

Iowa People and Events . . .

Ingham's European Journey

An interesting booklet is among the documents left by former Curator Ora Williams in the ANNALS office. It contains the reprinted letters of Harvey Ingham written by him day by day from Europe describing places he visited on a summer's trip.

Attached is a typed tribute to Mr. Ingham by Williams which is worthy of passing note. The two men were contemporaries in the newspaper field, but opposites in many ways; Ingham emotional, aggressive, fond of action, even strife, while Williams was quiet, unobtrusive, contemplative, but keen in observations and comment.

Appreciative of their dissimilarities, each respected the worth of the other, though often not agreeing with his judgment or conclusions. Both thoroughly knew the whims and wiles of public men. Neither sought public preferment, although Ingham was put forward by his county to succeed Dolliver when the latter became senator, and again on Senator Dolliver's death would have welcomed appointment to fill the vacancy which went to Lafayette Young. Williams was never a candidate but held by appointment several important official positions in which he acquitted himself well. The typed page written, signed and inserted in the Ingham booklet, reads as follows:

Harvey Ingham gave me this booklet soon after he had it printed in 1927.

"Six Weeks in Europe" is a reprint of the letters sent back and printed in the *Des Moines Register*, while Harvey was on tour of parts of Europe as member of a party of high class American editors, especially invited and well sponsored for seeing the old country at the halfway place between the two world wars.

The year 1927 was 13 years after the beginning of the first World war and 18 years before the commencement of the second.

Mr. Ingham was a competent observer. He had back of him the training of newspaper work for many years on the *Algona Upper Des Moines*, and for 25 years on the *Des Moines Register*. He was one who read with understanding and had been especially interested in world affairs. He had met Woodrow Wilson when he passed through Iowa on his last speaking trip in behalf of the League of Nations. He had followed F.D.R. with deep interest, or did so later.

The comments of the author and of others quoted in this booklet are of interest for comparison now that the second world war drags along and promises never to end, even if officially ended.

No Iowa editor wrote from a higher or broader viewpoint of world affairs than Harvey Ingham.

Iowa Precedent May Block Action

The racial segregation in southern public schools may be stubbornly contested notwithstanding the angle of the U.S. supreme court action of last year; and an almost forgotten defy of Iowa to the wishes of the supreme court in 1880 may be the basis for that conclusion. At least it is now cited as a precedent with respect to the rights of states to legislate.

It is in Mississippi that resistance now is most hotly exhibited, where it is proposed that in states where there has been segregation so long that it is considered a fixed rule of life, their legislatures be urged into passing laws declaring that the anti-segregation ruling of the U.S. supreme court is invalid and illegal insofar as their immediate area is concerned, and must not be obeyed by the state government, as offensive to the expressed rights of state residents.

A joint statement is set out by three leading officials of the state of Mississippi, being Sen. James O. Eastland, Rep. John Bell Williams, and Judge Tom F. Brady, urging such action. This is supported by citing a number of instances where various states drew the line sharply as to rights reserved to them in the forming of the constitution, and successfully challenged the U.S. supreme court to not step beyond the line.

Iowa was one of these states in an action relating

to land grants to railroads, the citation being as follows:

In 1880, the state of Iowa defied an effort on the part of the U.S. supreme court to reverse a position taken by the Iowa supreme court, holding extensive grants to expanding railroads unlawful. The supreme court of the United States was forced to back down.

Details of the action and circumstances surrounding it are not cited. Apparently the authority of the state to determine locally in its own courts was not finally contested further, and the Iowa decision on that point allowed to stand. Results in the present instance will be interesting.

Moreover, the U.S. supreme court had held in the rejection of the appeal from the state supreme court of Illinois holding in the celebrated Haymarket riot and killing of seven Chicago policemen in 1886, in which the core of the whole matter was the maintenance of the fundamental theory of the supremacy of state law in matters of local concern, that the decision of the highest court of a sovereign state could not be overridden by a federal court unless it clearly appeared that the result of such decision had been to deprive a person of his life, liberty or property without due process of law. The soundness of this decision has never been questioned.

Delayed Supervisorial Service

Seemingly, wonderment may never cease why every three years one of the county supervisors named at a general election must wait a year before assuming his duties of office, while the other enters at once upon his term. This was occasioned by a controversy ending in a compromise action in the Iowa General Assembly of 1906.

Prior to the voters of the state in 1904 having adopted the biennial election amendment to the state constitution, the elections had been held every year, with approximately one-half of our public officials elected annually. It became the duty of the legislature meet-

ing in 1906 to make adjustment of length of terms of several state, county and township official terms, some of which previously had been for three years.

The writer was a member of that assembly and recalls the controversy in committee action, particularly with respect to the length of terms of state railroad commissioner, county supervisors and township trustees. It was stubborn in some quarters, and differences not easily composed.

As to supervisors, a great many counties had three, as now, and the old law provided for election of one each year in those counties, for a three-year term. It was proposed to lengthen the term to four years or shorten it to two years, so that their election would operate smoothly. There was decided resistance to increasing the term to four years, and others felt that two years would provide too brief a tenure.

Finally, as a compromise, it was agreed that the three-year tenure should be retained with the provision that at one election two supervisors should be elected, with date of assuming duties by one supervisor be delayed one year, awaiting the close of the official term of his predecessor in the position. While not generally understood perhaps after a lapse of so many years, the plan has worked admirably and occasioned no further controversy or inconvenience.

An Agile Official

Gov. William S. Beardsley's fatal automobile accident in November of 1954, set in motion a chain reaction of precedents. He was the first governor to die in office. Lieut. Gov. Leo Elthon became governor and served throughout the unexpired portion of the Beardsley term.

The state executive's message to the legislature, which precedes the inaugural address by the governor, was given by Governor Elthon. Upon Gov. Leo A. Hoegh's succession as governor in January, Governor

Elthon, having been re-elected, again became Lieutenant Governor, presiding over the senate.

At the adjournment of the legislature, Governor Hoegh was out of the city. Lieut. Gov. Leo Elthon appointed a committee of the senate to act with a similar committee appointed by the speaker of the house as a joint committee to notify the governor that the legislature was prepared to adjourn.

Immediately after appointment of the senate committee, Lieutenant Governor Elthon went to the governor's office, received the joint committee of notification of preparation for adjournment and the constitutional provisions for adjournment thus were completed. Immediately thereafter, the lieutenant governor returned to his chair presiding over the senate and received the report of the joint committee that the governor had been notified and the motion for adjournment was in order.

Incidentally, this was the first time an Iowa governor was succeeded by a governor with the same given name, it being "Leo" in this instance.

Hamilton's Clouded Estimate

Alexander Hamilton's "estimate of the ultimate value of Louisiana to the United States" is the subject of "A Newly Identified Editorial from the *New York Evening Post*" which is reprinted with an introduction and notes in the April, 1955, issue of the *William and Mary Quarterly*.

Hamilton's views on the Louisiana Purchase, as stated in the editorial of July 5, 1803, reveal "how clouded could be his prophet's crystal ball upon occasion," for he felt that "the possession at this time of any territory west of the river Mississippi" had only "problematical" advantages for the United States.

"After all," he wrote, "it is the Island of New Orleans . . . that gives to this interesting cession, its greatest value."—*Minnesota History*.

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