

ANNALS IOWA

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

INACCURATE HISTORIANS

The lapse of time coupled with the fading of memory does some queer things to those who attempt the belated writing of the events of history and the record of individuals. At best the fame of a public man is fleeting and insecure. The record he makes and the character of his official service too often is quickly forgotten. Unfortunately the criticism of him or wishful thinking of other days as to what he might do are often dressed up decades later and magnified into statements of historic facts. But the discerning historian always must be on his guard to distinguish and divide fact from fancy.

In the flood of reminiscent writings during recent months that have interspersed Iowa Centennial recordings old local feuds have been disinterred, fierce political battles of yester year refought, and even grossly distorted and inaccurate tales of official acts of the long ago stated with the solemnity of fact.

An example recently noted has been the reviving of an aged, oft repeated, but wholly imaginary political yarn involving the transition of A. B. Cummins of Iowa from the status of governor to that of United States senator. As again it is told in political reminiscences in more than one instance, in order to attain the official position made vacant in 1908 by the death of Senator Allison, that Cummins resigned from the governorship and upon Lieutenant Governor Garst becoming governor the latter appointed Cummins as United States Senator.

Now, there are just three things the matter with this story. In the first place, Cummins spurned the thought of such a thing, which really was suggested by some unfriendly but clever political manipulator as a probable

action. In the second place Garst would not have been a party to that sort of convenient transaction. And, furthermore, it did not take place that way.

The sequence of events is so easily supported by the official record that none should be deceived by any distortion or mis-statement of facts, which in brief were these:

A state-wide primary election law had been enacted by the Thirty-second General Assembly, which adjourned April 9, 1907. The first primary held under the new law was in June 1908 in which Allison and Cummins were the opposing candidates for United States senator. Allison won the nomination. His death on August 4, 1908, caused a vacancy both in the primary nomination and in the senate.

When question arose and widespread discussion resulted in the state as to manner of filling these vacancies, Governor Cummins convened an extra session of the Thirty-second General Assembly, which began August 31, 1908. First the matter of a nomination for senator was taken up, and an act was drafted and passed amending the state primary election law providing for the holding of a special primary election "for the expression of choice of candidates for senator" to be held on the date of the following November general election. Election of a United States senator could not, at that time, be by vote of the people, but only by the General Assembly.

The act was approved September 10, 1908, and before temporary adjournment the members unanimously agreed to reassemble and elect as senator the candidate receiving the greatest vote at the special senatorial primary election authorized. Memorial exercises were held in honor of the late Senator William B. Allison, and adjournment temporarily had on September 10, 1908. At the senatorial primary authorized by the act the candidates voted upon were Albert B. Cummins and John F.

Lacey, and Cummins received the larger number of votes.

The legislature reconvened November 24, 1908, and elected Cummins as senator for the remainder of the term of Senator Allison which expired the following March 3, 1909. Thereupon Cummins immediately resigned from the governorship and Warren Garst, the lieutenant governor, was sworn in at the inauguration ceremonies held and served the remainder of the term, the legislature adjourning sine die the same day of its convening.

The Thirty-third General Assembly convened January 11, 1909, and elected Cummins to succeed himself for the full term commencing the following March. And so the eventful period of senatorial service thus begun by one of Iowa's ablest statesmen extended longer than that of any other senator from Iowa, save only those of Senators William B. Allison and James F. Wilson.

USS IOWA IV AND HER ENSIGN

The name Iowa will be forever linked with bringing peace to the peoples of the Pacific. The battleship Iowa IV led the way into Tokyo bay, as one of the support ships for the first landing of Americans on Japanese soil. The great ensign of the Iowa IV which flew over the ship on that occasion is now a notable addition to the fine naval museum at the state capital of Iowa. This ensign, an American flag is size twelve by twenty-two feet, takes its place alongside a similar ensign which was flying from the Iowa II when it fired the first shot in the battle of Santiago, on July 3, 1898. It is appropriate that they should adorn the museum in the state historical building, in recognition of Iowa's contribution of men and officers to the service of the seas.

The officers of the Iowa IV, as well as the navy department, have been helpful in building up the navy museum in the state historical department. Among other things

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