

AN ANALYSIS OF THE COATTAIL EFFECT  
ON THE BASIS OF KANSAS ELECTIONS  
1900-1960

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The idea of coattail influence is not new to political science. It has been discussed for years but still no conclusions seem to have been reached. Opinions range from that of coattail influence being a major factor in determining the outcome of elections to that of it having little, if any, effect.

Even among those who agree that the coattail effect is an important factor in determining the outcome of elections, there is disagreement as to when it is most effective. One school of thought holds that the further a presidential candidate runs ahead of his party the greater his influence; while the other says his coattails are providing the most pull when the other candidates run closely behind, or even with, the presidential candidate. Regardless of the concept of coattail influence different persons hold, they agree that some such phenomenon does exist. In a few instances there is evidence of scientific study but in most of them the opinion seems to be held with little, if any, empirical evidence to support it.

## I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. There is a difference in the ability of a political party to attract votes for its candidates from one election to the next. The objective of this study is to prove that the influence of the presidential candidates of a party has an effect on the vote for other members of their party's ticket in relation to the vote they themselves receive. Data concerning Kansas elections from 1900 through 1960 will be analyzed to determine whether presidential candidates do in fact influence voters to vote either for or against other candidates of their political party.

Importance of the study. In any field of knowledge, the social sciences as well as others, accurate tools are needed to measure what transpires. Since the coattail effect is a widely held concept, it should be either proven or disproven in order to help improve the measuring devices used in political science. It is the purpose of this study to seek proof of the validity or of the falsity of the concept.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Coattail effect. For the purposes of this investigation the coattail effect will be defined as the ability of the

presidential candidate to influence voters to vote either for or against other members of his party's ticket. That is, for example, when the Republican presidential candidates run above 57.0 per cent, which is their mean percentage of the two-party vote for the years 1900 through 1960, the candidates of their party for governor, United States Senator and United States Representative should run above their mean percentages of 56.6, 57.2 and 56.2 per cent respectively for presidential year elections from 1900 through 1960. The same concept should hold true when the presidential candidates run below their mean percentage and the other candidates should also run below their mean percentage. And the relationship between the vote for the presidential candidates and the vote for the candidates for the other three offices should be related in that the higher the presidential candidate's vote increases above their mean percentage the higher the vote for the other candidates should increase above their mean percentage, and the further the presidential candidates run below their mean percentage the further the other candidates should run below their mean percentage.

Mean percentage: The average of the percentages of the two-party vote the candidates for an office receive in two or more elections.

Mean percentages are used in an attempt to simplify the study and make it easier to understand. Without the use of the mean the tables would be larger and patterns of development could not be as easily observed.

The mean percentages will not always include the same number of elections. They are divided into ten-per cent levels and only those percentages that fall within a level are averaged. For example, there were three elections in which the Republican presidential candidates received between seventy and eighty per cent of the statewide two-party vote -- 1904, 1924 and 1928. The mean percentage for these three years was 72.1 per cent. Then the percentages are arranged for the candidates for governor, United States Senator and United States Representative for the same three years. (Figure 1). This same process is followed when the presidential candidate received between sixty and seventy per cent, between fifty and sixty per cent, etc., down to the lowest percentage of the vote cast for a candidate.

FIGURE 1

METHOD OF CALCULATING MEAN PERCENTAGE WHEN  
 THE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES  
 RECEIVED BETWEEN 70 AND 80 PERCENT OF THE  
 TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE IN KANSAS ELECTIONS  
 1900-1960

Year	President	Governor	United States Senator	United States Representative
1904	71.2	61.5		62.2
1924	72.3	63.9	73.5	55.4
1928	72.7	66.4		63.2
Mean percent- age for the 3 elections	72.1	63.9	73.5	60.3

NOTE: The mean figures are those shown on page 86 Table I of this study. The other mean percentages are calculated in the same manner for the years when the Republican Presidential candidates received lower percentage divisions.

Correlation: A comparison of the two-party vote for two candidates to each other on a county-to-county basis. For example, if the comparison were between the vote for the candidates for president and governor, and their percentages of the vote increased or decreased at the same time in the same counties they would have a positive correlation; but if one were to increase his percentages while the other was decreasing his, or vice versa, there would be a negative correlation. Under this system, the highest possible correlation would be a positive 1.000 and the lowest possible

correlation would be a negative 1.000. The former would occur when two candidates always increased and decreased their percentage of the two-party vote at the same time in every county; whereas the latter would occur when the percentages received by two candidates are always reversed. A good example of the latter would be two candidates running for the same office in an election.

Mean correlation: Mean correlations are used for the same reason as mean percentages and are, in some ways, related. Mean correlations are based on the same percentage divisions as the mean percentages. For example, in the three elections in which the Republican presidential candidates received between seventy and eighty per cent of the two-party popular vote, the three correlations for governor are averaged. This average is then compared to the average correlations when the presidential candidate's vote fell within the different percentage levels (Tables 3.3 and 3.4) to determine if the presidential candidate's percentage has any effect on the correlations.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The data used in this investigation have been obtained from county election returns for Kansas elections from 1900



through 1960. The elections used were those for president, governor, United States senator, and United States representative. There were, however, the following exclusions: two senatorial elections which were held to fill unexpired terms; all elections to fill unexpired terms for United States representative and all elections for United States representatives at-large.

Two methods of analyzing this information were used: first, a correlation was made in which the percentage of the two-party vote received by each candidate was compared to that of all of the other candidates, on a county-to-county basis, in each election; second, the percentage of the two-party vote received by each candidate was compared to all of the other candidates in each election. To make the information easier to understand both the correlations and the percentages are divided into percentage levels as illustrated in Figure 1, page 5. For example, the presidential candidates of the Republican party received between 70 and 80 per cent of the vote in three elections; the percentages of the two-party vote for the candidates for the other three offices and the correlations between the presidential candidates and the candidates for the other three offices are averaged for the three election years. This process was repeated for the presidential candidates of both parties when they received percentages of the two-party vote that

fell within various percentage levels in comparison with candidates of both parties for the offices of governor, United States senator, and United States representative.

The percentage levels used are ten per cent divisions starting with 20 to 30 per cent and going up to 70 to 80 per cent. Of course, all percentage levels are not used for all candidates because all candidates did not receive percentages of the two-party vote that fell within all of the percentage levels.

## CHAPTER II

### A REVIEW OF OPINIONS ON THE COATTAIL EFFECT

"In the absence of adequate empirical study, a body of folklore has evolved to explain, or explain away, all manner of conclusions concerning the phenomenon called 'coattail influence'."<sup>1</sup>

This statement by Warren E. Miller is a good example of the current status of research on the coattail effect. However, there is research and there are opinions on the subject which must be presented in order to form a basis for judging the information presented in this study.

The following is a presentation of some of these opinions. It is hoped that this presentation will point out the lack of consensus on the subject. There is no one opinion. Rather, there seems to be as many opinions as there are authors.

#### I. THE COATTAIL EFFECT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

There are two opinions, according to Moos, relating to the presidential candidate's influence over his party's congressional ticket. One is that the presidential candidate

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<sup>1</sup>Warren E. Miller, "Presidential Coattails: A Study of Political Myth and Methodology," Public Opinion Quarterly, XIX (Winter 1955-56), 353.

has a powerful bearing on the outcome of congressional elections; the other is that presidential and congressional elections are separate and unconnected events.<sup>2</sup> He further points out that even among those who hold to the coattail theory there is a difference of opinion. One group maintains it is only the added interest generated by the presidential campaigns which helps the congressional candidates while the other contends it is the personal charm of the presidential candidates which provides the ride for their respective congressional cohorts.<sup>3</sup>

To show how the presidential candidate can help his congressional ticket Moos points out that on the average seventy-five new members are brought into Congress in each congressional election.<sup>4</sup> Because, in many cases, little is known about these candidates either personally or politically, it is much easier for them to gain office if they have the help of presidential coattails.<sup>5</sup> In general, Moos believes, a presidential nominee is in a good position

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<sup>2</sup>Malcolm C. Moos, Politics, Presidents and Coattails (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1952), p. xi.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

to help his congressional ticket into office, particularly those candidates who are running for a first term.<sup>6</sup> However, the coattail effect does not necessarily mean the presidential candidate only provides aid to his congressional ticket. On the contrary, in a district where the congressional candidate is popular he can be a help to the presidential candidate.<sup>7</sup>

Moos believes coattail influence to be of at least some importance, and therefore, the influence of the presidential candidate might well be the decisive factor in deciding congressional races where the vote is close.<sup>8</sup> If this is correct, it would be expected that congressional candidates from marginal districts would have a much greater personal interest in their party's presidential nominee. To some extent this was true in 1952, for example. Republican congressmen from marginal districts tended to support General Eisenhower to a greater extent than did congressmen from safe districts. This apparently was because of their belief that Eisenhower's coattails would provide a surer ride into office than would those of any other candidate the Republicans could name.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 84.

In short Moos's opinion on the coattail effect can be summed up in the following:

"Presidential coattails, apart from the tides of their parties, do not boost significant numbers of congressional candidates into office, but in the long pull the skill with which the president both drives and leads his party has a way of stockpiling good will and building party fortunes in the public mind."<sup>10</sup>

There is, however, one more factor which Moos believes must be taken into consideration when attempting to measure the coattail strength of the presidential candidate. If for one reason or another there is a strong feeling sweeping the country, either for or against a political party, the party label itself may be of major importance in the public mind.<sup>11</sup> If this happens, it may well be the congressional candidate's political party which gives him the ride into office rather than the presidential nominee's coattail. This, however, does not exclude coattail influence from the election in question because both might occur simultaneously.

Warren E. Miller presents a slightly different view of the coattail effect. He believes it is not how far a presidential candidate runs ahead of his party that shows his coattail pull but rather how close his party members run to him.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 172

The critical point, according to Miller, when it comes to measuring the coattail effect is this: members of Party A receive votes they would not have received if it had not been for the vote-getting power of their presidential candidate.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, both the congressional vote decision and the presidential vote decision must be based on the appeal of the presidential candidate.<sup>13</sup> If, on the other hand, the decision to vote for the two candidates is made independently, then, even though the votes are cast for members of the same party, no coattail influence exists.<sup>14</sup>

Miller's main thought concerning the coattail effect is contained in this statement:

"The maximum demonstration of coattail influence would find all of the voters who supported a presidential candidate also supporting his congressional cohorts and all of the voters who supported his congressional cohorts also supporting him. Given this situation it would mean that the presidential candidate had 'delivered' to his congressional running mates all of the votes which he possibly could, namely, all of the votes which he himself received."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Warren E. Miller, "Presidential Coattails; A Study of Political Myth and Methodology," Public Opinion Quarterly, XIX (Winter 1955-56), 354.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 358.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 357.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

As can be seen in the previous statement, Miller does not believe, as most of the other authors do, that the better a presidential candidate runs, in relation to his party's congressional ticket, the greater his coattail influence. In fact, he claims it is the closeness of the presidential candidate to the rest of his party that demonstrates his coattail pulling power. To illustrate this he points to the 1952 election in which Eisenhower ran well ahead of the rest of his party because "... he failed to carry with him many voters who supported him but would not vote for his party's congressional candidate."<sup>16</sup> From this he goes on to point out that by the normal measure of coattail influence, i.e., the further a presidential candidate runs ahead of his congressional ticket, the greater his coattail influence. Using this measure, Eisenhower demonstrated a great deal of coattail power, and if more of the people who voted for him had voted for Democratic congressional candidates he would have run even further ahead of his congressional ticket and therefore would have presumably demonstrated an even greater coattail influence.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 356-57.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.



Not all observers of the coattail effect are political scientists. Louis H. Bean, for instance, is a statistician who has studied the coattail effect mainly from a statistical point of view. And, from this point of view, he thinks the power of the presidential candidate's coattails is easy to measure. He says:

"Measuring the pulling power of the President's coattails fortunately is a relatively simple matter. The measuring of the 'coattail effect' is merely the difference between the number of Democratic (or Republican) candidates elected in mid-term years. If there is no difference, on the average, then the presence or absence of a presidential figure on the ticket can have no noticeable effect."<sup>18</sup>

In order to test this concept, Bean checked the elections between 1928 and 1944 and found there was, on the average, a difference of about six or seven percentage points between the number of congressmen elected from the President's party in presidential and mid-term elections.<sup>19</sup> Since six or seven per cent of the 435 seats in the House represents some twenty-six to thirty congressmen he concluded that Roosevelt's name at the head of the ticket was worth an

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<sup>18</sup>Louis H. Bean, The Mid-Term Battle (Business Press Inc., 1950), p. 20.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid. See also Louis H. Bean, How to Predict Elections (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1948), p. 32.

average of twenty-six to thirty congressional seats in 1932, 1936, 1940 and 1944 as compared to 1930, 1934, 1938, and 1942.<sup>20</sup>

He goes on to point out that according to past experience a presidential candidate receiving fifty-six per cent or more of the two-party popular vote can expect his party's congressional ticket to win.<sup>21</sup> From this it was assumed that if a presidential candidate ran twelve percentage points ahead of his opposition, his coattails would pull enough congressional candidates into office to give his party a majority. However, Bean arrived at the above conclusion before the 1956 election in which Eisenhower received 57 per cent of the popular vote but the Republicans could not gain control of Congress.

However, Bean did not believe it was always necessary for a president to be running for re-election in order for him to help his party's congressional ticket. If he would work for his party's congressional candidates and lend his prestige to the campaign he could help his party's ticket.<sup>22</sup> Bean, then, does not concur with the idea that the coattail

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Bean, Mid-Term Battle, p. 21.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 19

effect exists only because of the added momentum generated by a presidential election year. He emphasized it could be the prestige of the president, or presidential candidate personally, that influences the voters. In general, his studies lead to the conclusion ". . . that usually the power of the president's coattail is synonymous with increased voting interest and a greater turnout. . ."23

So far this study has been concerned only with winning candidates, but coattail influence does not always have to be attributed to a winner. The losing presidential candidate may lend a helping hand to other members of his party. It is claimed by The Economist, November 19, 1964, that Nixon helped his party members much more than Kennedy did his, even though Nixon lost the election. It was reasoned that since Nixon ran well ahead of his party's ticket in many areas of the Middle and Far West that in these areas he helped his party's candidates into office. Kennedy, on the other hand, trailed his party in many areas of the country which meant that their coattails were helping him.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Bean, How to Predict Elections, p. 36.

<sup>24</sup> "How America Voted," The Economist, (November 19, 1964), p. 775.

Furthermore, a presidential candidate's coattails do not have to be limited to pulling up; they may also pull down. Murray Kempton writing for The Spectator, November 6, 1964, seems to feel the Republican losses in the 1964 election could be blamed more on Goldwater's coattails pulling Republican candidates down than on Johnson's coattails pulling the Democrats up. In general he claimed that Goldwater was nominated by Republicans out of office over the opposition of those in office. Those in office, he said, opposed Goldwater because they feared his influence would be detrimental and would keep them from being re-elected.<sup>25</sup> So according to Kempton, coattail influence, or, as it was in this case, the fear of coattail influence, is a factor which is taken into consideration, at least by some, in the selection of a presidential candidate.

Obviously opinions on the coattail effect are very common among interested people and they are also quite varied. Individuals looking at the same situation and using the same information are able to reach very different conclusions. And, since no accepted way has been developed to measure the phenomenon it is not easy to say just who is correct. In some cases authors even seem to disagree with themselves

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<sup>25</sup>Murray Kempton, "The Ruins Left by Goldwater," The Spectator, (November 6, 1964), p. 597.

from one book to another or from one place in a book to another. For example, after using Eisenhower's 1952 election as a good example of what coattail influence is not, Miller is among the four authors of a book in which this statement appears:

Without Eisenhower's name at the top of their ticket in 1954 the Republicans could not hold either house of Congress. And even with Eisenhower again heading the ticket in 1956 the Republican congressional candidates ran several percentage points further behind their pace setter than they had in 1952, and in doing so they once again lost both houses of Congress. There is evidence from our 1956 survey that Eisenhower's coattails were not without influence and that without them Republican candidates for Congress would have fared even more poorly than they did.<sup>26</sup>

## II. COATTAIL EFFECT AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL

At the state level there is still discussion of the coattail effect, though there have been even fewer studies of the subject. Opinions still seem to favor the existence of presidential coattail influence at the state and, in some cases, on the local level.

When a party is being turned out of power at the national level this affects the same party in state elections.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, The American Voter (New York and London: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1960), p. 537.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 557.

And, if the state had an even division of basic political strength it can cause a change in state administration.<sup>28</sup>

Another thing to be taken into consideration is that a state is much more likely to change administrations in mid-term years than it is in presidential years if the party in power in the state is the same as that which is gaining or retaining the presidency.<sup>29</sup>

In reference to state and local politics Kempton feels that state Republican parties, especially New York's, were trying to disassociate themselves from Goldwater in the fear that his coattails would pull them down to defeat. And in these states, particularly New York, he feels Goldwater caused a disastrous defeat for the Republicans.<sup>30</sup> Continuing, along this same line, Karl E. Meyer, writing for the New Statesman, in November, 1964, after emphasizing Johnson's national coattail influence, said: "His [Johnson's] coattails carried whole state legislatures into the Democratic column. . ." <sup>31</sup> This again points out the belief that state

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Kempton, The Spectator, p. 579.

<sup>31</sup> Karl E. Meyer, "The Johnson Landslide," New Statesman, (November 6, 1964), p. 685.

as well as national candidates are affected by the selection of their party's presidential candidate.

The belief in the coattail effect is by no means limited to those who observe and write about elections. Some of those who take an active part in politics also believe that coattail influence plays a role in determining the outcome of elections. In a speech at Albuquerque, New Mexico, Richard Nixon said the election of Republican Representative John V. Lindsay as mayor of New York City ". . .demonstrated that a president's coattail is not strong in a non-presidential year."<sup>32</sup> This expresses the belief that a President must be running for office himself before he is in a position to influence a very large number of voters to vote for his party's candidates.

### III. CONCLUSION

In general the authors presented in this chapter seem to agree that there is a phenomenon related to elections which is called the coattail effect. There is, however, disagreement among them as to just what the coattail effect is and the importance it has in determining the outcome of elections.

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<sup>32</sup>Lawrence [Kansas] Daily Journal-World, November 6, 1965, p. 2.

It is generally held that a presidential candidate is in a position to help his party members in gaining public office; however, there is disagreement over just how much help he may provide and how he provides it. It was suggested by some authors that many candidates believe their party's presidential candidate is in a position to help them, thus affecting their choices among the possible candidates their party could offer to the voters. There seemed to be no limit to how far down the political ladder some authors would suggest the influence of the presidential coattails reached to help his cohorts.

In some cases their opinions seemed to be based on a considerable amount of information covering a number of elections; in others, the opinions seemed to be based more on one election and in some cases specific examples from only one election. Also, there seemed to be as many shades of definition for the coattail effect as there were authors. All of this adds to the confusion surrounding the understanding of coattail influence.

At this point it may be necessary to re-establish the definition of the coattail effect which is being used for the purposes of this investigation. This investigation proceeds upon the premise that the coattail effect is the ability of the presidential candidates to influence the voters



to vote either for or against other members of his party's ticket. Under this definition the presidential candidates are in a position to either increase or decrease the percentage of the two-party vote received by other candidates of their party in relation to how far the presidential candidates themselves run above or below their average of 57.0 per cent of the two-party vote for the years 1900 through 1960.

## CHAPTER III

### STATISTICAL INFORMATION AND FINDINGS

In this chapter election returns from Kansas elections for the years 1900 through 1960 for the offices of president, governor, United States senator and United States representative will be under study. The main objective is to find evidence of coattail influence, particularly to find evidence of the ability of the presidential candidate of a party to influence the number of votes cast for each of the candidates for three other offices from the same political party. Also to be examined are the relationships of the mean percentages of the total popular vote received by the respective candidates for governor, United States senator and United States representative. This will be done for the purpose of attempting to clarify the effect of the presidential candidate on his party.

#### I. THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ON HIS PARTY

The information in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 indicates that a positive relationship does exist between the mean percentage received by the presidential candidates and the mean percentages of the other candidates. In all cases the candidates for

governor, United States senator and United States representative received their highest mean percentages when the presidential candidates for their party received their highest mean percentage and received their lowest mean percentages when their presidential candidates received their lowest percentage. Furthermore, with only one exception, the mean percentages for each of the three offices dropped with each ten percent lower division grouping for the presidential candidates, i.e., as the mean percentages received by the presidential candidates dropped from between 70 and 80 per cent to between 60 and 70 per cent and on down to the lowest percentage division, the mean percentages received by the candidates for the other three offices lowered also, although, not necessarily to the same degree. The one exception was that the Republican candidates for governor received a slightly higher mean percentage when their presidential candidate received between forty and fifty per cent than when they received between fifty and sixty per cent; and, of course, the Democratic candidates for governor received a slightly lower percentage when their corresponding presidential candidate received between fifty and sixty per cent than they did when their presidential candidate received between forty and fifty per cent.

TABLE 3.1

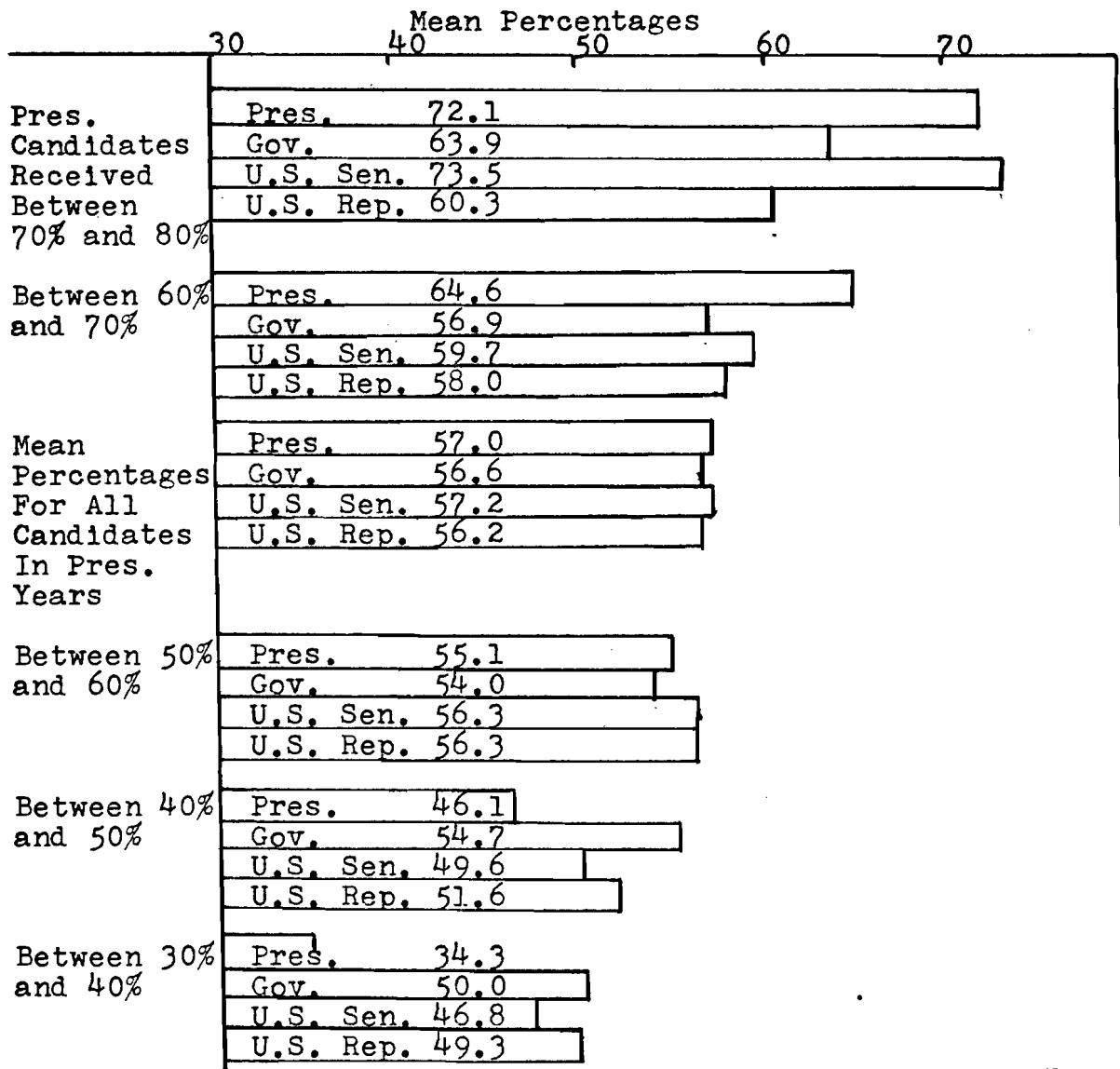
MEAN PERCENTAGE OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED BY  
 REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES IN KANSAS IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS  
 1900-1960

		U.S.	U.S.
	President	Governor	Senator Representative
When Presidential Candidate Received:			
Between 70% and 80%	<u>72.1</u>	<u>63.9</u>	<u>73.5</u> <u>60.3</u>
Between 60% and 70%	<u>64.6</u>	<u>56.9</u>	<u>59.7</u> <u>58.0</u>
Between 50% and 60%	55.1	54.0	56.3 <u>56.3</u>
Between 40% and 50%	46.1	54.7	49.6      51.6
Between 30% and 40%	34.3	50.0	46.8      49.3
All Elections	57.0	56.6	57.2      56.2

Underlined percentages indicate those mean figures which are above the mean percentages for each of the respective offices.

FIGURE 2

MEAN PERCENTAGE OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED BY  
 REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES IN KANSAS IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS  
 1900-1960



This graph is a graphic representation of the mean percentage figures listed in Table 3.1

This information in itself seems to indicate a relationship among the candidates for the various offices in an election. If there were no relationship, it does not seem likely that the mean percentages would be related in any way. The fact that the mean percentages (Table 3.1) form a pattern would appear to indicate a relationship among the candidates. The one exception to the general pattern is the result of the election of 1916 in which the gubernatorial candidate of the Republican party received 64.8 per cent of the two-party vote. This percentage was high enough to raise the mean percentage for the gubernatorial candidates for the three elections when the presidential candidates received between 40 and 50 per cent of the vote to the point that it did not fit directly into the general pattern.

#### CHI-SQUARE TESTS

To make a further evaluation of the mean percentages in the tables, chi-square tests have been run on each of the tables in which mean percentages have been used. (Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.6 and 3.7.)

In order to test the tables the following null hypothesis was formulated:

"When the Presidential candidate receives a stated percentage of the total vote there is no concurrent effect upon the percentage of the total vote that is cast for each of the candidates of the same party for the offices of governor, United States senator and United States representative, respectively."

To prove the above hypothesis correct at the .05 confidence level the  $X^2$  value would have to be larger than the .05 confidence level for the degree of freedom (d.f.) of the table being tested. To prove the above hypothesis incorrect the  $X^2$  value would have to be smaller than the .05 confidence level for the d.f. of the table being tested.

In all cases the chi-square tests of the four tables rendered  $X^2$  values smaller than the .05 confidence level for their d.f., indicating that the above hypothesis is invalid and that there apparently is some relationship between the percentage of the vote for the presidential candidates and the other percentages in the same line in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 and for the other candidates in Tables 3.6 and 3.7.

TABLE 3.2

MEAN PERCENTAGE OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED BY  
DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES IN KANSAS IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS  
1900-1960

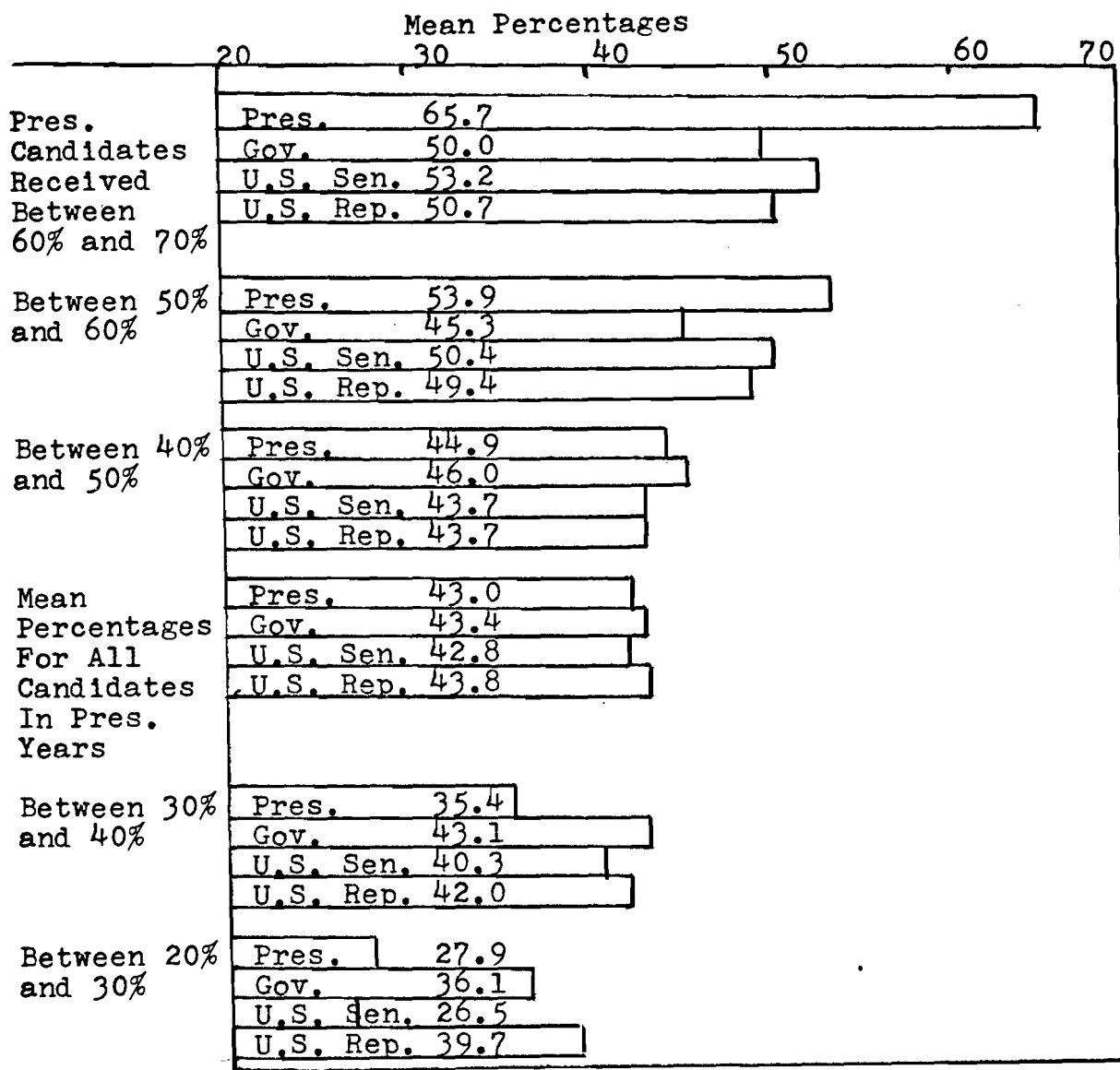
		U.S.	U.S.
	President	Governor	Senator Representative
When Presidential Candidate Received:			
Between 60% and 70%	<u>65.7</u>	<u>50.0</u>	<u>53.2</u> <u>50.7</u>
Between 50% and 60%	<u>53.9</u>	<u>45.3</u>	<u>50.4</u> <u>49.4</u>
Between 40% and 50%	<u>44.9</u>	<u>46.0</u>	<u>43.7</u> 43.7
Between 30% and 40%	35.4	43.1	40.3      42.0
Between 20% and 30%	27.9	36.1	26.5      39.7
All Elections	<u>43.0</u>	<u>43.4</u>	<u>42.8</u> <u>43.8</u>

Underlined percentages indicate those mean figures which are above the mean percentage for each of the respective offices.



FIGURE 3

MEAN PERCENTAGE OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED BY  
DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES IN KANSAS IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS  
1900-1960



This figure is a graphic representation of the mean percentage figures listed in Table 3.2

## CORRELATIONS

In a further attempt to determine a relationship between the presidential candidate and the candidates of the same party for the other three offices, correlations of the two-party vote for the candidates to be compared were run on a county-to-county basis for all Kansas counties. With the correlations, as with the percentages, a mean figure is used because it provides a clearer overall view of a mass of statistical information. The mean correlations were taken for the same division of percentage as those used previously in this study when only percentage figures were under consideration.

TABLE 3.3

MEAN CORRELATIONS OF TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE WITH REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AT DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE  
1900-1960

President Received:	Governor Correlation	U.S. Senator Correlation	U.S. Representative Correlation
70% to 80%	.631	.469	.463
60% to 70%	.687	.896	.485
50% to 60%	.889	.884	.514
40% to 50%	.609	.608	.517
30% to 40%	.293	.268	.482

TABLE 3.4

MEAN CORRELATIONS OF THE TWO-PARTY VOTE WITH DEMOCRATIC  
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AT DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE  
POPULAR VOTE  
1900-1960

President Received:	Governor Correlation	U.S. Senator Correlation	U.S. Representative Correlation
60% to 70%	.293	.268	.482
50% to 60%	.650	.608	.516
40% to 50%	.888	.884	.521
30% to 40%	.679	.896	.470
20% to 30%	.594	.469	.476

#### Republican Correlations

In the Republican party the mean correlations were higher between the vote for the presidential candidates and the vote for the candidates for both governor and United States senator than they were with the vote for the candidates for United States representative when these candidates were examined as a group. And, in general, the correlations were higher when the Republican presidential candidates received close to their average percentage (57.0) of the two-party popular vote and tended to become lower as their percentage both increased and decreased. The mean correlations between the vote for the Republican candidate for president and

governor were at their highest when the presidential candidates received between fifty and sixty per cent of the two-party vote. The mean correlations were at their highest between the vote for the candidates for president and United States senator when the presidential candidates received between sixty and seventy per cent, although the mean correlation was only .012 higher than it was between fifty and sixty per cent. The mean correlations between the vote for the candidates for president and United States representative were at their highest when the presidential candidates received between forty and fifty per cent, although this was only .004 higher than when the latter received between fifty and sixty per cent.

United States Senator. The Republican presidential candidates' vote correlated well with that of the senatorial candidates when the presidential candidates received between fifty and seventy per cent of the two-party vote. The correlation dropped as the percentage of the vote both increased and decreased. The highest correlation, .896, occurred when the presidential candidates received between sixty and seventy per cent. However, this was only .01 points higher than that between fifty and sixty per cent. The lowest correlation, .268, occurred when the presidential candidates received between thirty and forty per cent of

the two-party vote. The next lowest correlation, .469, resulted when the presidential candidates received between seventy and eighty per cent of the vote.

Governor. The vote for the Republican presidential and gubernatorial candidates had their highest correlation when the presidential candidates received between fifty and sixty per cent of the two-party vote, with a correlation of .889. Again, the correlations became lower as the percentage of the vote received by the presidential candidates moved in both directions but it decreased more rapidly as the percentage of votes went down. The lowest correlation occurred for the one election when the presidential candidates received between thirty and forty per cent of the votes and the next lowest between forty and fifty per cent with correlations of .293 and .609, respectively. For the three elections in the highest percentage range, seventy to eighty per cent, the correlation was .631 which was the highest of the correlations at that level.

United States Representative. Of the three groups, the votes cast for the candidates for United States representative had the lowest correlation with those of the presidential candidates. The highest mean correlation between the vote for the Republican candidates for president

and United States representative was only .517 and this occurred when the presidential candidates received between forty and fifty per cent of the two-party vote. The candidates for United States representative are the only Republican candidates to have their highest mean correlation with the presidential candidates when the presidential candidates received less than fifty per cent of the two-party vote. Their lowest mean correlation was .463 when the presidential candidates received between seventy and eighty per cent of the vote. However, this mean correlation is only .054 lower than the highest mean correlation.

#### Democratic Correlation

In the Democratic party the vote for the candidates for president correlate highest (Table 3.4) with that of the United States senatorial candidates and lowest with that of the candidates for United States representative. This is the same as for the Republican party except that in the case of the Democrats the percentage levels have been reversed, as is the case with all of the mean correlations. The vote for the candidates for governor and United States senator have their lowest correlations when the presidential candidates do their best at the highest percentage rather than at the lowest. The vote for the Democratic presidential and senatorial candidates correlated highest, .896, when the

presidential candidates received between thirty and forty per cent of the two-party vote and lowest when the presidential candidates received their highest percentage (sixty to seventy per cent) with a mean correlation of .268. The correlation between the vote for the presidential and gubernatorial candidates was highest when the presidential candidates received between forty and fifty per cent of the two-party vote and lowest when they received between sixty and seventy per cent with correlations of .888 and .293, respectively. The mean correlations between the vote for the presidential candidates and the candidates for United States representative were never very high with a correlation of .521 being the highest. This came when the presidential candidates received between forty and fifty per cent of the two-party vote. But, just as in the Republican party, the correlation was never very low, either. The lowest correlation was .470, occurring when the presidential candidates received between thirty and forty per cent of the vote. At the top percentage level (sixty to seventy per cent) the Democratic presidential candidates' vote correlated higher with the vote for the candidates for representative than they did with that of either the gubernatorial or senatorial candidates.

### General Information Gained from Correlations

The correlation was especially useful because it showed relationships between the vote for two candidates even when they did not run close to each other in the percentage of votes received and because the vote for two candidates may correlate well even though one loses and the other wins. In fact, they do not necessarily have to run close to each other in order for their vote to correlate well. If their percentages of the vote in the counties increase and decrease at the same time, even at very different percentages, they will correlate well. In a case such as this, a candidate may be having some effect on the number of votes received by another candidate but not enough affect to secure the election of the other candidate. It is a candidate's ability to influence voters to vote for another candidate that actually represents a candidate's coattail influence. It is not necessary for either candidate, or for both to be elected before it can be said that coattail influence exists.

It is also possible for two candidates to run very closely to each other and for their vote not to correlate well. If one candidate increases his percentage in a county while that of the other decreases, there will be a negative correlation. Probably one of the best examples



of this would be the 1924 elections for president and senator. In the Republican party the candidates for president and senator received percentages of 72.3 and 73.5 respectively on the state level (See Appendix, Table C). Since their percentages were so close it would seem likely that a high correlation would exist. This is not the case. Even though the percentages received in each county are generally very close, a great deal of fluctuation in per cent exists from one county to the next with first one candidate leading and then the other. The correlation, in this case, is .469 (See Appendix, Table E) which is not too low but nevertheless would not seem very close in light of the closeness of the state-wide percentages.

## II. COMPARISON OF PRESIDENTIAL TO NON-PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS

In general, neither party benefited greatly by the added voter turn-out in presidential years. That is, as far as winning and losing are concerned, both parties had about the same number of wins and losses in presidential and off-year elections. There is, however, an exception to this statement; the Republican senatorial candidates have suffered only two defeats in Kansas history and both of them occurred in presidential years.

The mean percentages of the two-party popular vote (Table 3.5) varied only slightly from presidential years to off-year elections. The greatest difference was for the gubernatorial candidates with the Republicans increasing their percentage by 2.1, and the Democrats having a corresponding drop, in presidential years. The Republican candidates for United States senator and United States representative had decreases of 1.3 and 0.2 per cent respectively in presidential years and there were corresponding increases for the Democratic candidates.

TABLE 3.5

MEAN PERCENTAGE OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS COMPARED TO NON-PRESIDENTIAL YEARS 1900-1960

	Republican		
	Governor	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
Presidential years	56.6	57.2	56.2
Non-Presidential years	54.5	58.5	56.4
	Democrat		
	Governor	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
Presidential years	43.4	42.8	43.8
Non-Presidential years	45.5	41.5	43.6

Even though the mean percentages (Table 3.5) were close in presidential and off-year elections, there was a difference in the range from highest to lowest in presidential and in off-year elections. The extreme percentages for each office, with the exception of the gubernatorial election of 1948, in individual election years were both higher and lower in presidential election years (See Appendix, Tables A, B, C and D).

With few exceptions Republican candidates received between fifty and sixty per cent of the two-party vote in off-year elections and even the exceptions did not stray far from this range. In presidential years the candidates, especially for governor and senator, tended to have more election results that were both higher and lower than the fifty to sixty per cent range. And, it should also be noted, they tended to go higher and lower in years when their presidential candidates were doing the same. Candidates for United States representative were more stable in both presidential and non-presidential years than were the candidates for governor and senator, but slightly more fluctuation could be seen in presidential years.

During the time concerned in this study (1900-1960), the presidential candidates received percentages of the two-party vote that were both higher and lower than the candidates

for governor and United States representative with a senatorial candidate receiving a higher percentage than the presidential candidate in one election. In 1924 the Republican senatorial candidate received 73.5 per cent of the two-party vote and the Democratic senatorial candidate received 26.5 per cent (See Appendix, Tables A and C). However, this seems to be exceptional because the second highest percentage for a Republican senatorial candidate was 65.7 per cent and the second lowest for a Democratic senatorial candidate was 34.3 per cent.

The Republican candidates all received their highest percentages in presidential years and, furthermore, these percentages were gained in years when the Republican presidential candidates received more than seventy per cent of the two-party vote. The Republican candidates for senator and United States representative received their lowest percentages in a presidential year and, in a year when the Republican presidential candidate received only 34.4 per cent of the two-party vote (which is the lowest percentage received by any Republican presidential candidate during the time covered in this study.) See Appendix, Table C. The Republican gubernatorial candidate in 1958 received only 43.0 per cent of the two-party vote (See Appendix, Table D). This was the lowest percentage recorded for a Republican for that office and it came in an off-year election.

A greater difference in mean percentage existed among the candidates for governor, senator and representative in off-year elections than in presidential years (Table 3.5). In presidential years the largest difference in mean percentages was between the candidates for senator and representative with a mean difference of 1.0 percentage points. In off-years the greatest difference in mean percentage was between the candidates for governor and senator with a mean difference of 4.0 percentage points. This information becomes interesting in light of the fact that there is much more fluctuation within an office from one election to the next in presidential years than in off-years and because there is a larger gap between the highest and lowest percentages in presidential years (See Appendix, Tables A, B, C and D). Because of this, it would seem that the mean difference in presidential years should be greater than in off-years if some factor were not causing the votes for the different offices to fluctuate together. Since the difference between presidential year and off-year elections is the presence of a presidential candidate it would seem likely that he is providing the influence which stabilizes the vote throughout the party.

COMPARISON OF CANDIDATES IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS TO NON-  
PRESIDENTIAL YEARS

The mean percentage for Republican gubernatorial candidates in presidential years was 56.6 per cent as compared to 54.5 per cent in off-year elections. When this is taken for a period of sixty years and thirty-one elections, a mean difference of 2.1 percentage points in the sixteen presidential year elections amounts to a rather large number of votes. These statistics point out very clearly that during this period the Republican gubernatorial candidates, on the average, did better in presidential years. In fact, they fared only slightly poorer than the presidential candidates who had a mean of 57.0 per cent. It would appear that some relationship did exist between the two groups of candidates and that, overall, the presidential candidates helped the gubernatorial candidates.

The mean percentages for the Republican candidates for United States senator and United States representatives were higher in off-year elections by mean percentage points of 1.6 and 0.2, respectively. For the senatorial candidates, especially, this seems to indicate that the presidential candidates, in general, have not been a help in gaining votes. A Republican senatorial candidate has never lost an election in the off-years whereas on two occasions (1912 and 1932)

Republican senatorial candidates have lost in presidential years. The lowest percentage a senatorial candidate received in an off-year election was 50.5 per cent followed by 55.3 per cent for the second lowest. In presidential years the lowest percentage was 46.8 per cent followed by 47.9 per cent and 51.3 per cent (See Appendix, Tables C and D). These data suggest that the Republican presidential candidates did not assist their senatorial candidates either in gaining votes or in winning elections.

The difference of 0.2 percentage points for the candidates for United States representative in off-year elections over presidential years hardly seems significant. The Republican candidates for United States representative, when grouped, lost two of fifteen elections in off-years with percentages of 49.0 per cent and 49.7 per cent, and lost two of sixteen elections in presidential years with percentages of 49.3 per cent and 49.5 per cent (See Appendix, Tables C and D). In the instance of the representatives the addition to the ticket of a presidential candidate seemed to have been of little importance as far as winning votes or elections are concerned.

### III. EXCEPTIONAL ELECTION YEARS

To further check the effect of the national ticket on the state candidates, the years 1912 and 1924 were

studied in some detail because in these years there were national-party splits. It is worth noting that the party upheavals at the national level did not slip by without repercussion at the state level. In both of these years the party which remained united seemed to have advantages, at both the national and state level, that it did not have in years when the opposing party remained united.

In 1912, with the Republican party split, the Democratic candidates for president, governor and United States senator were able to win and the Democratic candidates for United States representative, as a group, received more than fifty per cent (50.7%) of the two-party vote. The election for governor was extremely close with the Democratic candidate winning by only twenty-nine votes. The Republican senatorial candidates lost with the lowest percentage ever received by a Republican senatorial candidate, 46.8 per cent, and it marked one of the two times a Republican senatorial candidate has ever lost in Kansas. The Republican candidates for United States representative received their lowest percentage for any election held during the period of this study and it was one of only four elections held during the sixty-year period in which the combined vote for the Republican candidates for representative was less than fifty per cent



(See Appendix, Tables C and D). In general, 1912 was the worst defeat suffered by the Republican party during the time concerned in this study.

In 1924 a split occurred in the Democratic party and in that year the Republican party did much better than usual. The Republican candidates for president and senator received percentages of the two-party vote that were much higher than their mean percentage; the Republican candidate for governor ran ahead of the mean percentage for that office and the Republican candidates for representative received 55.4 per cent of the two-party vote, which, for them, was slightly less than the average of 56.2 for presidential years (See Appendix, Tables C and D). That year marked one of the worst defeats for the Democrats in Kansas during the time concerned in this study.

The fact that the Republican candidates for United States representatives did not do as well as their average for presidential years seems to indicate further that the candidates for United States representative are not as closely tied to the national ticket as are the candidates for the other two offices. In general, the candidates for United States representative have not correlated as well with the presidential candidates as have the candidates for the other

two offices and their mean percentages have not seemed to be as closely related to those of the presidential candidates.

#### IV. THE EFFECT OF THE NON-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES ON THEIR PARTY

In order to understand the effect of the presidential candidate on the rest of the party it is necessary to have a point of reference upon which to base conclusions. In order to find this point of reference, comparisons were made among the candidates other than the presidential candidates. The candidates for each office were compared to the candidates for the other two offices to see if one of the offices could possibly be dominant in the party.

In off-year elections when the mean percentages of the two-party vote received by the Republican senatorial candidates were compared to the mean percentages of the other candidates a general pattern can be seen (Table 3.6). When the senatorial candidates received between sixty and seventy per cent of the vote the candidates for governor and representative did better than when the senatorial candidates received between fifty and sixty per cent of the vote.

TABLE 3.6

MEAN PERCENTAGES OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED IN  
OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS WHEN THE SENATORIAL CANDIDATES RECEIVED  
DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE  
1902-1958

Republican Senatorial Candidates Received:	U.S. Senator	Governor	U.S. Representative
60% to 70%	63.7	60.9	58.3
50% to 60%	55.6	55.2	56.8
Democratic Senatorial Candidates Received:			
40% to 50%	44.4	44.8	43.2
30% to 40%	36.3	39.1	41.7

When this same type of comparison was made for the gubernatorial candidates, (Table 3.7) similar results were forthcoming. The candidates for the other two offices received their highest mean percentages when the Republican gubernatorial candidates received between sixty and seventy per cent and the candidates for representative did their poorest when the gubernatorial candidates received between forty and fifty per cent. The one exception to this general pattern was the senatorial candidate when the gubernatorial candidates received between forty and fifty per cent. However, since there is not a candidate running for senator

in every election, it so happened that there was only one senatorial election during the years the gubernatorial candidates received between forty and fifty per cent and in this election the senatorial candidate received 61.1 per cent of the two-party vote.

TABLE 3.7

MEAN PERCENTAGES OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS WHEN THE GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES RECEIVED DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE 1902-1958

Republican Gubernatorial Candidates Received:	Governor	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
60% to 70%	66.3	65.1	58.9
50% to 60%	54.4	55.6	56.7
40% to 50%	47.1	61.1	53.9
Democratic Gubernatorial Candidates Received:			
50% to 60%	52.9	38.9	46.1
40% to 50%	45.6	44.4	43.3
30% to 40%	33.7	34.9	41.1

In general this seems to show that some type of party momentum<sup>1</sup> is generated in some off-year elections. Since there is no presidential candidate, this cannot be attributed to him but must be the result of some other factor. However, it should be noted that the momentum does not reach the heights or depths in off-years that it does in presidential years. This, then would seem to indicate that although there is party momentum in both presidential and off-year elections, the presidential candidate is able to generate more momentum than any other candidate.

The correlation for off-year elections showed much the same thing as the correlation for presidential years. That is, the correlations became higher in the middle range, between fifty and sixty per cent for the Republicans and between forty and fifty per cent for the Democrats, and were poorer as the percentages went both higher and lower.

The vote for the gubernatorial candidates of the Republican party in off-year elections (Table 3.8) correlated highest with that for the senatorial candidates when the gubernatorial candidates received between fifty and sixty

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<sup>1</sup>Party momentum is defined as the ability of a party itself to attract votes. For example, the voters may feel it is time for a change and vote for the party that is out of power or that the economic problems of the time can better be solved by one party than the other.

per cent of the two-party vote with a correlation of .804. The second highest correlation came between sixty and seventy per cent and the lowest between forty and fifty per cent with correlations of .728 and .479, respectively. This pattern is about the same as that established between the vote for presidential candidates and the candidates for senator and governor in presidential years.

TABLE 3.8

MEAN CORRELATIONS OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE WITH  
REPUBLICAN GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS AT  
DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE  
1902-1958

	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
Gubernatorial Candidates Received:		
Between 60% and 70%	.728	.379
Between 50% and 60%	.804	.525
Between 40% and 50%	.479	.539

The mean correlation between the vote for the gubernatorial candidates and the candidates for representative was highest when the gubernatorial candidates received between forty and fifty per cent of the two-party vote with a .539 correlation. The next highest mean correlation came between

fifty and sixty per cent and the lowest correlation came between sixty and seventy per cent with correlations of .525 and .379, respectively. This overall lower correlation continued the trend that was established between the presidential candidates and the candidates for representatives.

In all of the elections in off-years the Republican senatorial candidates received between fifty and seventy per cent of the two-party vote. Because of this fact not many comparisons could be made between the senatorial candidates and the rest of the ticket. The mean correlation between the vote for the senatorial candidates and that of the gubernatorial candidates (Table 3.9) was higher when the senatorial candidates received between fifty and sixty per cent of the two-party vote with a .804 correlation. In the range between sixty and seventy per cent, the correlation was .645.

The mean correlations between the vote for the senatorial candidates and that of the candidates for representative were never very high. The higher correlation occurred when the senatorial candidates received between fifty and sixty per cent and the lower when they received between sixty and seventy per cent with correlations of .573 and .276, respectively.

TABLE 3.9

MEAN CORRELATIONS OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE WITH  
 REPUBLICAN SENATORIAL CANDIDATES IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS AT  
 DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE  
 1902-1958

	U.S. Representative	Governor
Senatorial Candidates Received:		
Between 60% and 70%	.276	.645
Between 50% and 60%	.573	.804

In the Democratic party experience much the same situation exists as in that of the Republican party. The votes for the gubernatorial and senatorial candidates correlate better with each other and poorer with that of the candidates for representative. The mean correlation between the vote for the gubernatorial and that for the senatorial candidates was highest (Table 3.10) when the gubernatorial candidates received between forty and fifty per cent of the two-party vote with a .804 correlation. The next highest correlation occurred when the gubernatorial candidates received between thirty and forty per cent and the lowest when they received between fifty and sixty per cent with correlations of .726 and .479, respectively.



TABLE 3.10

MEAN CORRELATIONS OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE WITH  
DEMOCRATIC GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS AT  
DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE  
1902-1958

	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
Gubernatorial Candidates Received:		
Between 50% and 60%	.479	.535
Between 40% and 50%	.804	.590
Between 30% and 40%	.726	.521

The correlations with the candidates for representative were, again, not as high as with the senatorial candidates. The highest correlation, in this case, came between forty and fifty per cent with a .590 correlation. The second highest correlation came between fifty and sixty per cent and the lowest between thirty and forty per cent with correlations of .535 and .521, respectively.

The vote for the senatorial candidates correlated higher with the vote for the gubernatorial candidates (Table 3.11) when the senatorial candidates received between forty and fifty per cent of the two-party vote and lower when they received between thirty and forty per cent with correlations of .804 and .645, respectively. The mean correlations with the candidates for representative were

both lower than the lowest correlation with the gubernatorial candidates. The higher correlation occurred between forty and fifty per cent with a correlation of .573 and the lower between thirty and forty per cent with a .489 correlation.

TABLE 3.11

MEAN CORRELATIONS OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE WITH  
DEMOCRATIC SENATORIAL CANDIDATES IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS AT  
DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE  
1902-1958

	U.S.	
	Representative	Governor
Senatorial Candidates Received:		
Between 40% and 50%	.573	.804
Between 30% and 40%	.489	.645

When the performance of the candidates, other than the presidential candidates, in presidential years are compared to off-year elections there are both similarities and differences. The vote for the gubernatorial candidates and that of the candidates for senator correlated best with each other and both correlated poorly with the vote for the candidates for representative in both presidential and off-year elections. The major finding was that the mean correlation among the vote for the three offices tended to be closer in presidential years than in off-year elections.

In the Republican party the highest correlation between the vote for the gubernatorial and senatorial candidates in presidential years (Table 3.12) occurred when the gubernatorial candidates' percentage fell between forty and fifty per cent. The lowest occurred between sixty and seventy per cent with correlations of .712 and .643, respectively. When the difference between these two correlations is compared to the difference in off-years (.804 for the high and .479 for the low) it can easily be seen that the correlations were more stable in presidential years. This trend also existed when the vote for the gubernatorial candidates was compared to that of the candidates for representative, but the difference between presidential-year elections and off-year elections was not as great.

TABLE 3.12

MEAN CORRELATIONS OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE WITH  
REPUBLICAN GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS AT  
DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE  
1902-1958

	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
Gubernatorial Candidates Received:		
Between 60% and 70%	.643	.518
Between 50% and 60%	.701	.434
Between 40% and 50%	.712	.576

In general, when the vote for the senatorial candidates was compared to that of the other candidates (Table 3.13), there did not seem to be sufficient statistics to reach a conclusion. In presidential years there were only eight senatorial elections and these fell into four different percentage divisions, with only one election in each of two of the divisions, two in another division, and four in one division.

TABLE 3.13

MEAN CORRELATIONS OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE WITH  
REPUBLICAN SENATORIAL CANDIDATES IN PRESIDENTIAL YEAR  
ELECTIONS AT DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE  
1900-1960

	Governor	U.S. Representative
Senatorial Candidates Received:		
Between 70% and 80%	.246	.191
Between 60% and 70%	.691	.755
Between 50% and 60%	.769	.564
Between 40% and 50%	.856	.681

The correlations between the vote for the Democratic gubernatorial candidates and that of the candidates for senator and representative (Table 3.14) were about the same as those for the Republicans except they were at different percentage divisions. Here, again, the point of major

importance is not the way the various factors correlate, but that the ranges from the highest to the lowest mean correlations were less in presidential years.

TABLE 3.14

MEAN CORRELATIONS OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE WITH DEMOCRATIC GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES IN PRESIDENTIAL YEAR ELECTIONS AT DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE LEVELS OF THE POPULAR VOTE 1900-1960

	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
Gubernatorial Candidates Received:		
Between 50% and 60%	.712	.576
Between 40% and 50%	.706	.522
Between 30% and 40%	.643	.573

The fact that the correlations tend to be closer in presidential years would seem to indicate there is some force which holds the candidates closer together in presidential years. It would seem likely that it is the presidential candidate who provides the necessary influence to keep his party together.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The information presented in this thesis seems to point out that the phenomenon called the coattail effect did have an influence on the elections held in Kansas during the time covered by this study (1900-1960). This study was not designed to point out coattail influence in specific elections and, therefore, only general observations have been presented. There are, no doubt, elections during this period that could be used as arguments against coattail influence, but these elections were not ignored, as they are incorporated with the other elections and in this way their effect was diminished. However, if the elections went against the general trend they affected the averages adversely and in this sense also had an effect on the findings of this study.

No attempt is being made to prove that a specific presidential candidate is responsible for the election, or defeat, of any candidate. What is being high-lighted is that there are general patterns which point to relationships between the vote for the presidential candidates and that of the candidates for the other offices of their party.

I. THE EFFECT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES  
ON THE VOTES RECEIVED BY HIS PARTY

The mean percentages (Tables 3.1 and 3.2) indicate that there was a relationship between the vote for the presidential candidates and that of the candidates for the other offices. They demonstrate that when the presidential candidates run above their mean percentage of 57.0 the other members of his party, on the average, run above their means also and that as the percentages received by the presidential candidates dropped the mean percentages received by the other candidates dropped also. And even if it were possible to attribute this to a type of party momentum, which it has been pointed out exists in off-years as well as in presidential years, this momentum is more noticeable in presidential years. It causes a greater fluctuation in the vote; i.e., candidates tend to receive percentages of the two-party vote that are further above and further below their average percentage of the vote in presidential years than they do in off-year elections. And, since the presidential candidates are probably the best known candidates, it seems likely that they would be the major contributors to their party's momentum or lack of momentum. If this were true, then the added momentum that would be attributed to the presidential candidates would, in essence, be the worth of their coattail influence.

The idea of party momentum can be supported by the fact that in the Republican party the candidates for governor, senator and representative all received their highest mean percentage when the presidential candidates were carrying the state by over seventy per cent (Table 3.1). And, at the other end of the scale, the Republican candidates for senator and representative received their lowest percentages in 1912 when their presidential candidate received only 34.3 per cent, which was the lowest percentage received by a Republican presidential candidate during the period covered by this study (See Appendix, Table C). So, in these cases, it would appear that the Republican presidential candidates' "coattails" were able to increase the vote for his party members in some cases and lower their vote in others. Of course, these examples are only the extreme cases, but a study of the mean percentages demonstrates the relationship at other levels as well.

The mean correlation shows that when the Republican presidential candidates received over 70 per cent of the two-party vote their party members did not correlate as well with them, on the average, as when they received a lower percentage of the two-party vote. At the same time, however, it indicated that the correlations for governor and senator are higher than when the presidential candidates received below 40 per cent of the two-party vote. From this information it seems that



the Republican presidential candidates are better able to help their party members than hurt them. At least this appears to be true for the candidates for governor and senator. But even though the correlations were not as high when the presidential candidates ran poorly, when they ran poorly enough (below 40 per cent) the presidential candidates did seem to be able to exert enough downward influence on the party to cause the defeat of the other candidates. Even though the other Republican candidates never ran too far below their mean percentages, there were times when they ran far enough below to be defeated and, since it is defeat that the candidates want to avoid, any time the presidential candidates influence their vote enough to cause it to drop below fifty per cent, the damage is done.

However, it should be mentioned that a simple loss on the part of a Republican presidential candidate was not enough to cause the defeat of his party's candidates. The voters seemed reluctant to vote against other Republicans just because they did not vote for the presidential candidate. When the Republican presidential candidate was defeated in a fairly close election, it did not cause the rest of the party to be defeated; but when the presidential candidate was being soundly defeated his percentage of the vote was low enough that there was not enough split-ticket voting to prevent the other candidates from being defeated.

In the Republican party the vote for the gubernatorial candidates correlated better with that of the presidential candidates than did the vote for the other offices when the presidential candidates received their highest percentages. Also, the gubernatorial candidates received a mean increase of 2.1 percentage points of the two-party popular vote in presidential years over off-year elections. These figures would indicate that the gubernatorial candidates have run better in presidential years, and, it would seem likely, the presidential candidates' coattails would be the contributing factor.

The candidates for senator and representative in the Republican party did better in off-years than in presidential year elections. The senatorial candidates seemed to have been especially hurt in presidential years because they have never lost in elections in off-years but have lost twice in presidential years. And, in their case, the influence of the presidential candidates seems especially important because when the two losses occurred the presidential candidates were not only being defeated, but were being defeated with the lowest percentages received by a Republican presidential candidate during the time covered by this study (See Appendix, Table C). So it would appear that the inability of the presidential candidate to appeal to the voters could very well be the reason for the senatorial candidates' losses.

In the Democratic party there has occurred just the opposite of what happened in the Republican party. The gubernatorial candidates seem to have been hurt the most by the presidential candidates and the candidates for senator and representative seem to have been helped.

The fact that Kansas is a Republican-dominated state may be part of the answer to why the Democratic gubernatorial candidates on the average do better in off-year elections. As pointed out in The American Voter, states are more likely to change administrations in off-years than in presidential years when the party in power in the state is the same as that which carries the state for the presidency.<sup>1</sup> If this is true, it would mean that the Democratic gubernatorial candidates have a better chance of winning in Kansas in off-year elections or, at least, would tend to gain more votes.

Strictly from the point of view of the correlations it would seem that the Republican presidential candidates have a greater influence on the vote received by candidates for governor and senator, while the Democratic presidential candidates have a greater influence on the vote received by candidates for representative. However, as far as winning and losing are concerned the senatorial candidates seem to

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<sup>1</sup>Campbell, The American Voter, p. 557.

be the ones that are most affected by the presidential candidates. And, in this case, it was the Republicans who were affected adversely and the Democrats who were affected positively.

These are not necessarily contradictory statements. For example, in the case of the senatorial candidates the fact that they correlated well with the presidential candidates would mean that they would be more likely to follow the lead of the presidential candidate and in years when their party's presidential candidate did poorly they also would do poorly. A high mean correlation would mean that the presidential candidate was not only influencing the voters to vote for their party's senatorial candidates when they run above their mean percentage, but also that they were influencing the voters to vote against their party's senatorial candidate when they run below their mean percentage.

## II. CHANGES IN THE AMOUNT OF COATTAIL INFLUENCE FROM ELECTIONS TO ELECTION

The study indicates that the presidential candidates do not always have the same degree of influence on the voters in every election. If they did, the correlations would always be the same, or at least very close to the same, in every election. This was not the case. A considerable

difference was found in the correlations from office to office within an election and from election to election. This, then, points out that there are factors which effect the amount of coattail influence possessed by a presidential candidate.

There seems to be two and possibly three factors which affect the ability of the presidential candidates to help the other members of his party: (1) the percentage of the vote the candidate himself receives, (2) the unity of the party, and (3) the identification of the candidate with the party.

The first of these points, the percentage of the vote the presidential candidate himself receives, has been studied at length in this thesis. In general the statistics show a relationship between the percentage of the two-party vote received by the presidential candidates and the percentage of the two-party vote received by the candidates for each of the other three offices. This relationship diminished as the percentages received by the presidential candidates moved toward the upper and lower extremes; i.e., in the Republican party when the presidential candidate received over 70 per cent or under 40 per cent of the two-party vote. The study also indicates that as a presidential candidate's percentage of the two-party vote increased the more likely other members of his party were to be elected and that as

his percentage decreased the less likely other members of his party were to be elected. However, a simple win or loss on the part of a presidential candidate was not necessarily enough to cause the victory or defeat of other party members.

The second factor, unity of the party, was not studied at length, but nevertheless seems to be of sufficient importance to warrant mentioning. In the two elections where there were major party splits the correlations were low and also the candidates in the party where the split occurred were defeated. To understand coattail influence it may be necessary to make an historical study of selected elections to determine the relationship, if any, between party unity and the ability of the presidential candidates to help their party members.

The third factor, the identification of the candidate with the party, could perhaps explain Eisenhower's lack of influence in attracting votes for other members of his party. Eisenhower, although he had an overwhelming amount of personal popularity, was a relative newcomer to Republican party politics. For this reason it could be possible that a great number of voters did not view Eisenhower as a Republican and felt no obligation to vote for other members of his party. This is just speculation and is outside the realm of this study but seems to be a possible answer for Eisenhower's lack of coattail influence.

### III. THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE'S STABILIZING INFLUENCE: A MEASURE OF THE COATTAIL EFFECT

Presidential candidates seem to be a stabilizing influence on their party. During the time covered in this study there were smaller differences in mean percentages among the candidates for governor, senator and representative in presidential years than in off-year elections (Table 3.5). This indicates a closer relationship among the candidates in presidential years.

If the presidential candidates do cause the candidates for the other three offices to be more closely related during presidential-year elections, it is reasonable to conclude that they are having an influence on the votes received by the candidates of their party. Hence, there is support for the hypothesis that coattail influence is a reality.

### IV. PARTY SPLITS

It is clear that party splits at the national level have had disastrous effects on the parties' candidates in the state of Kansas. The Republican party split of 1912 dealt the state candidates, as a whole, their worst defeat of any election that was held during the time of this study. And the split of 1924 in the Democratic party was only slightly less disastrous for that party's state candidates.

These party splits not only disrupted the party in general but also resulted in low correlations between the vote for the presidential candidates and that of the other party members. However, even though the correlations were low, the presidential candidates ran so poorly that they could very well have been the major reason for the defeat of the other candidates of their party. But it seems logical that much of the effect a presidential candidate has on his party could be based on the unity of the party itself. If the party is not unified the voter knows it and thus when he marks the ballot it becomes easier for him to split the ticket.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

In general this study was able to find some arguments to support the thesis that the presidential candidates of a political party do have an effect on the vote cast for other members of their party's ticket.

It indicated that the presidential candidates were a stabilizing influence on their party. In presidential years there was a difference of 1.0 percentage points in the mean percentage among the candidates for governor, United States senator and United States representative. In non-presidential years there was a difference of 4.0 percentage points, thus indicating that the candidates were more closely



related in presidential years. The likely cause of this closer relationship is the presence of a presidential candidate on the ticket.

In 1912 and again in 1924, splits occurred in the national Republican and Democratic parties respectively. In both elections the candidates of the party which remained united ran above their mean percentages for presidential years, with the exception that the Republican candidates for United States representative ran 0.8 percentage points below their mean percentage in the 1924 election. This figure is so small, however, that it could not be considered of major significance. In both elections the presidential candidate of the party in which the split occurred ran well below his mean percentage and in both elections the candidates for the other three offices in the party in which the split occurred were defeated.

When the presidential candidates of both the Democratic and Republican parties ran above their mean percentages the candidates for the other three offices of their respective parties also tended to run above their mean percentages. When the presidential candidates ran below their mean percentages the other candidates also tended to run below their mean percentages. The further the presidential candidates increased their vote above their mean percentages the further the other candidates tended to increase their vote above

their mean percentages. And, the further the presidential candidates ran below their mean percentages the further the other candidates tended to run below their mean percentages. These corresponding increases and decreases provide a strong indication that a relationship does exist between the vote cast for the presidential candidates and that cast for the other candidates on their parties' ticket.

The conclusion, therefore, is that in general the presidential candidates did demonstrate coattail influence in Kansas elections during the time period 1900 through 1960.

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APPENDIX

## APPENDIX

I. Percentages: All percentages indicate the per cent of the two-party popular vote received by a candidate of a party, or as in the case of the candidates for representative the vote cast for all of the candidates, in a given election at the state level.

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II. Correlations: All correlations indicate a comparison of a candidate, or as in the case of the candidates for representative a comparison of the candidates in one election year as a group, to another candidate of the same party at the state level.

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TABLE A

PER CENT OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED BY DEMOCRATIC  
CANDIDATES IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS

Year	President	Governor	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
1900	46.7	47.5		44.9
1904	28.8	38.5		37.8
1908	45.0	45.2		45.2
1912	65.7	50.0	53.2	50.7
1916	53.1	35.2		50.0
1920	33.4	40.2	34.3	37.1
1924	27.7	36.1	26.5	44.6
1928	27.3	33.6		36.8
1932	54.8	49.5	52.1	50.5
1936	53.9	51.3	48.7	47.8
1940	42.7	50.0		42.3
1944	39.4	33.3	41.3	37.0
1948	45.4	41.5	43.7	42.5
1952	30.7	42.5		40.6
1956	34.3	55.6	41.1	46.9
1960	39.3	44.0	44.5	45.7



TABLE B

PER CENT OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED BY DEMOCRATIC  
CANDIDATES IN NON-PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS

Year	President	Governor	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
1902		42.4		42.7
1906		49.6		43.6
1910		47.4		41.6
1914		43.6	49.5	51.0
1918		31.6	34.6	41.3
1922		51.8		45.1
1926		35.8	35.3	40.9
1930		50.0	38.9	42.9
1934		46.0		49.2
1938		46.4	43.8	41.0
1942		42.4	41.4	39.4
1946		46.8		40.4
1950		45.3	44.7	41.2
1954		46.5	44.8	43.5
1958		57.0		50.3

TABLE C

PER CENT OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED BY REPUBLICAN  
CANDIDATES IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS

Year	President	Governor	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
1900	53.3	52.5		55.1
1904	71.2	61.5		62.2
1908	55.0	54.8		54.8
1912	34.3	50.0	46.8	49.3
1916	46.9	64.8		50.0
1920	66.6	59.8	65.7	62.9
1924	72.3	63.9	73.5	55.4
1928	72.7	66.4		63.2
1932	45.2	50.5	47.9	49.5
1936	46.1	48.7	51.3	52.2
1940	57.3	50.0		57.7
1944	60.6	66.7	58.7	63.0
1948	54.6	58.5	56.3	57.5
1952	69.3	57.5		59.4
1956	65.7	44.4	58.9	53.1
1960	60.7	56.0	55.5	54.3

TABLE D

PER CENT OF THE TWO-PARTY POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED BY REPUBLICAN  
CANDIDATES IN NON-PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS

Year	President	Governor	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
1902		57.6		57.3
1906		50.4		56.4
1910		52.6		58.4
1914		56.4	50.5	49.0
1918		68.4	65.4	58.7
1922		48.2		54.9
1926		64.2	64.7	59.1
1930		50.0	61.1	57.1
1934		54.0		50.8
1938		53.6	56.2	59.0
1942		57.6	58.6	60.6
1946		53.2		59.6
1950		54.7	55.3	58.8
1954		53.5	57.4	56.5
1958		43.0		49.7

TABLE E

CORRELATIONS OF THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES TO THEIR  
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Year	Correlation of vote for President to that for:		
	Governor	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
1900	.988		.233
1904	.764		.650
1908	.955		.722
1912	.293	.268	.482
1916	.401		.678
1920	.738	.924	.708
1924	.442	.469	.420
1928	.688		.319
1932	.465	.557	.361
1936	.961	.658	.511
1940	.736		.472
1944	.842	.918	.587
1948	.874	.884	.630
1952	.482		.290
1956	.591	.900	.376
1960	.781	.842	.463

TABLE F

CORRELATION OF THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR AND UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS

Year	Correlation of vote for governor to that for:	
	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
1900		.230
1904		.568
1908		.653
1912	.856	.715
1916		.399
1920	.691	.610
1924	.431	.449
1928		.442
1932	.406	.478
1936	.624	.496
1940		.315
1944	.855	.733
1948	.889	.647
1952		.084
1956	.656	.517
1960	.820	.456

TABLE G

CORRELATION OF THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES  
REPRESENTATIVE TO THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES FOR UNITED  
STATES SENATOR IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS

Correlation of vote for United States senator to that for:	
Year	U.S. Representative
1912	.681
1920	.755
1924	.191
1932	.419
1936	.632
1944	.645
1948	.659
1956	.365
1960	.521

TABLE H

CORRELATION OF THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR AND UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR IN OFF-YEAR ELECTION

Year	Correlation of vote for governor to that for:	
	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
1902		.930
1906		.311
1910		.359
1914	.710	.720
1918	.858	.689
1922		.687
1926	.598	.069
1930	.479	.208
1934		.481
1938	.889	.468
1942	.791	.634
1946		.481
1950	.800	.568
1954	.831	.300
1958		.721

TABLE I

CORRELATION OF THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS

Correlation of vote for United States senator to that for:	
Year	U.S. Representative
1914	.616
1918	.645
1926	.033
1930	.150
1938	.465
1942	.699
1950	.594
1954	.490



TABLE J

CORRELATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES  
TO THEIR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Year	Correlation of vote for President to that for:		
	Governor	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
1900	.988		.271
1904	.764		.621
1908	.955		.611
1912	.293	.268	.482
1916	.522		.675
1920	.700	.924	.708
1924	.530	.469	.420
1928	.688		.387
1932	.465	.557	.361
1936	.961	.658	.511
1940	.736		.573
1944	.842	.918	.587
1948	.874	.884	.630
1952	.482		.204
1956	.591	.900	.376
1960	.781	.842	.463

TABLE K

CORRELATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES  
 SENATOR AND UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CANDIDATES  
 FOR GOVERNOR IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS

Correlation of vote for governor to that for:		
Year	Senator	Representative
1900		.292
1904		.855
1908		.640
1912	.856	.715
1916		.333
1920	.710	.673
1924	.431	.449
1928		.498
1932	.406	.478
1936	.624	.496
1940		.640
1944	.855	.733
1948	.889	.647
1952		.348
1956	.656	.517
1960	.820	.456

TABLE I

CORRELATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR IN PRESIDENTIAL YEARS

Correlation of vote for United States senator to that for:	
Year	U.S. Representative
1912	.681
1920	.755
1924	.191
1932	.419
1936	.632
1944	.645
1948	.659
1956	.365
1960	.521

TABLE M

CORRELATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR AND UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS

Year	Correlation of vote for governor to that for:	
	U.S. Senator	U.S. Representative
1902		.931
1906		.833
1910		.267
1914	.710	.721
1918	.858	.689
1922		.687
1926	.598	.352
1930	.479	.195
1934		.463
1938	.889	.468
1942	.791	.634
1946		.727
1950	.800	.568
1954	.831	.293
1958		.721

TABLE N

CORRELATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CANDIDATES FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR IN OFF-YEAR ELECTIONS

Correlation of vote for United States senator to that for:	
Year	U.S. Representative
1914	.616
1918	.645
1926	.530
1930	.292
1938	.465
1942	.699
1950	.594
1954	.490