

## Notable Journalists

Competent and forceful men have edited Des Moines newspapers down through the years. Iowa has liked their work. That is evident from the success of the papers, particularly after they enlarged their field to serve the entire state. Though presentation of the news is the primary function of a newspaper, it is through editorial interpretation and comment that a paper provides leadership. Notable editors have supplied such leadership in Des Moines from the time of the *Iowa Star*.

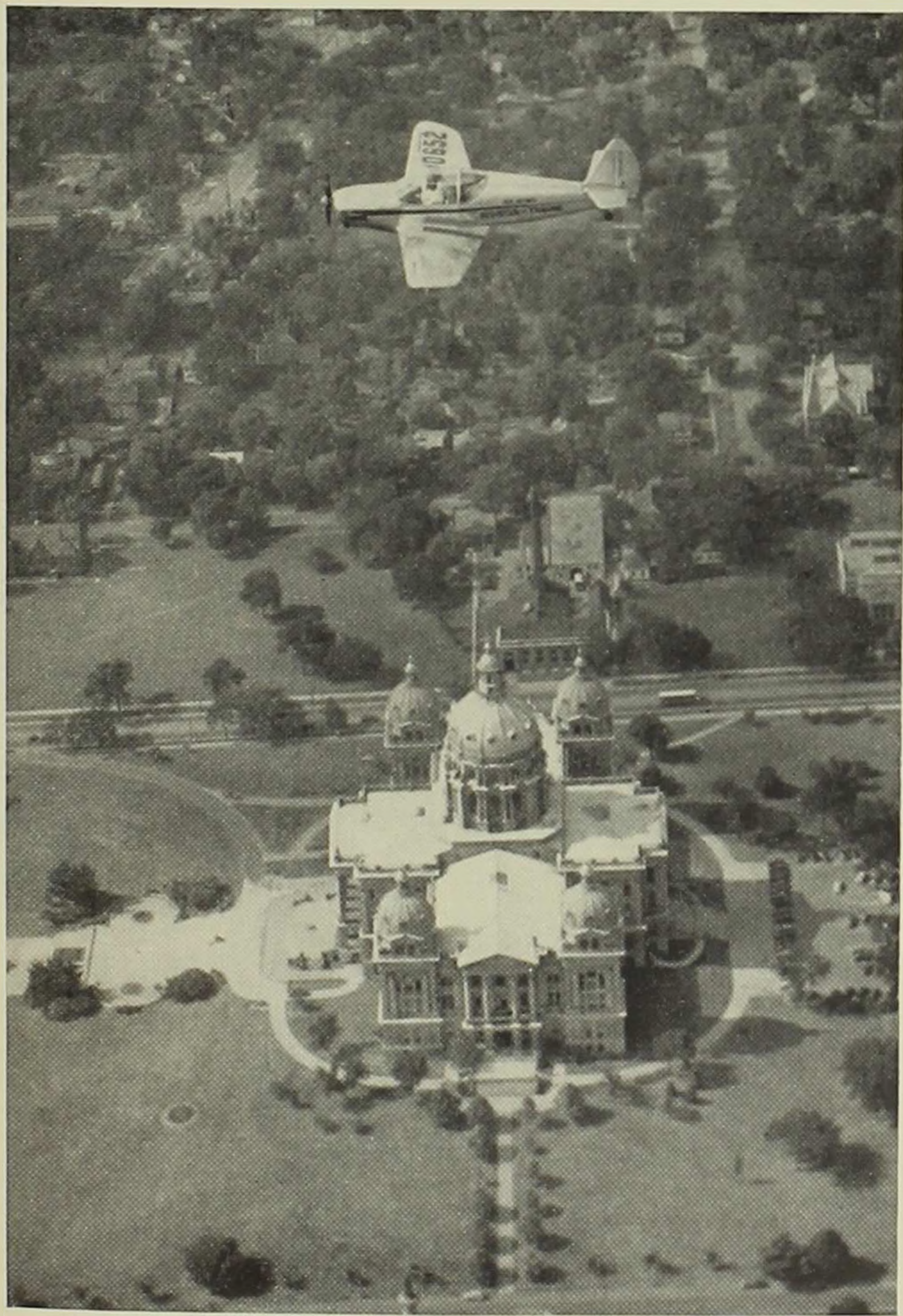
Both Barlow Granger and Curtis Bates of the *Star* were powerful figures. The *Star's* interest in saving the Union and in such programs as railroad building has been referred to. Some of the meritorious things Bates recommended have not come to pass even yet. For example, he wrote in 1850: "We believe that the constitution of the United States requires further amendments in order to make it keep pace with the spirit and intelligence of the age. One of these would be the election of the president and other officers of the general government by a direct vote of the people."

Another early editor, John Teesdale, is identified with the story of John Brown, the famous,

albeit foolhardy, abolitionist. When Brown and his band passed through Des Moines on their way east to Springdale, Iowa, Teesdale paid their ferry charges across the Des Moines River. Shortly after that, Brown and his men attempted to start an insurrection of slaves at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, in a battle which some authorities regard as the first violence of the Civil War. Teesdale said of Brown's capture: "He has rendered his name immortal. His boldness and frankness command the admiration even of his enemies; while his prisoners all testify with one voice to his kindness and forbearance to them." The editorial said that "there is no escape for the old man — his fate is sealed." Brown was hanged.

Editor of the *Iowa State Register* through the Civil War period was able Frank Palmer, later an Iowa Congressman. When President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation in 1862, the *Register* said: "Events have proved that liberty and slavery can not exist in the same union together, and the executive head of the government has decreed that in order that the government may live, slavery shall die. The nation and the world will sing halleluiahs, for the great day of jubilee is near."

Palmer was bitter against southern sympathizers but he deplored the destruction by Union soldiers of a Copperhead newspaper at Fairfield in



REGISTER PLANE OVER IOWA CAPITOL

**STATE HOUSE ON FIRE**

**A DEADLY TORNADO.**

Central Iowa Swept with a Terrible Storm Last Night.

**REBBL. RAID INTO IOWA.**

**Bumper Oats  
And Soybean  
Output Also**

**IOWA BOYS IN GLORIOUS VICTORY**

**JUDGE BEATEN**

**Spencer Not Discouraged**

E. L. C. White, editor of the Spencer News-Herald, estimated the fire loss at \$2,000,000. Seventy business firms were destroyed.

**CHAMBERLIN LANDS**

**DOGS TAKE TRAIL  
FROM HOME WHERE  
EIGHT WERE SLAIN**

**CHARLES CITY MURDERER LYNCHED**

**IOWAN GETS FIRST U. S. CORN LOAN**

**EXTENT OF THE GREAT STORM.**

**The Most Sudden Change  
perature in Iowa for  
Years.**

**THE OFFICIAL VOTE OF IOWA.**  
For ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 72,110 votes; for McCLELLAN, 47,071. LINCOLN's majority, 25,039. The counties yet

**REPEAL WINS IN IOWA, 3 TO 2**

IOWA HEADLINES OF YESTERYEARS

1864. "The paper should have been permitted to live," he wrote. "Its existence was a substantial benefit to the union cause."

Palmer took his seat in Congress in 1869 and the next year the Clarksons, father and two sons, opened their vigorous era in Iowa journalism. In 1873 they denounced the whipping of children in school. ("This process might do well in arguing wild mules down to business.") In 1882 they explained how the location of a factory in any Iowa city is of benefit to the state as a whole. In 1883, a "mud road" period if there ever was one, they wanted something done soon "to improve the highways of Iowa." In 1884 the Clarksons criticized the practice of giving free railroad passes to politicians and newspapermen. In the same year they asked: "Do the people of Iowa know they have 2,500 insane requiring hospital care, and room for only one-third that number?" The next year, commenting on mob murders at Audubon, the *Register* declared that "mobs are never to be defended and always to be condemned."

In 1887 they supported the state parole system for prisoners and in 1890 they demanded better fish and game laws to prevent the extinction of wild life. In 1896 the *Register* commented: "Sound money is essential, but we may have all the coined silver in the world and we will not have prosperity unless our laboring men have work at

good wages. Money is all right, but men must also have the opportunity to earn it."

With the end of the Clarkson era came Harvey Ingham. All his newspaper life he fought for equal rights for the Negro and for all races and creeds. He hoped in 1914 that world disarmament would be the result of World War I. In the same year he wrote that the "abolition of the liquor traffic is bound to come. The quicker it is over and disposed of, the better." He also demanded a fair share of the national income for the farmer.

In supporting the League of Nations he said that Americans "can not get out of our world duties if we try. . . . The wisest nationalism the American citizen ever will show will be the nationalism that is international." Of President Woodrow Wilson, Ingham wrote in 1919: "He has always been on the large side. . . . We remember with honor the men who have been ahead of their times, but not in a solitary instance the men who have been behind their times. It will be to the everlasting glory of America that in a time of world babble the American voice was heard above them all in ringing tones of assurance to a better world, a more livable world, a more humane world. . . ." It can be said with equal truth that Ingham too was "always on the large side" and was "ahead of his time" in reporting and interpreting human affairs.

Contemporary with Ingham on the *Register* was Jay N. (Ding) Darling, one of the greatest cartoonists of his time. His work was widely syndicated and tens of millions of American newspaper readers have chuckled every morning for years at his sharp yet humorous and human drawings. He retired in 1949 after forty-three years on the *Register*.

Nobody ever was left in the dark as to where Ding stood on an issue. He is a fighting believer in the American way of life, a vigorous proponent of conservation of natural resources and preservation of wild life, a strong advocate of international cooperation. He twice was given Pulitzer awards. In 1923 he was so honored for his cartoon: "The Good Old U.S.A." The drawing pictured the success that some hard-working young Americans had achieved. The final caption observed: "But they didn't get it by hanging around the corner drug store."

Although he and Ingham sometimes drastically opposed each other, Ding strongly supported the League of Nations in 1919 and 1920. Following through on that idea, he published a devastating cartoon entitled, "Eventually, Why Not Now?" after World War II. The drawing pictured the charred framework of a world destroyed in atomic warfare. One skeleton-like human being is on a telephone asking: "Hello! Hello! If there's any-

one left alive, I'd like to unite with 'em in a world league to outlaw war."

His favorite topic was conservation. He cried out against the senseless loss of our soil through erosion, and one of his cartoons sarcastically noted: "We poison our rivers near home — and then drive 300 miles to find one fit to wade in."

Another stalwart of the Cowles-Ingham era in *Register* and *Tribune* history is thoughtful William W. Waymack, who succeeded Ingham as editor of the papers in 1943. The measure of Waymack's reputation and worth is the fact that President Truman appointed him to membership on the nation's first atomic energy commission. He left the *Register* and *Tribune* to accept that nationally-vital appointment.

Waymack, who came to the *Register* and *Tribune* in 1918, was an Ingham type of editor. He examined events and trends from the long-time point of view. His editorial page had a tremendous following. In 1937 he was awarded a Pulitzer prize for distinguished editorial writing the previous year. That award undoubtedly was based in large part on an editorial series entitled: "The Farmer and the Land."

Pointing to the danger of increasingly heavy farm tenancy, Waymack wrote:

It is the property owner who must obviously be the bulwark of capitalism. It goes without saying that property



must be fairly widely diffused if a social order based on it is to endure in a political democracy. . . .

If we permit land ownership to concentrate so that no large part of the population consists of actual capitalist farmers; if we reduce the farmer, too, to a hireling with no more emotional or practical stake in capitalism than the city proletarian has; if we bring face to face on the land as well as in the crowded streets the capitalist and the proletarian, the ultimate answer can hardly be doubted. Capitalism will go.

All these men, from Granger to Waymack, belong to *Register* history now. Ding and Waymack are the only living members of this illustrious line and they both have retired.

Present-day editors of the *Register* and *Tribune* are a new generation in the never-ending flow of men and ideas needed to keep newspapers alive and alert to the task of serving a constantly-changing people. The best measurement of the abilities of men who edit newspapers is the public's appraisal of their product.

Nowhere in America are newspapers serving an expanded field more widely accepted than are the Des Moines *Register* and the *Tribune*.