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C. C. Hutchens

A Strong Endorsement of A Strong Man—READ IT

The Hon. W. C. Dowd, Ex-Speaker of the House of Representatives and Editor of The Charlotte News Powerfully Presents Candidacy of Hon. Cameron Morrison for Governor.

The early history of Cameron Morrison is one of struggle with difficulties that were hard to overcome. He was born in Richmond county in 1860, and his youth was spent during a period in which an education was not easily obtained by any save those of wealth. The free schools of the country community in which his parents lived were open for only a month or two during each year, and the best Cam could do was to attend one of these schools in a log school house for a brief period each year. His father was a carpenter, and a man of great industry; but in those days wages were low and work noticeably obtained.

At about eight years of age, after the death of his mother, he was placed under the tutelage of M. C. McCaskill, a noble old Scotchman, who ran a little school at Ellerbe Springs in Richmond county. Board was obtained for him at a nearby home, where he helped about the house and on the farm during the hours when he was not in school. At the end of the first year McCaskill moved his school to the old Terry school house near Roberdel factory in Richmond county. Board was secured for young Morrison with a farmer named C. P. Dawkins, who lived about two miles distance from the school. Cam worked on the Dawkins farm at odd times. After a year at this school it became necessary for him to go to work. His father was struggling to support three other small children in addition to Cam. Work was obtained in Wolf Pit township, in a country commissary and on a farm. This continued for a year or two, the boy earning his support.

Then for four years, with one year intervening in which he clerked in a grocery store, he attended school in the town of Rockingham, having the great pleasure for the first time in several years of boarding at the same place with his father. He was a hard student and at the end of that period his teacher, the late William Carroll, declared him to be well prepared for college. A college career was impossible. It was absolutely necessary for young Morrison to go to work and help his father take care of the other three children. All who knew the struggling youth knew that he would have worked his way through college but for the necessity of helping to support the family.

Denied his cherished ambition to go to college, young Morrison went to work. During the next four or five years he worked at different jobs, and young Morrison approached manhood, all the while studied with great avidity. Among other things, he worked as a clerk in the office of the register of deeds for a year at a salary of \$90 per month. At other times he taught in the free schools at \$40 per month.

Young Morrison's father was during this period, a republican. He had been a brave Confederate soldier, and during the days of Vance he was a democrat, and helped to redeem the state; but, like a great many good men have done, he fell out with the democratic party over some local matter, and became a republican. Thus, as he was under republican environment. In 1890, and before he was 21 years of age, he joined his father in a local political fight and went to Raleigh as a delegate to a republican state convention. He returned home and shortly thereafter informed his father that he could not be a republican; that if the republican party ever got in power in North Carolina, they would ruin the state. The elder Morrison was at that time postmaster of Rockingham, and Cam was working with him in the postoffice for his board and clothes. He was at the same time studying law and was about ready to go to a law school. He had hoped that his father would help him, but Cam's change of politics, of which he had notified his father, caused a temporary, but bitter breach between them. Upon his father declining to do anything for him, he left the postoffice and secured a position as teacher in a public school and made sufficient money to attend the law school of Judge Dick in Greensboro. He studied law under Judge Dick for twelve months. A few months after Cam was 21 years of age, he publicly announced that he was a democrat. This was before he obtained his license to practice law.

Young Morrison was licensed to practice law in February, 1892, and immediately opened an office in Rockingham. His knowledge of the law, combined with unusual abilities as an advocate, quickly obtained for him high rank at the bar. These qualities were supplemented by literary attainments that were a surprise to those who did not know him intimately. These were the result of a wide reading that had been carried on privately by young Morrison through the years of struggle.

The bar at that time in Richmond county was an unusually able one, composed of Major John D. Shaw, Hon. James T. LeGrand, Franklin McNeill, the younger Shaws, Judge Walter H. Neal, T. C. Guthrie and others. Morrison was not only a powerful advocate and a trial lawyer without superior in his county, but his general ability was such that his services were sought by the larger business interests of his county, by many of which he was retained as general counsel.

Morrison's natural love for the public service manifested itself early. In the spring of 1892, in the democratic convention, he made his first democratic speech. This speech was made under dramatic circumstances. The whole county knew the struggle Cam was having on account of his father's resentment at his course. He commenced his speech by a quotation from Demosthenes: "Man is born not unto his parents alone but unto God and his country as well." Richmond county was at that time overwhelmingly republican. In the campaign which followed, young Morrison canvassed the county. His speeches marked him as a young political leader of great ability.

The campaigns of 1892 and 1894 have been largely forgotten, but they

were bitter and dangerous struggles in the eastern section of the state. Richmond county was overwhelmingly republican. The democrats were trying to prevent the negroes from voting under the technicalities of the Payne election law. If it could be enforced, the negroes could be prevented from voting, and the county could be carried democratic. The populist revolt commenced in 1892 and this increased the difficulties. Young Morrison was threatened with violence time and again in both campaigns. In 1894 he not only spoke all over Richmond county but in surrounding counties, and in Richmond county came near being killed in Beaver Dam township, where he challenged over 200 negroes for illegal registration and prevented them from voting. On the night of the election he and a republican leader had a desperate encounter over Morrison's campaign speeches. They fought fairly. Both were good men physically, and they fought till both had to be put to bed. The times were dangerous and Morrison lived for years in constant danger of personal violence. In 1896 he was a candidate for the state senate. He canvassed that entire section of the state for the party, but went down in defeat as all other democrats did that year in his district. The fusionists had the state from '94 to '98 and during that period conditions became intolerable in the state.

In Richmond county they were desperately bad. There were forty negroes in office in the county, thirteen negro justices of the peace, a negro on the county board of education, and two on each township school board. The injuries were full of negroes. Lawlessness was widespread throughout the entire eastern part of the state. Morrison commenced to organize the white people with the utmost care. He was made chairman of the democratic executive committee of Richmond county in 1898 and proceeded early to organize each precinct in the county, which then included the present county of Scotland, and was seventy miles long. Mr. Morrison mercifully denounced the wrongs and malfeasances of the county officials. In the midst of the violence and danger of the times Morrison lived in constant danger of deadly encounters with the desperate negro leaders of that day. Finally, in defense, not for aggression, as is generally supposed, the white men donned their red shirts. Morrison had been made supremely happy by the fact that his father had quit the republican party and joined him. From that day the elder Morrison became a power in the fight for democracy and white supremacy. In this campaign young Morrison's speeches were powerful in their denunciation of the republican misrule, but so convincing and appealing that hundreds of republicans joined the democratic party and put on white supremacy buttons. At one speaking at Ellerbe Springs one hundred and thirty-five republicans joined the democratic party. On Saturday before the probably the most spectacular Red Shirt parade that ever took place in the state. The parade was headed by the elder Morrison and another Confederate soldier bearing a banner with the inscription, "The Whites Will Rule the Land Or Die." The republicans realized that they were in a death grapple, and every known means of intimidation was employed. Governor Russell had issued a proclamation denouncing the Red Shirts of Richmond and Halifax counties, ordering them to subside, and threatening those two counties with martial law. This was followed by a great meeting at Rockingham at which young Morrison denounced and defied Russell, and his threats. At the meeting at Rockingham on Saturday before the election, Mr. Morrison and Senator Tillman of South Carolina made speeches that stirred the people as they had never been stirred before. The county was carried by a majority of over a thousand.

A few mornings after the election the Raleigh News and Observer declared that "The spirit early manifested in Richmond county that the 'whites would rule the land or die' spread to adjoining counties, finally permeated the whole east, carried thirty counties, and the state for democracy."

Cameron Morrison aroused that spirit in Richmond county and was the unquestioned leader of the movement.

At the same time he was leading the turbulent fight in Richmond county, he went from time to time to other counties in the state and spoke for white supremacy and democracy.

The state was safe. After the election a banquet was given at Laurinburg in honor of Senator Simmons and Mr. Morrison, respectively state and county chairmen. At this banquet Senator Simmons said that "the first real hope in the campaign in the state had been inspired in him by the spirit of Richmond county under the splendid leadership of Cameron Morrison, and that when the history of the movement for white supremacy came to be written no man would be given greater credit for the victory than Cameron Morrison. Later on, the people of Rockingham gave Mr. Morrison a banquet in recognition of his services to the county."

When the democratic county officers were inaugurated in Richmond county, Morrison was carried from office to office in the court house and made to speak from a table in every office.

Following the victory in 1898 the fight for the constitutional amendment was inaugurated. There were many who doubted the wisdom of the movement. Morrison was one of those who vigorously advocated it. He was one of the young men who stood with Simmons in Raleigh for weeks urging the bill through the legislature. There is small wonder that Senator Simmons is for Mr. Morrison in his candidacy for governor after their experiences together in those stirring times.



HON. CAMERON MORRISON

Mr. Morrison has never held public office except in the senate branch of the general assembly in 1901, and as mayor of the town of Rockingham. Mr. Morrison's friends, however are not urging his candidacy on the grounds of party service rendered in the campaigns of 1892 to 1900 alone, but because he has continued his services to the party and the people of the state up to, and including, the last special election in the Ninth congressional district.

Since the redemption of the state from Russellism and Butlerism, Mr. Morrison has been in every important party council where grave policies were considered and adopted. In the last presidential campaign he was elected at large, and canvassed the state for Woodrow Wilson from Pasquotank to Swain at his own expense. He has been chairman of the platform committee a greater number of times than any other living North Carolinian. He has always fought back all ins and schemes to attach unsound politics to the democratic party, and caused the party to adhere to a policy of constructive upbuilding. He has consistently and successfully fought to hold the party true to a policy of education, health, protection, good roads, scientific agriculture, and encouragement to every legitimate industry of the state. No man in North Carolina has had more to do than Morrison with the shaping of the policies of the democratic party in the state since the defeat of Russell and Butler. In the great conventions and party councils he has met in debate the strongest intellects in North Carolina, and has principles of statesmanship that has enabled him to lead the party in the adoption of wise policies. In the last twenty-eight years he has made more speeches for the democratic party than any private citizen in the state.

For ten years more or Mr. Morrison has lived in Charlotte, having removed here for the practice of his profession. In Mecklenburg, as in Richmond, county, he has ranked among the leaders at the bar.

In advocating the nomination of Cameron Morrison, his friends confidently assert that he is eminently qualified to discharge the important duties of the high office of Governor. Without influence in youth, he is, by wide reading and deep study, a man of culture and education. As a lawyer he stands among the foremost of the profession in the state. He has appeared in many of the most noted

lawsuits of his time and always with great credit to himself and his cause. While not a business man in the usual acceptance of the term, he has in his professional career come in contact with all lines of business activity, having been employed as counselor and attorney by many of the most important business organizations of the state. He has through his professional activities acquired a general knowledge of the state industries. He is absolutely friendly to and unprejudiced against any industry in which our people are engaged, but is subservient to no industry or class.

It is safe to say that no North Carolinian of the day has a profounder understanding of the fundamentals of government than has Mr. Morrison. As a political debater he has no superior in the state. As the candidate of the democratic party, and therefore, the leader in the state campaign, he would uphold the principles and direct the forces of the party as we believe no other man in the party in the state could do. As Governor he would give the state safe, sound administration, devoted to the education of her children, the protection of the health of her people, the development of her industries and the construction of good roads; he would foster and encourage every legitimate industry of the people. He would stand for a spirit of co-operation and brotherhood, and against class hatred; for the maintaining in North Carolina of that high spirit of devotion to the basic principles of Americanism that has ever been one of the state's most pronounced characteristics.

W. C. DOWD,
Charlotte, N. C.

(Advertisement).

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