

Address of Edgar R. Harlan

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And I can tell them of my grief,
And in their presence find relief;
Thus in sacred memory here below,
Still live the friends of long ago."

Senator Smith's address was followed by remarks by Governor Clarke, A. B. Funk, H. T. Saberson, W. G. Kerr, E. C. Roach, G. M. Titus, J. O. Kasa, Thomas Geneva, and the reading of a letter from R. T. St. John by the secretary. The meeting was then turned over to Curator Edgar R. Harlan who spoke as follows:

ADDRESS OF EDGAR R. HARLAN

Charles Aldrich, in the beginning of this Portrait Division of the Historical, Memorial and Art Department of Iowa, and his successors ever since, have followed the doctrine of Thomas Carlyle to this effect, that the testimony of a sincere painter contributes to the appreciation by a historical student of persons of public interest as pen pictures of them often fail to do. So the installation of a portrait of a secretary of agriculture augments the sources of information concerning him, voluminous though they may be, elsewhere beneath this roof.

It is appropriate for me to indicate the contribution of our state to the Agricultural Department of our Federal Government. It was in the administration of Franklin Pierce that Charles Mason, whose portrait here confronts you, was placed in charge of the Bureau of Patents. It was then, as now, a bureau in the Department of Interior, but had among its functions the direction of what is now the Smithsonian Institution, the National Observatory, and other scientific work, including the germ of the Department of Agriculture.

We learn from the private papers of Charles Mason, on deposit elsewhere in this institution, that during his incumbency of the office of patent commissioner, he caused to be taken simultaneous observations of the weather at points remote from one another, then but recently possible with the telegraph. He caused or authorized many of the earliest agricultural experiments. He laid down certain fundamental principles which the Department of Agriculture practices to this day. At that time and ever since, there have been Iowa scientists of the first rank in the agricultural phases of the national government. From that time until this day there has been close contact and co-ordination between the agricultural officia's and institutions at Washington, with our own Department of Agriculture and the college at Ames.

When the Bureau of Agriculture became a department with a place in the Cabinet of the president, Grover Cleveland in the last days of his first administration appointed as secretary of agriculture, Norman J. Co'man of Missouri. Harrison appointed Jeremiah Rusk of Wisconsin. Cleveland in his second administration appointed J. Sterling Morton of

Nebraska. McKinley appointed James Wilson of Iowa, whom Roosevelt and Taft retained. Wilson first appointed David F. Houston of Missouri, whom Edwin T. Meredith succeeded. Henry C. Wallace of Iowa was the next secretary of agriculture in the Harding and Coolidge administrations. Secretary Jardine of Kansas succeeded Mr. Wallace. So the entire existence of the Department of Agriculture has been presided over by men of Iowa, or one of its neighboring states.

Here faces us the portrait of James Wilson. That of Henry C. Wallace is in existence, though not in our collections. Meredith's is the subject of importance to this assembly this afternoon.

I would speak in cordial satisfaction a welcome then, to you and to your guests, the family and business associates of our late distinguished citizen, Edwin T. Meredith. The address of the occasion will be given by one of your number, the friend of Mr. Meredith, former senator, John T. Clarkson.

EDWIN T. MEREDITH

By JOHN T. CLARKSON

When our forefathers and patriots of '76 proclaimed to the world the sound fundamental doctrine that man has "certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed," the sage men of letters and statecraft in the Old World were moved to voice their opposition thereto, as the philosophy thus proclaimed was by them unknown and unthinkable.

It was said by one, regarded as an authority, that a government founded upon the basis of such philosophy could not long survive, nor could it develop men of character or quality. Let the record of over a century and a half be submitted as evidence in support of the soundness of the philosophy thus proclaimed. We find the names of Webster, Lincoln, Blaine, Cleveland, Roosevelt, Bryan, Wilson; and in our own state, Harlan, Allison, Kirkwood, Weaver, Cummins, Dolliver, Dodge, Young, the Wallaces, and the man whose portrait we present today, to be placed with a host of other valiant, patriotic, liberty-loving men, representative of a truly great people. These men stand out among their fellows, yet typify a standard made possible by popular government, where the best in man has an opportunity for development and expression.

In this environment and as a result thereof men have achieved fame and name in oratory, letters, statecraft, and business, but few if any stand out more conspicuously than E. T. Meredith.

Mr. Meredith was endowed with a wonderfully pleasing personality, a commanding presence, a keen intellect, and his ability to vigorously present and ably defend his convictions made him one of Iowa's outstanding figures in the many affairs of life, always the champion of what he believed to be the right in public and private affairs.

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