

GALUSHA GROW

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

Galusha Grow was a lucky man, who was handpicked to succeed his predecessor in the Congress of the United States. And it was lucky for the nation and the State as a whole to have him there. He served a long distinguished career in both Government and Politics. In the history books Grow is not listed as a politician, but rather as a statesman. He was born in Connecticut, graduated from Amherst, and came to Pennsylvania--as did many residents of the Nutmeg State--to the northern tier counties. Their roots--people and fine elm trees--are still there. Grow was admitted to the bar of Susquehanna County, and practiced law with David Wilmot, who had written the much-disputed Wilmot Proviso. That incidentally, provided Wilmot's political downfall and Grow's good fortune. When the Proviso passed the House and failed to be talked down in the Senate, Wilmot was doomed. He ran again for his seat in the house, was reelected in an election which attracted national attention; an election which had much to do to strengthen the anti-slavery movement in the North. But when Wilmot came up for re-election in 1850, conservative Democrats who were against the Proviso suggested that Wilmot withdraw and select another man around whom everyone could unite. Wilmot agreed on condition that the one nominated would be faithfully anti-slavery in thinking, and be personally acceptable to himself. He was asked to suggest a man, and he named Galusha A. Grow, the young member

of the bar in Susquehanna County who had studied with him. Thus, in 1850, Grow went to Congress and he was six times re-elected, once unanimously from that district. During his first three terms he was a Free-Soil Democrat and during the last three a Republican, as anti-slavery became the standard of the new party. During the harsh times of the Civil War, Galusha Grow became Speaker of the House and one of its distinguished ones. He is most famed, however, as the father and the author of the Homestead Act, which opened the nation's west to migration. He fought for its enactment for ten years and finally saw the day, as Speaker, when he signed the act. Known as a statesman, he was offered the ministry to Russia in 1879 but rejected it. He re-entered government in 1894 and was Pennsylvania's congressman at large for four terms. Politically he was a delegate to the National Republican Conventions in 1864, 1884 and 1892, and in 1868 Pennsylvania State Republican Chairman. Galusha Grow rendered a record of conspicuous service to both the people in Pennsylvania and the nation. The Homestead Act was probably the most forward-looking legislation in Congress during the 19th century. Galush Grow died in 1907 at 85 years of age, leaving behind an unparalleled record in the annals of the United States.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.