



## KANSAS LEGEND BIOGRAPHY

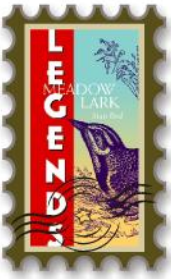
### Charles Curtis (1860-1936)

Charles Curtis was born in Topeka when Kansas was still just a U.S. Territory. The year after his birth, Kansas received statehood. While Curtis was still a young boy, his mother passed away and his father left him. He was sent to live with his mother's relatives on the Kaw Indian Reservation in Morris County.



Curtis attended Topeka High School and was admitted to the bar in 1881. Just three years later, he was elected County Prosecutor of Shawnee County and was a strict enforcer of the prohibition law. Curtis first received national notoriety in 1892 when he was elected as a Republican to the House of Representatives, to which he would dedicate 14 years of service.

Immediately following his resignation from the House, Curtis filled a Kansas Senate seat that had been vacated by Joseph R. Burton. After failing to be re-elected in 1912, he returned to the Senate in 1914 and was named party whip in 1915. Curtis served on numerous committees and was active in finance, agriculture and Indian affairs. He became majority leader in 1925.



Due to his strong contributions to the Republican Party and his dedication to the every American regardless of race, gender or occupation, Curtis was chosen by Herbert Hoover as his vice presidential running mate in the 1928 election. The pair won by a landslide. During his four years in office, Curtis endorsed the five-day work week; supported women's, Indians' and farmers' rights; and was an anti-child labor activist.

Despite all of Curtis' success, he and Herbert Hoover failed to win re-election in 1932. Curtis then retired from political office and returned to practicing law in Washington, D.C. He continued to do so and to take an active interest in political affairs until he suffered a heart attack in 1936 and died.

To this day, Charles Curtis is the only vice president with traceable Indian heritage. Additionally, he is the only Kansan to have ever held this position and was the last vice president to keep a mustache while in office. His memorial can be found in the Topeka cemetery.

