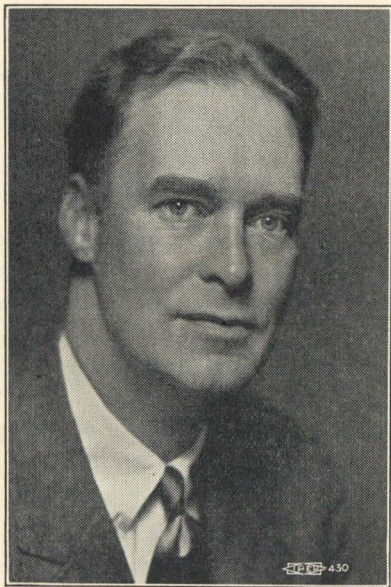


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HON. CHRISTIAN A. HERTER

Speaker

House of Representatives

Boston, Massachusetts

4-13-55  
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## STATE HOUSE, BOSTON

Mr. Herter, but only an epitome possible today, in this space, which concerns only the vital high tides in his comprehensive career of only 44 years. The Honorable Christian Archibald Herter of Boston, Republican, is the seventieth Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, under the constitution of 1780. He was born in Paris, in 1895, on March 28, the son of Albert and Adele McGinnis Herter, both American-born and painters of recognized note. Many of his father's mural decorations appear in the public buildings of this country, including a number of State capitols. The great-grandfather of the Speaker, and of his same name, came to this country with his son, in 1848, the latter then a boy of three, both political refugees out of Stuttgart in Germany. An uncle of the Speaker, and of his same name, was a physician of eminence, the head of the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia, one of the

founders and first directors of the Rockefeller Institute, and a founder of the Journal of Bacteriological Chemistry. Everit, an older brother of the Speaker, was killed at Chateau Thierry.

\* \* \*

The Speaker lived in France until he was nine years old. He then came to New York City, with his Uncle Christian, and attended the Browning School. Upon the return of his mother and father to this country, the Speaker rejoined them, continuing his studies at the Browning School until he entered Harvard University, at the age of sixteen, in the class of 1915. He graduated with the honorary degree: Cum Laude. He began with the study of architecture. He then reshaped his "course."

\* \* \*

In 1916, he went to Berlin, an attache of the Embassy under James W. Gerard. He engaged principally in prison camp inspection and political reporting. Because of the illness of Ambassador Whitlock and his first secretary in Belgium, the speaker was then transferred from Berlin to Brussels, where for two months he was in charge of the American legation. While there, and during the war, he wrote the only official report, from neutral sources, on the Belgian deportations. This later became a public document.

• When the United States severed diplomatic relations with Germany, in 1917, the Speaker was not allowed to leave Belgium at once. He was finally permitted to join our Embassy in Switzerland, but was arrested as a spy and kept in jail which created a diplomatic incident. It is interesting to emphasize that he was the last of the American diplomatic corps to leave Germany, and the first to re-enter after the armistice. He then entered the territory between the French and the German lines, to reach a camp in Germany where American prisoners were held. He persuaded them not to try to break out of their confinement until proper arrangements could be made to take care of them.

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In 1917, he was rejected for army service, for physical reasons. He then spent three months with the Harvard R. O. T. C., in an attempt to overcome these handicaps, but was again rejected. He entered the State Department at Washington. There his work dealt primarily with interned enemy aliens and prisoners of war. In 1918, he became Assistant Commissioner and Secretary of the Special Diplomatic Mission to draw up a prisoner-of-war agreement with Germany. That agreement was drafted and signed the night of the armistice, after three months of negotiations. He was then transferred to the American Peace

Commission, at Paris, as assistant to one of the Commissioners, and later became its secretary, and also the head of its current information section.

\* \* \*

He returned to the United States, in 1919. After six months in the Department of State, he resigned to become Secretary to Mr. Hoover. He continued in that capacity, and also as an assistant to Mr. Hoover when he was Secretary of Commerce, for over four years. He was an ardent leader in the Hoover campaign for President. He came to Boston, in 1924. He then bought and published, jointly with Richard Ely Danielson of Boston, a weekly political and economic magazine: The Independent. This was sold to the Outlook, in 1928. In the meantime, the Sportsman had been established by these two men, but it was sold to Country Life, in 1937. In 1930, he was elected to the Legislature to succeed Henry Shattuck. He was made Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in January, 1939.

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He has been President of the Republican Club of Massachusetts, since 1937. He has been a delegate to both State and National Republican conventions. As an evidence of his interest in and knowledge of international

questions, it might be interpolated that he lectured at Harvard, in '29-'30, on international relations, and he has been chairman of the Boston Branch of the Foreign Policy Association. It is impossible to set out in detail, in this space, his affiliations with patriotic, civic, welfare and educational associations. He is an officer in about 25 of such endeavors, outside of his social societies. He has been "decorated" by Belgium and Poland for his humanitarianism.

\* \* \*

In a spirit of gallantry and by way of a climax, Reader, you are now led into the domestic cojurisdiction of the Speaker. In 1917, on Aug. 25, he married Mary Caroline Pratt of Brooklyn, a granddaughter of Charles Pratt, one of the founders of the Standard Oil Company, and a daughter of Frederic Pratt, the head of the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. The Herters have four children: Junior, aged twenty, the sixth Christian Herter, now a sophomore at Harvard; Frederic Pratt, aged eighteen, a freshman at Harvard; Adele, thirteen, and Eliot Miles, ten, the latter two at Schools in Boston. They live on Beacon street in Boston during the winter, and in other seasons at Millis in Massachusetts. Of such are the essential facts and figures in the life of Christian Archibald Herter.