

## NEWS DEPARTMENT

### *President Harding in Seattle*

The last public address delivered by President Warren G. Harding during his long journey through the United States was in Seattle on the afternoon of Friday, July 27, 1923. The address was devoted to Alaska, from which great Territory he had just returned. That occasion and the address have become important items in the history of the Northwest. On the journey from Seattle to San Francisco, the President became ill and on the evening of Thursday, August 2, he died at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco.

The news of that tragic event so overwhelmed the Nation, that little attention was given to one of the minor events of his visit to Seattle which really had peculiar significance in the history of the Pacific Coast. Roy O. Hadley, formerly Secretary of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, conceived the idea that, as a President of the United States was visiting Alaska for the first time in history, it would be most appropriate to add an inscription to Seattle's statue of William H. Seward.

Mr. Hadley thought that portions of Seward's prophetic speech about the Pacific, delivered in the United States Senate on July 29, 1852, would be especially appropriate. He secured the cooperation of the Seattle Park Board, custodians of the statue and of Judge Thomas Burke and Professor Edmond S. Meany, Chairman and Secretary, respectively, of the original Seward Statue Committee. To secure an international Pacific flavor, help was also obtained from the China Club of Seattle, through its Secretary, J. C. Herbsman. The sculptor, James A. Wehn, put aside all other work to hastily prepare two beautiful bronze tablets and have them in readiness for the President's return from Alaska.

The statue by Richard E. Brooks, sculptor, was originally unveiled in 1909, during the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. On the bronze rim of the pedestal are the words, "Let us make the treaty tonight." The original inscription reads: "William Henry Seward, Patriot and Statesman, as Governor of New York, United States Senator and Secretary of State, gave to the people of this country a long and useful life culminating in his purchase of Alaska on March 30, 1867, in commemoration of which

the citizens of Seattle have set up this monument in the year of our Lord, 1909."

The two supplemental tablets, neatly placed in the base of the pedestal, contain these words: "The Pacific Ocean, its shores, its islands and the vast regions beyond will become the chief theater of events in the world's great hereafter," and "As war has hitherto defaced and saddened the Atlantic world, the better passions of mankind will soon have development in the new theater of human activity." At the bottom of each inscription, in smaller letters, are the words: "William H. Seward in the United States Senate, July 29, 1852."

It will be noted that President Harding's visit lacked only two days of being the exact seventy-first anniversary of Senator Seward's speech. The President was most gracious during his participation in the unveiling of the new inscriptions. He held in his arms for the purpose Elizabeth Brown, the little granddaughter of Seattle's Mayor. After the ceremony was completed, President Harding carefully read and approved the inscriptions.

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#### *Celebration of Constitution Day*

It was on Monday, September 17, 1787, that the Constitution of the United States was signed and it was Monday, September 17, 1923, that the event was patriotically celebrated throughout the Republic. In Seattle, Horace F. McClure, President of the King County Bar Association, called a meeting of the Bench and Bar to assemble in the court room of the United States District Court. Mr. McClure presided and appropriate addresses were delivered by United States District Judge Jeremiah Neterer, Superior Court Judge James T. Ronald, United States District Attorney Thomas P. Revelle and Hon. George Donworth, former United States District Judge. The United Circuit Court of Appeals was represented by Judges Frank H. Rudkin of Washington, William H. Hunt of California and George M. Bourquin of Montana. These, with Judge Neterer and Judge E. E. Cushman, also of the United States District Court, in their robes of office, occupied the bench and the spacious court room was filled with lawyers and laymen, all deeply interested in the impressive program. It is quite likely that Constitution Day will hereafter be annually observed throughout America.