

## *Iowa People and Events . . .*

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### Attractions of the South

Iowans continue to travel the world over—hardly a ship of passage leaves an American port without the passenger list includes someone from the Hawkeye state. And it is the same, only more definitely upon our own continent. From Alaska to Mexico and South America the Iowa traveler is found almost everywhere. He seems to have an insatiable desire to seek new places, to go everywhere and see everything.

The forty-eight states all have attraction for him, and in all seasons of the year travel by rail, bus and automobile conveys thousands in every direction and to varied destinations. During the winter season the travel is mostly southward, and many a visitor becomes a resident, hoping to find the milder climate beneficial and relying upon his business or professional ability to obtain a foothold that will yield livelihood for him and his family. One such who has located in a southern state and having become somewhat acclimated tells of the differences observed and contended with there, but is not at all critical.

Although he has enjoyed the new residence for some time, he states that he still feels the downright poverty of the South, occasioned without doubt by the lower scale of production by its residents. While there are a number of persons there who have means and property, and of course there is great wealth in the cities, one sees evidences of poverty on every hand. As an example, the average home of the negro population is a three-roomed "shot-gun" sort of house, set on piers without adequate ventilation or conveniences, and constructed more like sheds with corrugated metal roofs; and the negro men are paid, in many instances, only \$4 a day, a figure difficult to live upon.

And here and there is found a white family faring no better.

Another ANNALS reader describes living conditions in some of the gulf states improving rapidly, particularly in Texas and Florida, the latter depending much upon winter residence there of Northerners. Productive capacity has been rising in most of these states and many northern people, including a generous sprinkling from Iowa enjoy residence there, adding their activity and resources to development in industrial rather than agricultural lines. Oils, rosin and lumber development have earned great wealth in some sections and vast opportunities in cities like Houston, Atlanta and Miami have attracted Northern energy and capital, with resultant spirited growth of varied lines of business. Widespread lethargy is no longer a general characteristic, although poverty and slowness in acquiring of substance by the native masses is still noticeable, as well as some degree of reluctance to keep up with the gait of the imported worker.

The automobile has lessened the feeling of distance between sections of the country, as well as added to opportunity of favorable acquaintances with areas heretofore not well known or appreciated sufficiently to encourage emigration now progressing rapidly and favored by earlier residents, in contrast to conditions obtaining a decade ago. It is thus that the continued loss of population by Iowa perhaps may be explained.

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### The First Christmas Cards

The first Christmas cards were sent over one hundred years ago, in 1846, by Sir Henry Cole, of London, England. At that time Sir Henry was disturbed because certain financial losses during the year had made it impossible for him to remember a host of friends with gifts. He did not wish to offend anybody by leaving them off his list, which would have happened if he had sent gifts to a limited number of his friends.

It was a situation that was very disturbing, but he

solved it in a novel manner. He had cards hand painted with sprays of mistletoe and holly, and on each card he wrote in ink a message expressing good will and happiness for each one of his friends. On the evening before Christmas he sent a messenger out to distribute those cards to all of his friends.

The cards varied somewhat and some attracted the attention of a printer in London. The following year, 1847, that printer printed one thousand, just as an experiment, to test the popularity of Christmas cards. He hardly expected to sell all, but to his surprise, the demand far exceeded the supply and he might have sold thrice as many.

From that year, Christmas cards were more in demand, although it was not until 1860 that dispatching them by messenger was replaced by the mails, and postoffices had to hire extra clerks just for the handling of these greetings.

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### Signed for Two Presidents

An Iowa-born woman, who performed a unique public service for two presidents, passed away in Washington, D. C., May 24, 1954. She was Mrs. George C. Dietz, who was empowered legally to "forge" the names of two presidents.

As an Interior department clerk in the General Land Office from 1931 to 1944, Mrs. Dietz was given the permission by executive order to sign the name of Pres. Herbert Hoover to homestead land grants as part of her job. She did the same for Franklin D. Roosevelt when he was president. Several Iowa governors on occasion lodged similar responsibility with secretaries who would sign their names in faultless manner.

The former Leafie E. Scott, Mrs. Dietz was born in 1876, in Keokuk, Iowa. As a young girl she went to Silver Cliff, Colo., where her father worked in a silver mine during a silver rush. It was there she met Mr. Dietz, whom she married in 1895. They lived in Denver, where Mr. Dietz practiced law until 1918, when

they removed to Washington. Mr. Dietz was a lawyer in the Interior department until his death in 1929.

Mrs. Dietz is survived by two sons, John E. Dietz, 9143 Sligo Creek parkway, Silver Spring, with the Federal Mediation Service; Joseph M. Dietz, Harrisonburg, Va.; and a daughter, Mrs. Dorothy Trautman, with whom she lived at 8424 Queen Anne's drive, Silver Spring.

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## An Iowan on Brotherhood

Wm. M. Beardshear:\* Washington monument, at the seat of our national government, is the highest monument in the world erected in memory of one man. The states and territories organized at the time of its erection each contributed a stone upon which is the inscription of some leading sentiment of the contributing state. Upon the stone contributed by Iowa is the inscription: "Iowa, the affections of whose people, like the rivers of her borders, flow on to inseparable union."

In masterpieces there are no primacies, all are equals. In honoring the masterpiece of Washington as a character, Iowans become an "inseparable union."

As the acorn of the oak and the winged seed of the maple descend into the earth, carrying the determination of the times before appointed and the bounds of the elements of earth, air and light, for their future habitation, so in that something called man there are distinctive choices that will turn similar conditions and circumstances into a new human being as distinctively fragrant as are the flowers of the May upon our prairies. . . .

There are kinships that make the world akin, that enlist the prayers and command the money of saints, that lead the lover of his kind into prison cells, loathsome dens of iniquity, that he may bring this prodigal brother back to himself, back to the universal brotherhood of man.

\*President Iowa State college, 1891-1902.

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