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Iowa and the Nation

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Iowa and the Nation

In 1908 Iowa ranked eighteenth as the birthplace of persons distinguished enough to be listed in *Who's Who in America*. Twenty years later (1928) Iowa ranked seventh — which seems to suggest that only six other States in the Union are now contributing more to the leadership of the nation.

It is a mistake to suppose that Iowa excels only in agriculture, literacy, banks, and number of automobiles. In almost every line of human endeavor Iowans have played conspicuous rôles, particularly on the stage of national politics. Novelists, poets, musicians, scientists, scholars, artists, actors, and captains of industry are found in the lists of those born in the prairie State beyond the Mississippi. To mention names would only serve to emphasize the omissions.

That the achievements of the people of this commonwealth may be more widely known, the theme

selected for Iowa History Week this year (April 14-19) is "Iowa and the Nation". Attention is to be focused upon the careers of Iowans who have attained distinction in various fields of activity. The interest of schools and clubs will be centered on biography in the field of State and local history. It is hoped that the lists of illustrious Iowans heretofore compiled and published will be made more complete. Perhaps some people will be surprised to discover what nationally known men and women have lived in their community.

The State Historical Society will participate in the observance of Iowa History Week through the collection of biographical data and the publication (in *THE PALIMPSEST*) of stories concerning the lives of Iowans who have brought distinction to the State through their achievements.

This number of *THE PALIMPSEST* is devoted to a general survey of Iowa's participation in national politics. Future issues will deal with art, agriculture, business, journalism, literature, music, and other interests. Of course in these sketches it will not be possible even to mention by name all Iowans who are known beyond the borders of the State; nor can representatives of every vocation be included. The purpose is rather to suggest typical and prominent Iowans, and to portray the significant and dramatic incidents in their lives.

JOHN ELY BRIGGS