

REVIEW OF HIS LONG SERVICE IS GIVEN BY CARLSON

Retiring Mayor Presents
Final Annual Message to
City Council as He Re-
tires From Service.

OUTLINES CITY IMPROVEMENTS

Discusses Progress of Util-
ities, Bonded Debt, Taxes,
Campaigns—Favors
Police, Fire Depart-
ment Merger.

Mayor Samuel A. Carlson con-
cluded his long period of service to
the city on Saturday morning when
he presented his final farewell mes-
sage and turned over the keys of
the city to his successor, Mayor
Harry C. Erickson.

The message of Mayor Carlson
follows:

In closing my 26 years' career
as Mayor perhaps it may not be
inappropriate to review briefly
some of the municipal movements
with which I have been identified
during this period comprising one
four year term and eleven two
year terms, and my previous ser-
vice as Councilman and Public
Works Commissioner.

Pioneer Municipal Movement.

In 1883 when I was elected
Councilman there was not a single
foot of pavement or sewer in the
city, not even a City Hall. The
only public institution, outside of
schools, was a small municipal
street lighting plant. It was at that
time that public discussion began
as to what, if any extensive public
improvements should be under-
taken. Taxpayers were extremely
reluctant to be taxed for any new
construction, preferring inconve-
niences to increased taxes. There
were, however, a few public spir-
ited citizens who vigorously ad-
vocated certain new projects. But
it was my privilege, as a youthful
member of the city government,
to introduce officially the first
measures that led to the develop-
ment of the lighting plant so that
electricity could be sold to our
citizens, the first experiment of this
kind in America. Most conserva-
tives at that time regarded this
proposal as dangerously radical.

The initiatory movement for a
municipal water supply also began
at this same period. Both of these
proposals encountered the same
kind of opposition talk that we
hear today against a municipal
gas plant. It was claimed then, as
now, that the private corporations
held franchise rights and certain
vested interests with which the
city could not interfere. But we
proceeded nevertheless to acquire
both the water and electric utility
business regardless of this oppo-
sition influence.

I am now the only surviving
public official of the pioneer peri-
od when most of our municipal
projects, which we now enjoy, had
their inception.

Improvements Proposed and
Completed.

from any outside pov
And let us not be unmindful of
the fact that these splendid
achievements could never have
been attained if ample surplus
funds had not at all times been
available. All these surpluses have
been supplied by the consumers
whose patronage constitutes the
one source from which revenue is
derived. Hence, whenever profits
have warranted, reduction in rates
have been made to these con-
sumers, all of whom either own or
rent property on which they pay
taxes either directly or indirectly.
In harmony with this policy for
which the taxpayers declared
when the plant was originally in-
stalled and in compliance with a
recent order issued by the State
Public Service Commission, the
Board made a further reduction in
the rates. The revised rate ranges
from 3.1-4c per K.W.H. to 2 mills
per K.W.H. This rate, will enable
citizens to provide for themselves
more electric conveniences which
in turn will increase the revenue
of the plant, and at the same
time afford an annual saving to
the people of \$112,000.

Bonded Debt.

The people of this city have
\$15,000,000 worth of public prop-
erty and less than \$1,500,000 of
city indebtedness. Other cities in
the Jamestown class carry a
bonded debt, ranging from \$4,000,-
000 to \$15,000,000.

Tax Rate.

In political campaigns my op-
ponents have always blamed me
for increased tax rates, even when
such increases have been vetoed
by me and approved by these same
opponents when budgets have been
prepared.

But, although I have sometimes
vetoed tax rates because they were
based on expenditures, part of
which I felt might have been
eliminated, yet, compared with
other cities, the tax rate here has
never been excessive. The U. S.
Census Reports show that James-
town is one of the lowest cost
governed cities in America.

In this city the average tax-
payer pays out more money for
gas and milk than he does for
his entire city tax bill represent-
ing the combined service received
in Police and Fire protection,
highway maintenance, health, hos-
pital service, garbage collection
and sewage disposal. The present
tax levy, exclusive of schools, is
less than 5 cents daily per capita.

City Government and Industries.
During the past thirty years
there have been times when our in-
dustries expanded and prospered
and there have been times when
industries failed and went out of

And give their lives to make it
right
And turn its darkness into light.

What makes a city men can love?
Not things that charm the out-
ward sense,
Not gross display of opulence,
But right, the wrong cannot re-
move,
And truth that faces civic fraud
And smites it in the name of God.

This is the city that shall stand
A light upon a Nation's hill,
A voice that evil cannot still,
A source of blessing to all the
land."

I now come to the performance
of the closing act of my long
mayoralty career, and in so doing
I hereby deliver to my worthy
successor, the keys to the execu-
tive office of the city. Harry C.
Erickson enters this high office
fully equipped with a ripe public
experience and with a splendid
background of a fine record as a
member of the City Council. To
you, Mayor Erickson, I extend my
sincere congratulations, my Best
Wishes and a God Speed.

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel A. Carlson,
Mayor.

Dated: Jamestown, New York,
January 1, 1928.