



# The Gentleman from Illinois: Stories from Forty Years of Elective Public Service

*Alan J Dixon*

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In 1993, Alan J. Dixon's political career came to an end with a defeat—the first one in his forty-three years of elected service. Beginning his legislative career in 1950 as a Democrat in the Illinois House of Representatives, Dixon also served in the Illinois State Senate, worked as state treasurer and secretary of state, and concluded his political career as a U.S. senator. *The Gentleman from Illinois* is an insider's account of Illinois politics in the second half of the twentieth century, providing readers with fascinating stories about the people he encountered and events he participated in and witnessed during his four decades of service.

With a degree of candor often unheard of in political memoirs, *The Gentleman from Illinois* reveals Dixon's abilities as a storyteller. At times chatty and self-effacing, Dixon pulls no punches when it comes to detailing the personalities of major political figures—such as Mayor Richard J. Daley, Adlai Stevenson, Paul Simon, and presidents of the United States. Indeed, he uses this same honest approach when examining himself, fully describing the setbacks and embarrassing moments that peppered his own life.

As a moderate Democrat who regularly crossed party lines in his voting and his views, Dixon also shares his thoughts on the proper way to run a government, the difficulties of passing legislation, the balancing act required to be a statewide official, and other valuable observations on local, state, and national politics. Full of behind-the-scenes insights presented in 121 short vignettes, *The Gentleman from Illinois* entertains as much as it informs, making it a necessary book for everyone interested in Illinois politics.



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