

## Comment by the Editor

### *WHENCE, GOVERNOR, AND WHITHER*

All that the constitution of Iowa requires is that the Governor shall be a citizen of the United States, thirty years old, and a resident of the State during the two years just before his or her election. There is not a word about executive ability, education, or political experience. These qualifications, however, may be more significant than those prescribed.

When Governor Clyde L. Herring completes his present term, twenty-eight men will have been Governor of Iowa during its first hundred years as a Territory and State. A composite design of their characteristics would reveal the typical Iowa Governor as a lawyer, forty-eight years old, who belonged to the Republican party, and had served in the legislature.

This specific, however, is not the only formula that will produce gubernatorial incumbency. Farmers, merchants, and journalists, as well as disciples of Blackstone, have attained the office of chief executive. One became Governor at the age of thirty-three and another at sixty-five. Six were Democrats. Nine had had no experience as law



makers, and nine had been to college. No more than two have been elected from the same county.

However devious may be the paths that lead to the Governor's chair, his position seems usually to have been the end of the political odyssey. Although all but seven have occupied the office longer than two years, most have retired from public life at the conclusion of their gubernatorial tenure. If Iowa Governors have aspired to seats in Congress or the President's cabinet, they have generally been disappointed. Only six have attained such distinction. Strategically, the Governorship appears to be a political *cul-de-sac*.

J. E. B.