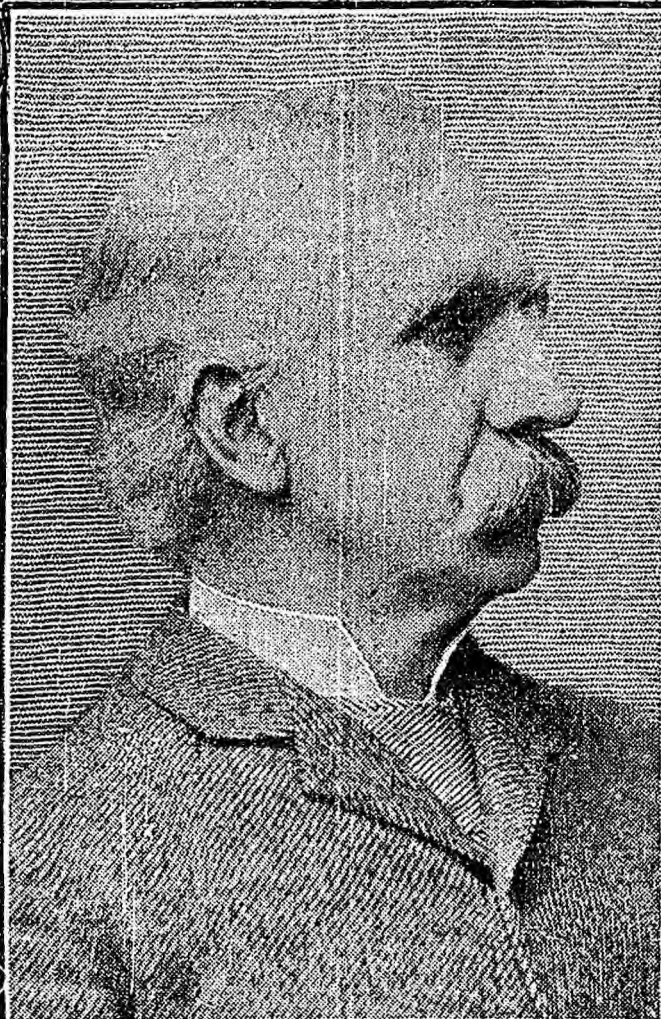


CIVIL SERVICE WORKER, WHO DIED SUDDENLY.



John W. Ela.

President John W. Ela of the Chicago civil service commission died yesterday at Philadelphia, where he had gone as a delegate to the national civil service convention.

DEATH OF JOHN W. ELA.

PRESIDENT OF CHICAGO MERIT BOARD EXPIRES SUDDENLY.

Stricken with Apoplexy at Philadelphia, Where He Was Attending National Civil Service Reform Convention—City Council Adjourns Out of Respect—End Not Wholly Unexpected to Colleagues, Who Knew His Health Was in Precarious State.

John W. Ela, president of the Chicago civil service commission, died yesterday afternoon in Philadelphia, where he was attending the national civil service reform convention. He was stricken with apoplexy on Friday, soon after reading a long paper before the convention. He was taken to the Methodist hospital, but never rallied.

Mrs. Ela reached the bedside of her husband a few hours before he died, but he was unconscious and unable to recognize her.

Council Adopts Resolutions.

The city council at its regular meeting last evening adopted resolutions on Mr. Ela's death and then adjourned as a mark of respect to his memory. A committee of the National Business league will meet at the Wellington hotel today to adopt resolutions and appoint a committee to meet the remains on arrival in Chicago. The civil service commission will adopt resolutions at its meeting tomorrow.

"Mr. Ela lived a thoroughly useful life," Mayor Harrison said. "He was a patriotic citizen and accomplished a great deal of good in the community. He made his mark as an advocate of civil service, especially in carrying through the legislature the present law."

The death of Mr. Ela was not wholly unexpected by his colleagues on the civil service commission.

"It was known to Mr. Ela for weeks that he might be called on to go at any time," said Commissioner Joseph Powell. "More than a month ago he was examined by a physician and learned that he was in a precarious condition. He several times told me that he might die at any time."

"Mr. Ela's character was admirable," Commissioner Christian Meier said. "He was well constituted for the work he had to do. Nothing could exceed his faithfulness to duty."

Lived in Chicago Many Years.

Mr. Ela had been a resident of Chicago for thirty-six years, and during that time was prominently identified with many of the most important public movements. He was a native of New Hampshire, having been born at Meredith, in that state, in 1840. He was graduated from the Harvard law school and practiced in his native town until 1863, when he enlisted as a private in the Fifteenth New Hampshire volunteer infantry. He was promoted to the rank of captain and served until the close of the rebellion. Then he came to Chicago, and in a short time built up a lucrative practice.

He was one of the first to take hold of the movement for a municipal civil service law. He drew the bill on which the present civil service law was founded, went to Springfield with it, and worked harder than any one else for its passage by the legislature. He was at the head of the movement that resulted in giving Chicago the law it now has. Since it went into effect he has been identified with the department as attorney and a member of the board.

Appointed to Merit Board.

Mr. Ela was first appointed civil service commissioner by Mayor Harrison in May, 1900, to succeed Edward Carroll. On July 9, 1900, he was made president of the board. He argued the constitutionality of the Chicago act before the Supreme court of Illinois and won the case. He was an attendant upon the sessions of the legislature for a number of years and gave his opinion of measures when asked, therefore had much influence in shaping legislation. He was prominently identified from its organization with the Civic federation as a member of the executive committee and as the vice president.