

When Lynch Davidson was inaugurated as lieutenant governor in 1921, he came to the office already recognized as one of the pioneers of the state's lumber industry. A self-educated individual, he had begun his career in 1887 at the age of 15 as a sawmill roustabout. He proceeded to learn the business rapidly, and by 1921, Davidson had established a succession of companies involved in all areas of retail and wholesale lumber processing and distribution.

Davidson, born on January 3, 1873, in Cotile, Louisiana, came to Texas with his parents when he was an infant. The family settled in Groesbeck where he later attended high school. By the time Davidson was graduated in 1887, he had already decided to pursue a career as a lumberman.

He familiarized himself with all phases of the business, working at various jobs in the camps and mills and eventually concentrating his efforts on the merchandising operations. After five successful years as a salesman in Mexico, Davidson went into business for himself and opened his first lumberyard in Laredo. A year later, in 1897, he moved to Houston and during the next 24 years organized extensive logging, milling, production, and distribution businesses, finally incorporating these diversified holdings into Lynch Davidson and Company in 1921.

Davidson, who strongly believed that businessmen of vision and ability were needed in the legislature, first ran for state office in 1918. He won a seat in the House of Representatives of the 36th Legislature, but served only part of his term. He resigned in 1919 and was appointed to the state senate to fill the unexpired term of R. M. Johnstone. While a member of that body, Davidson, who had previously used modern and sophisticated methods in his lumber ventures, set a precedent by being the first senator to use an airplane for state business.

Davidson successfully ran for lieutenant governor in 1920. While presiding over the Senate of the 37th Legislature, he advocated several measures that the legislature enacted into law, including bills increasing appropriations for rural schools to \$2.5 million (the largest amount until that time), providing for eradication of the pink bollworm, and establishing compensation for destroyed crops.

While he was lieutenant governor, Davidson was also appointed chairman of the Texas State Railroad, which had been built as part of the state prison system and had been running at a loss. Under Davidson's chairmanship, however, it soon began to show a profit and he remained as the head of its board until 1943.

At the end of his term in 1923, he returned to Houston and, until his death on January 27, 1952, was considered one of the state's most prominent businessmen. In addition to his presidency of Lynch Davidson and Company, which through his executive abilities became one of the leading lumber businesses in the southwest, the former lieutenant governor served as director of both the Second National Bank and the First Texas Joint Stock Land Bank. Also active in many public service capacities, Davidson was a member of the United States Good Roads and Highway Association, held membership on the board of the Texas Historical Society, and served as chairman of the advisory committee of the Salvation Army in South Texas.