

= Charles S. Morehead =

Charles Slaughter Morehead (July 7 , 1802 ? December 21 , 1868) was a U.S. Representative from Kentucky , and served as the 20th Governor of Kentucky . Though a member of the Whig Party for most of his political service , he joined the Know Nothing , or American , Party in 1855 , and was the only governor of Kentucky ever elected from that party .

Morehead 's political service began in the Kentucky House of Representatives in 1828 . In 1832 , he was appointed state attorney general . He served in this capacity for five years , and later returned to the Kentucky House , where he was chosen Speaker of the House three times . He was elected to Congress in 1848 and served two terms . After his congressional tenure , he joined the Know Nothing Party and was chosen as the party 's candidate for governor in 1855 . The campaign was marred by anti @-@ immigrant and anti @-@ Catholic rhetoric that touched off the " Bloody Monday " riots in Louisville .

Morehead was a delegate to the Peace Conference of 1861 and the Border States Convention that attempted to stave off the Civil War . Although he favored Kentucky 's neutrality , Morehead sympathized with the South and was an open critic of the Lincoln administration . He was imprisoned for disloyalty in September 1861 , although no formal charges were ever brought against him . He was released from prison in January 1862 , and afterward fled to Canada , Europe , and Mexico . After the war , he returned to the United States and settled on his plantation in Greenville , Mississippi , where he died on December 21 , 1868 .

= = Early life = =

Charles Slaughter Morehead was born near Bardstown , Nelson County , Kentucky on July 7 , 1802 . He was the son of Charles and Margaret (Slaughter) Morehead and a first cousin to Kentucky 's twelfth governor , James Turner Morehead . His father served in both houses of the Kentucky General Assembly .

Morehead was educated in the area 's public schools , then matriculated to Transylvania University . He earned a bachelor 's degree in 1820 , graduating with honors . After graduation , he became a tutor at the university and earned a Bachelor of Laws degree in 1822 . He relocated to Christian County , Kentucky , was admitted to the bar , and commenced practice in Hopkinsville . He also worked as a farmer , and owned plantations in Mississippi and Louisiana .

Morehead married Amanda Leavy on July 10 , 1823 . She died July 5 , 1829 at the age of twenty @-@ five . Following her death , Morehead married Margaret Leavy , his first wife 's sister , on September 6 , 1831 . Together they had four children . Charles and Margaret were very fond of music , theater , dances , and parties .

= = Political career = =

Morehead was elected as a Whig to the Kentucky House of Representatives in 1828 and was re @-@ elected in 1829 . Following his second term in the legislature , he moved to Frankfort , Kentucky , believing it provided better opportunities for his legal practice . He was appointed as state attorney general in 1832 and served for five years . In 1834 , he co @-@ authored A Digest of the Statute Laws of Kentucky with Mason Brown . He represented Franklin County in the state house from 1838 to 1842 and again in 1844 ; he was chosen Speaker of the House in 1840 , 1841 , and 1844 .

Morehead was elected the Thirtieth and Thirty @-@ first Congresses , serving from March 4 , 1847 until March 3 , 1851 . During the Thirty @-@ first Congress , the Whig caucus considered him as a candidate for Speaker of the House . The voting for speaker began December 3 , 1849 . The caucus first chose Robert C. Winthrop as their candidate , but after several ballots , Winthrop was still unable to obtain a majority because of sectional rivalries within the caucus . Some Whigs from northern states voted for David Wilmot , a Free Soiler , while five southern Whigs steadfastly voted for Meredith Gentry . The Democrats were similarly unable to muster a majority for their candidate ,

Howell Cobb .

At their caucus meeting on the night of December 10 , the Whigs agreed to continue voting for Winthrop for one more day , and if he was not elected , to switch their support to Morehead , who they believed could hold all of Winthrop 's votes and win the votes of the southern Whigs as well as some southern Democrats . They made their intentions known on December 11 , and by the end of the day , Morehead reported that he had received commitments of support from twenty southern Democrats . During the day 's voting , the five southern Whigs shifted their support from Gentry to Morehead . This shift cost Morehead the support of many northern Whigs who , at the caucus meeting the night of December 11 , declared that Morehead 's election " would ruin the Whig party in the North " , especially if he gained the support of southern Democrats . Rather than further fracture the caucus , Morehead withdrew his name from consideration . Cobb was finally elected on the sixty @-@ third ballot on December 22 .

= = = Governor of Kentucky = = =

Following his congressional tenure , Morehead resumed his law practice and management of his plantations . In 1852 , he was a presidential elector for Winfield Scott , and in 1853 , he served another term in the Kentucky House . By early 1855 , sectional divisions had ripped apart the national Whig Party . In Kentucky , many former Whigs associated with the Know Nothing Party . Morehead was among these ; he claimed that the Know Nothing Party was more " Union " than the Democratic Party . The ex @-@ Whigs hoped to take over the Know Nothing Party and reshape it into a Unionist Whig organization . Accordingly , when the Know Nothing candidate for governor , Judge William Loving , withdrew from the race due to failing health , the influx of ex @-@ Whigs nominated Morehead to replace him for the gubernatorial election of 1855 . Prior to the dissolution of the party , most had expected the Whigs would nominate Morehead at their own party 's convention in April .

Though Kentucky had only a small population of immigrants and Catholics , much of Morehead 's campaign oratory was directed against these groups . Most of the state 's immigrant and Catholic population resided in Louisville , and tensions there reached a climax with an anti @-@ foreign riot known as " Bloody Monday " on August 6 , 1855 . Morehead won the election with 69 @,@ 816 votes to 65 @,@ 413 votes for Democrat Beverly L. Clarke . In his inaugural address , Morehead denounced the nullification of the Fugitive Slave Act and despite his campaign rhetoric , proclaimed " perfect equality " for naturalized citizens .

Morehead 's term as governor was an active one . He approved the appropriation of funding for the first Kentucky State Fair , which was seen as a vehicle for encouraging improvements in agriculture . He also approved the formation of the Kentucky State Agricultural Society in 1856 . The state geological survey begun under Governor Lazarus W. Powell was completed and published . Internal improvements progressed as well ; railroad mileage in the state increased from 242 miles to 568 miles during Morehead 's term .

Kentucky 's school system was expanding rapidly , creating a shortage of qualified teachers in the state ; Morehead responded to this need by proposing a bill for state @-@ supported teacher education program at Transylvania University . The state 's superintendent , John D. Matthews , lobbied for the bill , claiming that a failure to educate teachers in Kentucky would result in Northern teachers infiltrating the state and corrupting children 's minds . The bill passed in 1856 , and Transylvania University made the transition from a private institution to a state @-@ supported university . Money raised through school taxes , previously regarded as revenue by the legislature , was diverted to support of Transylvania . Although the teacher education program enrolled seventy @-@ five students , opposition to the plan developed soon after its passage . Many citizens felt that public school money should not be used to support higher education . Governor Morehead defended the plan , but when the legislature convened two years later , it revoked the university 's funding .

The number of prisoners housed in the state penitentiary at Frankfort was also increasing . By 1856 , 237 prisoners were detained in the facility which had only 126 cells . Though state law required

solitary confinement at night , the statute was impossible to administer due to the space constraints . Morehead cooperated with the legislature and developed a plan to expand the penitentiary to 252 cells . He also renegotiated the state 's contract with the warden that was more favorable to the state , and allowed the warden to collect income from convict labor .

Early in his term , Morehead approved two new bank charters , but he later vetoed several others , beginning with the proposed Bank of Harrodsburg . Many other proposed bank charters died in the General Assembly . The later years of Morehead 's administration were hindered by the financial Panic of 1857 . In December 1857 , he reported state expenditures of \$ 21 @, @ 000 for relief of the poor .

= = Civil War and later life = =

Morehead moved to Louisville in 1859 and formed a law partnership with his nephew , Charles M. Briggs . In February 1861 , he attended the Peace Conference of 1861 that tried to resolve the sectional differences between the states . In May 1861 , he was chosen as a delegate to the Border State Convention , an ultimately futile attempt to avert the Civil War . Morehead refused to sign the final document produced by the convention because he did not agree with all the statements it contained . He was an advocate of Kentucky 's position of neutrality , but was personally sympathetic to the South and was an outspoken critic of the Lincoln administration . He condemned Secretary of State William H. Seward for cutting off trade with the South .

On September 19 , 1861 , Morehead , Louisville Courier editor Reuben T. Durrett , and a man named Martin W. Barr were arrested for disloyalty . The three were taken to Indianapolis , Indiana , and the next day , Louisville circuit court judge John Catron issued a writ of habeas corpus for Morehead . On September 24 , the officer who had arrested Morehead told Catron that Secretary of War Simon Cameron had already ordered Morehead taken to Fort Lafayette in New York Harbor . Shortly after this , a grand jury was convened but failed to return any charges against Morehead .

Morehead was later transferred to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor . He complained to his captors about the conditions in the prison ; specifically , the difficulty of writing letters when confined with nine other men in a room that measured just ten feet by twenty feet . Petitions for Morehead 's release were delivered to President Lincoln , but Lincoln told Secretary of State Seward that Morehead and those arrested with them would be released " when James Guthrie and James Speed [friends of Lincoln 's in Kentucky] think they should be " . Later , Guthrie told Lincoln that Morehead 's arrest had " not been beneficial " to their cause in Kentucky . Morehead was paroled on January 6 , 1862 , on the condition that he swear an oath not to take part in the Confederate insurgence . On March 19 , 1862 , he was unconditionally discharged from his parole .

Morehead returned to his home in Louisville , but feared his refusal to take an oath of allegiance to the Constitution would lead to another arrest . In June 1862 , he fled to Canada , then to Europe , and finally to Mexico . Following the war , Morehead returned to the United States and lived on his plantation in Greenville , Mississippi . He died there on December 21 , 1868 and was buried on the grounds . On May 31 , 1879 , he was reburied in the Frankfort Cemetery in Frankfort , Kentucky .