

Bismarck, N. D., I was editor of a paper in Sioux Falls, managing editor of a paper in Sioux City, wrote editorials for an Omaha newspaper; have crossed the big rivers at Lake Itasca, at St. Louis, Memphis and Vicksburg, and listened to Booth and Barrett in the old French opera house in New Orleans. I have seen Niagara from the Canadian side and have peered across the Rio Grande at El Paso into the bleak hills of Old Mexico. I served my state or the nation for 35 years, and went to the Southland seven years ago to await the end.

But the wanderlust is persistent. I came back two seasons to Iowa by train. Then I drove my car back two seasons. For the second time, I came by the sky route. And so, I find it impossible to resist the lure of this beautiful midland region. My search for the better land is over. I have gone far and always come back. There are alluring mountains, green valleys and wonderful cities. America is the fairy-land of legend and reality. I have lived in and through the Golden Age of the western world. I have seen its best, have enjoyed the triumphs, have faced the failures. But it is the best world I recollect ever to have lived in, and certainly the best country that ever was made for the abode of man.

My wanderings are over, my search ended, the end of the road is in sight. I have come back. I have come back not to boast, not to mourn; but to find that here, here is the better land. Here is beautiful Iowa, my Iowa.

ON THE WAY

A date I have with destiny
 Secret it is as to place, and time,
 Some trivial thing, a song, perhaps a rhyme,
 Will set off the now from ages yet to be,
 Only a pause at the rim of eternity's sea.
 Why worry as to when, or what the way,
 Not for me to plan, not mine to say.
 I've come quite a way on the pleasant lane,
 Higher yet the peaks I hoped to gain.
 Perhaps, who knows, my date may be
 A happy one with destiny.

—Ora Williams, 1949

The Man Who Leads

The meaning of history is never apparent to those who make it. A leader in any age or generation is no more than a man who sees somewhat beyond the end of his nose.—Thomas Sugrue.

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