

THE PALIMPSEST

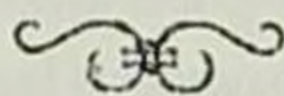
EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

VOL. XXXV

ISSUED IN JANUARY 1954

No. 1

Copyright 1954 by The State Historical Society of Iowa



The 1952 Election

As in every year, Americans prepared themselves during the campaign to answer some momentous questions at the polls in November. The big question was whether the Republicans or the Democrats had the best answers to such vital issues as the stalemate in Korea, Communists in government, corruption in high office, inflation, reduction in taxes, and a balanced budget. Another big question was whether Dwight D. Eisenhower, a military career man lacking political background, could, with his "great crusade" designed "to return government to the people," defeat a high-principled politician, Adlai E. Stevenson.

Always audible, above the heated debates on the farm problem, labor, and capital, was the chant "it's time for a change." Emphasis was placed on the "twenty long years" of Democratic rule.

Paradoxically, the identical words — "it's time for a change" — were being hurled back at Republicans by Democrats in the campaign for the Iowa Statehouse, held by Republicans since 1939.

Moreover, Iowa Democrats were using many of the same arguments advanced by Republicans seeking to capture the White House: that Republicans in the Statehouse were building up a state bureaucracy, were indifferent to the people, and were guilty of deficit spending.

It was on such issues that an unprecedented number of Iowans voted on November 4, 1952. When the ballots were counted they showed that Iowa Republicans had endorsed Eisenhower by a wide margin, but had won the Statehouse by a narrower margin. Eisenhower defeated Stevenson 33,938,285 to 27,312,217 votes nationally, each man getting more votes than any previous winner or loser in our history. Iowa's vote was:

<i>Office</i>	<i>Republican</i>		<i>Democrat</i>	
President	Eisenhower	808,906	Stevenson	451,513
Governor	Beardsley	638,388	Loveless	587,671
Lt. Gov.	Elthon	677,905	Allen	483,370
Sec. of State	Synhorst	717,599	Kelleher	446,828
Auditor	Akers	720,584	Weddle	435,387
Treasurer	Abrahamson	713,081	Heimes	439,079
Sec. of Agriculture	Spry	659,073	Gillette	514,708
Atty. General	Larson	717,941	Claassen	461,090

Two amendments to the Iowa constitution were also approved in 1952. Both dealt with the order of succession, in case the governor dies or vacates his office, and both were readily approved.

Republicans were uniformly victorious in gaining local and county offices and sent an overwhelming majority to the General Assembly.

FRANK T. NYE