

Ephraim F. Morgan (1869-1950), Governor, Papers A&M 1660

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1921-1938



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Biographical / Historical

Ephraim Franklin Morgan (January 16, 1869-January 15, 1950) served as West Virginia's 16th governor, 1921-1925.

Governor Morgan was born on a farm near Forksburg, Marion County, and was a descendant of Morgan Morgan, the first white settler of western Virginia. He studied at Fairmont State Normal School and earned his law degree from West Virginia University in 1897. After establishing a law practice in Fairmont, he later served with the First West Virginia Regiment during the Spanish-American War. He held a number of public positions in Fairmont including city solicitor and judge in the Intermediate Court. He married Alma Bennett in 1902.

In 1915, he became a member of the state Service Commission, but resigned in 1919 to run as a Republican candidate for governor. He narrowly defeated Arthur B. Koontz in the 1920 fractious election.

The bitterly divisive Mine Wars in southern West Virginia consumed much of Morgan's administration. During this time, he favored the state's coal operators and sought to squelch the miners uprising and the formation of strong labor unions by sending the WV State Police to the coal fields. As the violence escalated President Harding eventually intervened by sending federal troops to Mingo and Logan counties.

Under Governor Morgan's administration the legislature created a sinking fund to provide financial assistance to new programs, namely a new road system. He also oversaw the building of a state capitol and a Governor's Mansion. The new Capitol was completed during the last month of his administration, and he and his family moved into the Mansion just days before his governorship ended.

Morgan continued public service after leaving the Governor's Office. He worked as a solicitor for the U.S.

Department of Commerce spending much of his time in Washington. In 1940 he ran for U.S Senate, not making it beyond the primary. He died at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland.

Scope and Contents

Newspaper clippings concerning the administration of the 16th Governor of West Virginia, the launching of the U.S.S. West Virginia, and the building of present Executive Mansion

Separated Materials

4 photos separated to A&M 4168, Panoramic Photos Collection:

Dedication Class, Scottish Rite Reunion, 1916/10/10-1916/10/13; 1916/10

Senators of WV, Regular Session; 1921

House of Delegates, Regular Session; 1921

Meeting of Mine Inspectors Institute of America, Charleston, WV, 1927/05/03-1927/05/05 (photographed on Hawks Nest Rock); 1927/05

Related A&M Collections

203, 1660

Keywords

Charleston.

Maps.

Politics and government.

United States Navy - USS WEST VIRGINIA.

West Virginia - Governors.

Politicians -- United States

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Morgan, Ephraim Franklin, 1869-1950

West Virginia (Ship)