

Initiators of Our State Park System

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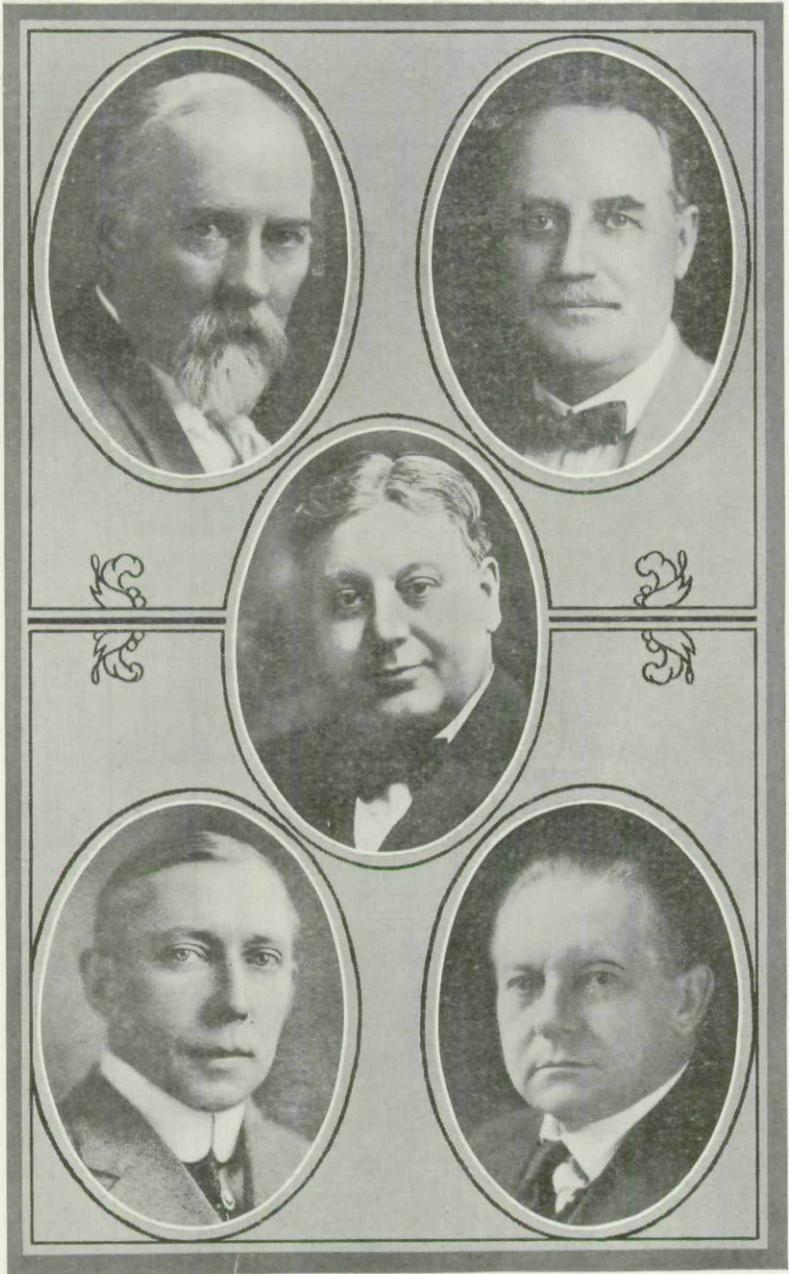
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INITIATORS OF OUR STATE PARK SYSTEM

At the close of the excellent series on conservation and related subjects by Dr. L. H. Pammel, it may be appropriate to add a word on the first Board of Conservation.

The first statute provided for the creation of a board of which the Curator of the Historical Department should be a member, and three others to be appointed by the Governor.

Governor Harding appointed Hon. John F. Ford, a former mayor of Fort Dodge, whose close and practical knowledge of native wild life, familiarity with the rod and gun, and standing among the sportsmen of the state well fitted him.

Hon. Joseph Kelso of Bellevue was selected because of his experience in the General Assembly, in business, and his knowledge of natural history and the Mississippi region.

Governor Harding accepted with fine ardor the suggestion that an enthusiastic scientist should be chosen. He named Dr. L. H. Pammel.

The board organized December 27, 1918, with Dr. Pammel, president, and the Curator, secretary. The organization so remained throughout the first phases of the work, or until the retirement of Messrs. Ford and Kelso in October, 1921. This consisted of general surveys, the purchase of the first few areas with a fund accumulated by the Fish and Game Department, added to a small direct appropriation. The Executive Council, with Governor Harding as its head, Secretary of State W. S. Allen, State Treasurer E. H. Hoyt, and State Auditor Frank S. Shaw made of this matter a major concern. From the co-ordinated functions came the first steps that led to the present achievement of a series of state parks and system of administration that, in Governor Harding's administration and through his intelligent zeal, early took rank as a leading instance of conservation and state park movements among the states of the Union.

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