

= James D. Black =

James Dixon Black (September 24 , 1849 ? August 5 , 1938) was the 39th Governor of Kentucky , serving for seven months in 1919 . He ascended to the office when Governor Augustus O. Stanley was elected to the U.S. Senate .

Black graduated from Tusculum College in 1872 and taught school while studying law . He was admitted to the bar in 1874 and opened his legal practice in Barbourville , Kentucky . Eventually , his son , Pitzer Dixon , and his son @-@ in @-@ law , Hiram H. Owens , became partners in his practice , called Black , Black and Owens . Deeply interested in education , he served as superintendent of the Knox County public schools for two years , and was instrumental in the founding of Union College in Barbourville . He served as president of the college from 1910 to 1912 .

Black was chosen as the Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor in 1915 , despite having only meager previous political experience . He was elected on a ticket with Augustus O. Stanley and was elevated to governor when Stanley resigned to take a seat in the U.S. Senate . Much of his seven months as governor were spent on his re @-@ election campaign . He was unable to satisfactorily answer charges of corruption made against the Stanley administration by his opponent , Edwin P. Morrow . Morrow won the election by more than 40 @,@ 000 votes . Black returned to his legal practice in Barbourville and served as president of a bank founded by his older brother . He was campaign manager for Alben Barkley 's senatorial campaign when he died of pneumonia on August 5 , 1938 .

= = Early life and family = =

James Dixon Black was born on September 24 , 1849 nine miles from Barbourville on Richland Creek in Knox County , Kentucky . He was the youngest of twelve children born to John Craig and Clarissa " Cassie " (Jones) Black . Black 's older brother , Isaac Jones Black (August 5 , 1828 - October 22 , 1866) , was captain of the 49th Kentucky Mounted Infantry in the Union Army during the Civil War .

Black was educated in the rural and subscription schools in and around Barbourville . In 1872 , he graduated from Tusculum College near Greeneville , Tennessee with a Bachelor of Arts degree . After college , Black returned to Knox County where he taught in the public schools for two years . Concurrently , he studied law , and was admitted to the bar in August 1874 . He opened his legal practice in Barbourville .

Black married Mary Jeanette " Nettie " Pitzer on December 2 , 1875 in Barbourville . The couple had three children : Pitzer Dixon , Gertrude Dawn , and Georgia Clarice . All were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church . All three children graduated from what is now Centre College in Danville , Kentucky . Pitzer then went on to study law at the University of Virginia . After being admitted to the bar , he became a partner in his father 's law firm . Georgia Black married Hiram Hercules Owens , who also became a partner in the Barbourville firm of Black , Black , and Owens .

= = Educational career = =

Black was elected to represent Knox and Whitley counties in the Kentucky House of Representatives in 1876 . A Democrat representing a district with a majority of Republican voters , he served a single , one @-@ year term .

In 1879 , Black and other citizens of Barbourville purchased stock to fund the start up of a new college in Barbourville . Black insisted that the college be named Union College , because he hoped the college would unify the community . He continued to be involved in the development of the college , serving as its attorney and as a fund @-@ raiser . Deeply interested in education , he also served as superintendent of the Knox County public schools in 1884 and 1885 , but returned to his law practice thereafter .

A long @-@ time Freemason , Black served as master of his local lodge on seven different

occasions , was twice high priest of the Barbourville Chapter of the Royal Arch Masons , and was chosen Grand Master of Kentucky in 1888 . In 1893 , he was chosen by Kentucky governor John Y. Brown as a commissioner to the Chicago World 's Columbian Exposition , representing Kentucky 's forestry and mineral departments .

On September 10 , 1910 , Black was named the eighth president of Union College . The following year , his alma mater awarded him an honorary Doctor of Laws degree . He served as president of Union College until 1912 .

= = Political career = =

Black returned to politics in 1912 when he became Kentucky 's first assistant attorney general . In 1915 , he was chosen as the Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor . Black was pro @-@ temperance , and was chosen to balance the ticket with Augustus O. Stanley , who opposed prohibition . While Black defeated his opponent , Lewis L. Walker , by more than 8 @,@ 000 votes , Stanley bested Republican Edwin P. Morrow by only 421 votes , the closest gubernatorial election in the state 's history .

Though Stanley and Black won the election , they never became political allies . At the time of their election and service , the Kentucky Constitution prescribed that the lieutenant governor would act as governor any time the governor left the state . Consequently , Stanley refused to travel out of state on vacation because he feared he would not approve of anyone Black would appoint to any unfilled governmental offices while he was gone .

Black ascended to the governorship on May 19 , 1919 when Governor Stanley resigned to assume a seat in the U.S. Senate . His pro @-@ temperance stand cost him many of Stanley 's supporters , while his association with Stanley , a prohibition opponent , caused his support to wane among prohibitionists . There was no legislative session of the General Assembly during Black 's term , so potential conflicts with the legislature were avoided .

Black immediately faced accusations of poor appointments by Stanley . The School Textbook Commission was singled out for particular criticism . The Kentucky Court of Appeals had ruled that the Commission acted illegally in selecting textbooks submitted in dummy form . Black called on the commissioners to resign , but when they refused , he claimed he had no power to remove them except for fraud or corruption . The Louisville Courier @-@ Journal pointed out that Black could replace any Stanley appointees that had not yet been confirmed by the Senate , but Black refused to do so . Some believed that Black had agreed to retain Stanley 's appointees in exchange for Stanley 's support of Black 's re @-@ election campaign .

The settlement of state inheritance taxes on two estates also plagued Black . In the first case , Governor Stanley had made a compromise settlement of back taxes with L. V. Harkness before his death . The compromise was criticized , and although Black asked the attorney general to investigate , the case was not decided during Black 's tenure as governor . In the second case , Stanley had appointed three special attorneys to collect inheritance taxes from the estate of Mrs. Robert Worth Bingham . Black wanted the attorneys to resign and save the state their large fees , but refused to remove them outright . This action was made more damning because one of the attorneys was a member of Black 's campaign staff .

In 1919 , Black was chosen as the Democratic gubernatorial nominee over John D. Carroll , chief justice of the Kentucky Court of Appeals , by more than 20 @,@ 000 votes . The Republicans again nominated Edwin P. Morrow , who implored voters to " Right the Wrong of 1915 " . Since Black had very little record as governor in his own right , Morrow campaigned against him by attacking Stanley 's administration as corrupt . Morrow cited as evidence the tax cases of Mr. Harkness and Mrs. Bingham and Black 's inaction against the State Textbook Commission .

Black tried to remain positive in his race , and focused on national issues rather than defending Stanley 's administration . He touted his support of President Woodrow Wilson and declared his support for the United States ' admission into the League of Nations . His support of Wilson hurt him with German American voters , and Wilson 's handling of recent coal strikes hurt Black with the traditionally Democratic labor vote .

Days before the election , Morrow exposed a contract approved by the state Board of Control to purchase cloth from a man named A. S. J. Armstrong at twice its normal price . Black responded to the allegation by temporarily suspending his campaign and ordering an investigation . The investigation revealed that Armstrong was a plumber who was bidding on behalf of his brother @-@ in @-@ law , a former prison official in the Stanley administration . Despite this revelation , Black refused to remove members of the Board of Control . This issue finally sank Black 's candidacy ; Morrow won the election by more than 40 @,@ 000 votes .

In his final days in office , Black considered many requests for executive clemency . On December 1 , 1919 , he issued a pardon for Henry Youtsey , a recent parolee who had served eighteen years for conspiracy in the assassination of Governor William Goebel .

In 1918 , while still serving as lieutenant governor , Black had assumed the presidency of the John A. Black National Bank of Barbourville , named for and founded by his older brother . He became chief prohibition inspector for Kentucky in 1920 . Later , he served as director of the Barbourville Cemetery Company . While working as Ninth Congressional District campaign manager for Senator Alben Barkley in 1938 , Black developed pneumonia and died on August 5 , 1938 . He is entombed in a mausoleum at Barbourville Cemetery .