

## *Iowa People and Events . . .*

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### How Mrs. Kendall Trained "Nate"

As Governor Kendall approached the close of his official incumbency, an Iowa newspaperman submitted a serious inquiry that he answered with unusual frankness. The question submitted was "How has your wife helped you?" The governor's answer was most generous to the woman who had shared life with him, especially the long waiting period that a young lawyer in a county seat town experiences before clients seek him out, revealing the depth of his feeling and regard of obligation incurred.

Appreciative of the qualities of his helpmate of those early years, that to him were extraordinary, embracing as they did the direction of the affairs of the home and his training in relation thereto, Mr. Kendall wrote of his first wife, Belle Woodin Kendall, for later in life, after her demise, he married again. The letter to his friend, the newspaperman, read:

The inquiry you propose is difficult of answer, because the reply to it is so perfectly obvious. My wife has helped me indispensably in every activity of my adult life. She is endowed in a remarkable degree with the uncommon faculty of common sense, and this quality has been of inestimable value to me in many circumstances.

In my earlier years before I became acquainted with her, I had contracted foolish and expensive habits, utterly inconsistent with the sensible frugality which ought to characterize a prudent man. If I had a dollar, I spent it like it was a withered leaf and I was the owner of unbounded forests, and although I had for several years enjoyed a lucrative law practice, its revenues were exhausted as rapidly as they accrued. I was 27 years of age, with less than \$300 of capital, but with abundant confidence in the future, and I married.

Fortunately for me, my wife's childhood discipline had been altogether different from mine. She understood that every fee I collected represented a compensation for so much skill and ability and industry, and she supervised its disbursement as jealously as knight ever protected his honor. She resisted temptations to luxury which she knew we could not afford—temptations to which I was eagerly disposed to surrender—and under her restriction I have been gradually converted to the philosophy of buying what I need rather than what I want. Indeed, the only extravagance from which I cannot be subdued is my passion for the acquisition of books, and this weakness she tolerates because she enjoys our library as much as I do.

But, if I have achieved any substantial success in life, it has not been in the direction of accumulating money. My wife always has estimated more highly than I my capacity for the public service. She encouraged my candidacy first for the general assembly, then for the speakership of the house, and latterly for representative in congress. I say encouraged, but I mean that in a rather limited construction. If I secured a nomination or an election, she approved the enterprise within the family, but she was disinclined to mention the matter outside. I think she never once in all my numerous contests electioneered for me, or solicited support in my behalf.

Although she has been for years a P.E.O., a D.A.R., a Chi Omega and a member of the Federation of Women's clubs, she never has perverted her fraternal connection by attempting to capitalize it to my political advantage. I deeply appreciated this attitude.

We were not disappointed in any of the aspirations to which I have referred, but whether the positions I have occupied have been filled creditably and satisfactorily it must, of course, devolve upon those who are disinterested to say.

I ought to concede that my wife was wholly disaffected toward my ambitions for the governorship. She never underrated the high distinction of the office, but she in-

sisted that after my twenty years of constant campaigning, she was entitled to a period of uninterrupted home life. For the first and only time on an important issue I overruled her opposition, and while she submitted as gracefully as possible to my decision, neither of us has been able to determine that she was altogether unjustified in her original objection.

My wife knows my vanities, my hypocrisies, my affectations—all the infirmities which disfigure my character; and yet after all I defy anybody to convince her that I am not a great man. Even the bitterly hostile Des Moines newspapers could not dispel the illusion in 1920. When she and I disagree in argument, as we frequently do, we generally compromise the discussion by adopting the suggestion she has advanced.

I entertain profound respect for the infallibility of her judgment. I wish you knew her. She is an extraordinary woman. Last year when I was sick almost unto death, I acquired a new understanding of her unselfish devotion to me, and a new comprehension of my infinite obligation to her.

I have no hesitancy in the statement that if my modest career shall be accounted in any measure worthy of indorsement, she is entitled to the major credit for it. Without her uplifting, restraining and stimulating influence, all my energies would have been dissipated, misdirected and prostrated. I am proud to proclaim to her as Meredith apostrophized his heroine in the saddest and sweetest love story in all literature:

Wherever this nature of mine is most fair,  
And its thoughts are the purest, beloved thou are there.  
Whatever is noblest in aught that I do,  
Is done to exalt and to worship thee, too.

How has my wife helped me? Just as every good wife has helped her husband. But chiefly by enriching me with a higher view of duty and inspiring me to a firmer consecration for its performance.

Seldom has a more eloquent, and deserved, tribute been paid to any wife. The governor wrote as fluently and as movingly as he always spoke.

Those of Governor Kendall's friends and admirers yet alive will remember that as soon as he retired from office, shortly after the first of that year, he and his wife took a long planned tour around the world, occupying the greater part of a year, and thereafter retired to private pursuits to enjoy the remainder of his life in the company of those "old home" folks who, knowing him best, loved him most. But his complacency and satisfaction was short-lived, for upon a return trip to Italy, which had captured the fancy of his loved mate, she fell ill and died before their return home to Iowa, leaving him desolate and almost weary of life. The ongoing of the affairs of the world about him then no longer provided attraction or solace for a soul burdened with grief.

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### The Wooden Indian

Long since, the Wooden Indian became both a curio and an antique. Cigar stores no longer display them and museums now seek them, particularly when they have a long record of possession. The symbolism is difficult to trace, and only the elder people now recall their display in front of cigar stores indicative of the habitat of the tobacco merchant and his cigar stock.

The Rhode Island State Historical Society recently has acquired a Wooden Princess said to represent Pocahontas, the Virginian Indian maiden of historical note, long a familiar sight in Providence, Rhode Island, the ownership of which can be accurately traced back to 1867. It is a unique accession typical of the age when wooden figures were used to advertise all manner of business houses. A photograph of the object has been taken and graces the front cover page of the October issue of *Rhode Island History*, the magazine publication of the society. It says:

"Among the commonest of the wooden figures used in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were the little carved mariners who hung outside ship chandlers' and instrument makers' shops. A unique early nineteenth century is the society's manacled felon, which hung from Kent county jail in East Greenwich for many years, supposedly as a warning

to evildoers and certainly not as an advertisement of the trade of a thief.

"Another earlier trade figure is the society's copy of the original Turk's Head, whose history is lost in legend, but may have begun as a tobacco sign, set up in front of Smith & Sabin's shop. Possibly the Wooden Indian is one of a few types of shop signs that survived to the 20th century. Other types of signs included picturesque foreigners, representatives of everyday American life, figures of literature and history and even prominent personages of the day. . . .

"Tradition has it that the first tobacco Indian was a figure of Pocahontas at the door of a Boston tobacco vendor's shop in colonial times; but it was not until about 1840 that every small town boasted at least one resplendent trade figure, whether an Indian or other genus. . . . Such pieces of folk art included, in addition to trade signs, ships' figureheads, toys, circus ornaments, decoys, primitive portraits and scenes, theorem and other decorative painting.

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### The Elder Statesmen

The announcement of Senator George of Georgia that at 77 he was not a candidate for re-election to the United States senate has created some discussion. Besides being the chairman of the Foreign Relations committee of the senate, as a party leader, he is a man of powerful influence nationally as well as in his own state. He has been named by President Eisenhower as administration consultant on foreign affairs following his retirement from the senate.

Iowa has contributed service in that body by four men over seventy years of age, and in two instances long service. William B. Allison 79 served 36 years as senator from this state, and Albert B. Cummins 76 served 18 years. The other two elderly men from Iowa serving as U. S. senator after seventy years of age, but comparatively short periods were John H. Gear 75 and Lafayette Young 78. Most of Iowa's U. S. senators were much younger men.

Of the 96 members of the present U. S. senate twelve are over 70 and six older than Senator George, the eldest being Senator Theodore Green of Rhode Island, who is 88. The others are Neely 81 of West Virginia, Smith

79 of New Jersey, Murray 79 of Montana, Barkley 78 of Kentucky, Hayden 78 of Arizona, Lehman 77 of New York, Martin 76 of Pennsylvania, Flanders 75 of Vermont, Wiley 71 of Wisconsin, and O'Mahoney 71 of Wyoming.

Some of the above have been re-elected recently and will serve at greater age. Most of them are active in the senate and ripe in public experience, which generally is regarded as a political as well as a practical asset. Senator Barkley only recently passed away.

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### Government School Aid

There will be a raising of Iowa eyebrows and some audible criticism of the latest attempt to take from the local districts control over their schools. Of course it is not broached upon such broad terms, but in the end will amount to just that, if the government aid plans become a reality.

Here in Iowa, since the big state department of public instruction was given greater local control, complaints at the lower level have become common, although the extravagant local district that exceeds in reasonable expenditures in operation of its schools has become resigned to allowing the state to assume payment of such extravagance over a 15-mill levy.

It long has been the boast of those directly interested in the successful operation of our American school system that its control has been kept close to the people who on least provocation have resented outside interference in the conduct of local school affairs. After all, government aid of any sort, like state aid, means subservience, and eventual control and direction.

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### Old Wall Street

One spring day, in the year 1792, a group of corporation stock traders who had been meeting under a great buttonwood tree that stood at 60 Wall Street, adjourned to the Tontine Coffee House to discuss how they could

best meet competition from some auctioneers who were selling U. S. government stock at the other end of Wall Street. They signed an agreement to trade only among themselves—and the New York Stock Exchange was born.

After the early meetings at the Tontine Coffee House, the Exchange moved a dozen times or so before settling down at its present address at 18 Broad Street.

The original membership of 24 since has swelled to over 1300; and seats on the Exchange, which in 1824 were purchasable for about \$100, have in recent years brought anywhere from \$35,000 to \$90,000.

When the first price list of stocks was published in the *New York Commercial Advertiser* of March 10, 1815, it included just a score of companies. Today, over 1100 are listed on the Exchange. These earn about one-half of all the net profits after taxes reported by U. S. companies. Over 90 per cent of them paid cash dividends last year; and some 300 have paid annual dividends consecutively for a period of a quarter of a century or longer!—Brookmire Reports.

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### Dr. F. C. Grimmell's Home

St. Ambrose church at High and Sixth street now occupies the site of the first frame dwelling house in town, the home of Dr. F. C. Grimmell, built in 1847, on a high knoll. It was a regular down-east timber frame, with mortises, tenons and braces. The timber was hewn from trees cut in the dense forest on the bluff north on Sixth avenue. The lumber was sawed at Parmelee's mill, ten miles down the river, built to cut the lumber for the fort buildings. The house was enclosed the first year and occupied, but not plastered until the fall of 1848, as there was no lime nor plasterer in town, but in June of that year Judge Casady was married in it to the daughter of the doctor, and made his home there for a time, but it was "so far out in the country" to walk from his office on Second street, through the weeds, brush and mud, that he built a small house on the cor-

ner where Clapp's building is. Charley Kahler, the well-known shoe dealer was married in the old house. For many years it was a favorite place for social events, Mrs. Grimmell and the doctor being fond of young people and their society.

In it, in 1855, was organized the First Lutheran church, the doctor and his wife being zealous Lutherans.

In 1889 it went out of existence in a cloud of fire and smoke.—*Des Moines Register and Leader*, September 30, 1906.

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### The Kensington Stone

The opinion regarding the carving of the Kensington rune stone expressed by a Minneapolis sculptor, John Karl Daniels, is reported by Jay Edgerton in the *Minneapolis Star* of August 1. Mr. Daniels contends that "the inscription was put on quickly with sure deft strokes by a person thoroughly familiar with carving runes."

In addition, he observes that while most of the carving was done with a hammer and chisel working from right to left the last part of the inscription was carved from the opposite direction, suggesting the possibility that it was done by two carvers or by a man who was ambidextrous.

Basing her narrative on documents of the fourteenth century, Laura Goodman Salverson presents in *Immortal Rock: The Saga of the Kensington Stone*, a fictional version of the events supposedly recorded on the Minnesota Stone (Toronto, 1954). The writer attempts to reconstruct the life story of each of the men in Paul Knutson's expedition, as well as to describe their adventures in the heart of the North American continent. "The Vikings in America: A Critical Bibliography" by T. J. Oleson, appearing in the *Canadian Historical Review* for June, lists many books and articles about the stone published for the most part from 1939 to 1954.—*Minnesota History*.



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