDERS—Nominated by Mr. Crosby, seconded by Dr. McPhail.

WALTER R. FERGUSON—Nominated by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Blake Mills.

DR. WILEY—Nominated by Angus Gillanders, seconded by Mr. McGuire.

E. E. PARROTT—Nominated by W. Saddington, seconded by Mr. Smith.

DR. MCPHAIL—Nominated by J. C. Black, seconded by James Webster.

JOHN COCHRANE—Nominated by A. McDermid, seconded by George Fisher.

CAPT. RIBBLE—Nominated by W. Barrie, seconded by R. Burns.

DAVID CAUGHILL—Nominated by J. K. Laird, seconded by Peter Haggert.

L. J. REYCRAFT—Nominated by

Rev. Mr. Long, seconded by W. McDonald.

When the above names had been submitted, the President declared the nominations closed, and proceeded to distribute the ballots.

Someone in the audience suggested that all the candidates be heard, and this seemed to be the feeling of the meeting. The President, who throughout conducted a fair convention, gave way and called upon the nominees to take seats on the platform. He then called upon them in reversed order, and short five minute addresses were given.

REYCRAFT DROP OUT.

Mr. Reycraft was first. He was not a candidate. He would be proud to be the representative for East Kent, but circumstances would not permit. He hoped they would make a wise selection.

CAUGHILL ALSO.

David Caughill had not even heard his name. He reminded the convention of the time at Blenheim when all the candidates resigned, leaving Mr. Howatt and himself in the field, and he had said at that time that he would stand if no one else would. He understood that there were men at this convention who would stand and so he would not. He would give way to them. He hoped that the people of East Kent would elect the man chosen by the convention.

SPEAKS FOR STURGIS.

Capt. Ribble said that two years ago he had attended a convention in this same hall, and he had gone home dissatisfied with the choice this time. He would not stand for the nomination himself, because there were men at the meeting who wanted it. He was there to help one of them to get there, and he was going to do all in his power to get his man in at the convention. He thought there was more purity in politics years ago than there is now. He thought the Liberal party was entirely to blame for the reverse in East Kent at the last election. There was one gentleman at the convention, a neighbor of his—Mr. Sturgis—who could redeem the riding. He is a fighter from away back, and if he starts out to win, he will win. He'll be the next man to go to Toronto.—Cheers.

SOME GOOD ADVICE.

John Cochrane was glad to have the opportunity to thank the people who supported him in the last election. There were lots of Reformers who did not vote for him. He knew lots of them. He hoped it would be different this time. There should be no jealousies. There has been too much sectionalism. He hoped they would settle on the candidate who would get the most votes. He would not be that candidate.

Dr. McPhail was surprised at the result of the last election. He would not be the candidate, but he was sure that after the next two years were up, that Mr. Graham would be the Premier of the Province. It was an idea of his own. He thought Whitney went back on the School Bill, also on the License Bill. He hoped the people would sink all petty differences. He would not be a candidate, but would withdraw.

EXIT MR. PARROTT.

E. E. Parrott was on deck again. He would not be a candidate for the position this time, however.

Dr. Wiley was quite willing to fight in the ranks with the rest of the boys.

BRIGHT YOUNG MAN.

Walter Ferguson announced that he would be a candidate for the nomination. If he were not selected, he would be willing to fight just the same. He had been asked to allow his name to stand, and he was going to do so, come what may.

It appeared from the talk around the town yesterday, that Mr. Ferguson's chief claim to the position was that he was a nephew of the late Robert Ferguson, who represented the riding so well for such a great number of years. He is also a young man, and there was a strong feeling that young blood should be introduced. He is a good appearing young man, and creates the impression that

he is honest. He made a straightforward appeal to the convention, and was loudly applauded. There is no doubt that if he had received the nomination, he would have acquitted himself with credit. He had a strong following, who did their best to press his claims, but they were over-ruled. There are still many among the staunchest Liberal workers who think that he should have received the nomination.

Angus Gillanders was glad the time for speaking was limited. He thought that the people had come together for a serious purpose. It was up to the party to redeem the riding. He withdrew.

PERSONAL AMBITION.

R. L. Gosnell was given a fairly good reception. He had been solicited by a great many friends to run. That was not the only reason that he was going to stand. He had a personal ambition, but chiefly to rid the riding of East Kent in the Legislature, and this was one of the important reasons why he was going to allow his name to stand. He believed he would be elected if he got the nomination. He had fought in every election, and he did so because he wanted to, and believed in the ultimate triumph of the Liberal party. He would use fair means. He would want united action. He would fight to the limit himself, but he would lean heavily on the party for support. Whoever was appointed, he would be found in the ranks when the next election rolls around.

MAY BE A LOAD.

From his speech, it appeared that Mr. Gosnell wanted the nomination, not only as a reward for his services, but to gratify his personal ambition. Moreover, he seemed to think that the party should help him to gratify this whim on his part, as he said that he would lean heavily upon them for support. The feeling on several sides was that he would lean so heavily that he would be a load to carry.

THE PLOT THICKENS.

Stephen Parnall Sturgis, in measured tones, impressive and solemn, said that he was glad at the turn things had taken. Some wondered what he meant, but he explained that he was glad that there was no caucus, and that the candidate would be selected by the convention proper. For thirty or thirty-five years he had been attending conventions, and each time the work of the convention had been done before the meeting opened. For eight or ten years he had been pressed to allow his name to stand in convention, but this was the first year that he had decided to do so. He also had a personal ambition to represent the riding. His municipal experience had acquainted him with all the haws which the Legislature enacts.

"If I should receive the nomination," he said, "I will be your representative, and if I am not you will never be bothered with me again. If I get it, I will try to see you as often as I can before the polling day."

THE FIRST JOLT.

Mr. Black, from the audience, wanted to hear from Mr. Sturgis what he would do if he did not receive the nomination. Would he work for the man who was chosen? All of the other candidates had said that they would, but Mr. Sturgis had omitted that part. Mr. Sturgis said that he would work for the man who was chosen, "but, of course," he candidly admitted, "I would not work for him as hard as I would for myself," and the people believed him.

Mr. Sturgis spoke with much confidence, making several pauses for effect. He had seen the most of the delegates, and he was certainly given the applause of the day when he was announced for his speech.

At this point, Col. Atkinson, M. P. P., of Simcoe, was asked to take a seat on the platform, and he did so amidst great applause.

CRISIS APPROACHES.

The ballots were then distributed and the following was the result of the first polling:

Gosnell—92.
Sturgis—33.
Ferguson—33.

The president announced that there would have to be another poll, with Mr. Ferguson dropping out.

A CRITICAL MOMENT.

At this point, Stephen Parnall's face was a study. It was very red

Continued on Page Eight.

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