



The Mayors: The Chicago Political Tradition

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Green and Holli have tapped America's best-qualified observers to help us fathom the "byzantine labyrinth that honeycombs and undergirds Chicago politics."

Here is a political roadmap through the labyrinth. There are insightful essays about the recent mayors: Richard J. Daley, Michael A. Bilandic, Jane M. Byrne, and Harold Washington. Less well known even to astute political observers are Edward F. Dunne, reformer and reputed radical, who had "long-haired friends" and "short-haired women" in his administration; the politically reticent Fred A. Busse; Big Bill Thompson, a buffoon whose departure from office was much rued by Al Capone; William E. Dever, "an honorable man" who was "soundly defeated by a loudmouthed lout [Thompson] who barely avoided imprisonment"; Anton Cermak, smart, tough, a winner stopped only by an assassin's bullet; Edward J. Kelly, who balanced scandal and accomplishment to reign for 14 years; and Martin H. Kennelly, a nice guy, honest, dignified, inept.

The earliest mayor to be considered is Joseph Medill. More famous as editor and publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*, Medill was the mayor who, after the Great Fire of 1871, guided the city in its rise from ashes. Representing the city at the turn of the century was long-time mayor Carter Harrison II, a progressive, effective mayor who, when forced by reformers to close the red-light district, worried that he had merely driven the whorehouses into the neighborhoods.

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