



NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 31

IOWA CITY, IOWA

MAY, 1959

ANNUAL MEETING

The Ninth Annual Meeting of the Iowa Archeological Society was held at Sanford Museum, Cherokee, Iowa, April 25-26. As we predicted, it was a most enjoyable meeting with typical Cherokee hospitality in evidence at every turn. More than seventy-five people attended and all seemed to be enjoying themselves. Visits were made to the Simonson Site at Quimby on Saturday and Sunday. The Trustees had their meeting Saturday evening and accomplished a great deal of business in the longest, and most enjoyable, Trustees meeting in our history. Some of the Iowa City contingent took advantage of the trip to Cherokee and visited the Wittrock Site where two stratigraphic test pits were excavated and a much needed surface collection was obtained. The report of the excavation appears later in this Newsletter. A number of members brought some of their collections to the meetings and these were exhibited in the museum. We were also fortunate in seeing the first stages of a new exhibit on the Indians of Iowa being installed in the museum. From what we saw, it will be a fine exhibit and all members are urged to view it if they possibly can.

The principal speaker, Dr. George Agogino, Acting Director of the W.H. Over Museum, University of South Dakota, presented an interesting commentary on the status of early man studies in the Great Plains. The reports on regional archaeological activities covering the northwest, southwest, central, eastern, and northeastern parts of Iowa were interesting. We do not realize how much archaeological activity takes place in the state until we hear a series of reports like these. As Editor, we can only hope that such reports will be available for inclusion in the Journal.

Mr. Jim Pilgrim presided at the business meeting and we owe him a vote of thanks for the well-planned and smoothly operated meeting. A slate of candidates was proposed by the nominating committee and voted into office. There were no nominations from the floor. Our new officers are:

President, Paul Kline of Vinton, Iowa. Paul is Game Biologist for the State Conservation Commission. He has an advantage over most of us as his work takes him over a large part of the state and he has the opportunity to spend many week-ends and evenings visiting sites and inspecting collections. As president it will be Paul's job to further the aims of the Society, obtain publicity, and plan the next annual meeting.

Vice-President, George Miller of Davenport, Iowa. Like Paul Kline, George has had a long continued interest in archaeology and has done a good deal of collecting along the Mississippi River. He teaches general science in the Davenport Junior High-School and his interest in archaeology caused him to sign up for credit on the SU Summer Session dig at Toolesboro last summer.

Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Ruth Thornton of Storm Lake, Iowa. After long and faithful service, Frank Frankforter has turned over his duties as secretary-treasurer to Mrs. Thornton. Mrs. Thornton is a housewife who has served as secretary-treasurer of the Northwest Chapter. She and her husband are active amateur archaeologists and their son and daughter have also acquired archaeological interests.

Editor, Reynold J. Ruppe of Iowa City. Despite the trials and tribulations resulting from the lack of enough material to keep the publications on time, his offer to the nominating committee to resign was met with a certain coolness, and he continues as Editor.

Trustees, R. J. Ruppe and W. D. Frankforter. Both these men were re-elected to serve for another three years. (The other Trustees of the Society are: A.K. Fisher, Iowa City; Joe Beals, Cherokee R.W. Breckenridge, Ames; and D.D. Davis, Glenwood.)

Other business accomplished will meet, we are sure, with whole-hearted support from the members. It was decided to reduce the annual dues for active members and student members to \$2.00 annually, effective July 1, 1959. We are certain that this ruling will prove popular but it must be emphasised, reiterated, and underlined that we will need MORE MEMBERS to finance our publications. We will need approximately 200 members to break even. Coupled with the reduced dues is a new publication policy in which the Newsletter and Journal are combined and issued on a quarterly basis. Starting July 1, the Journal, as the new publication will be called, will appear as an 8½ by 11 inch publication. The old size Journal will disappear as soon as the issues are brought up to date. For a short time new members will receive a bonus of both old and new Journals.

While on the subject of the Journals, we are happy to report that Volume 6 will be in the hands of the printer when you read this Newsletter. It will be followed in a short time by Volume 7. We hope to have Volume 8 in the hands of the members by fall at the latest.

We are excited about the possibilities of the new publication plan. All members must bear in mind, however, that unless our membership

increases significantly, we cannot afford to bring our Journals up to date and still continue to issue new Journals. Please remember that our publication is the major benefit derived from membership in the Iowa Archeological Society. It is the only way that we can all learn about archaeological activities in Iowa. If each member obtains ever one new member our financial position will be assured. We are not a profit making organization, and need very little money except to finance our publications.

ARCHAEOLOGY AT SUI

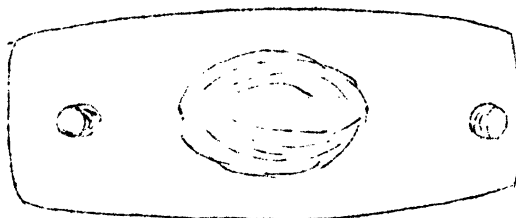
Plans for a Summer Session dig are in the final stage. We have decided to complete our research on the Mill Creek culture and will excavate at some of the later Mill Creek sites. Our plans for the proposed investigation are the excavation of houses at more than one of the sites, to make stratigraphic tests at several of the sites, and to complete the survey of all the sites in the Mill Creek culture that have not yet been mapped.

One of the students in the laboratory, Mr. Carroll Zuber, recently found a concentration of early Woodland material in Iowa County. The find is extremely important as it gives us evidence of a pure Early Woodland site, and a valuable association of material. Among the artifacts found are large side notched blades, a two holed gorget, five celts, and an atlatl weight. The atlatl weight and gorget are illustrated below. We will have a more complete report as soon as the material has been analyzed. Mr. Zuber has also found another site which produced several varieties of Early Woodland pottery including Marion Thick and Sister Creeks Punctate but no later types. Unfortunately there was only one non-diagnostic projectile point associated with the sherds.

Atlatl weight

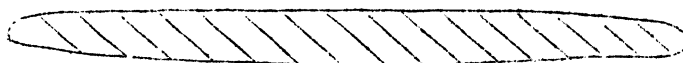
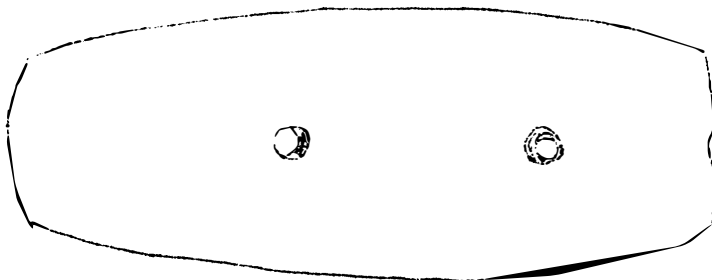


side view



bottom view

Gorget



NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Northwest Iowa W. D. Frankforter

Winter may not seem the best time of year for field trips in northern Iowa but when a sunny and relatively calm day presents itself the exploring instinct gets the upper hand and anything can happen. At our Northwest Chapter meeting in January, a talk on early Indian cultures in the Southwest by Dr. George Agogino, Acting Director of the W.H. Over Museum, University of South Dakota, Vermillion, turned our thoughts toward Turin, Iowa, where human skeletons were found in 1951. It had been reported by two of our Chapter members that new exposures were being made there as a result of a major earth-removal project to obtain fill for levee work along the lower reaches of the Little Sioux River. The opportunity to see the changing relationships of geologic deposits beneath the earth's surface is rarely possible so it was decided to visit the site in hopes of finding more clues to the problem of the geologic history of that vicinity. The field trip was made by Earl Brewster, Joe Beals, and W. D. Frankforter.

The hill at Turin which divides the Maple and Little Sioux valleys as they join the Missouri is at the end of a long ridge which broadens and flattens, rising to the northeast, until it merges with the dissected tableland east of Cherokee. The south side of the hill at Turin is being sliced away by bull-dozers, revealing layers of earth which have not seen the light of day for thousands of years. We spent most of one afternoon studying, photographing, and making notes on the deposits in the new exposure.

The till deposit which overlies the sand and gravel in the Turin pit is clearly seen in the west half of the new exposure. Here, also, it lies above a sand which is obviously a continuation of the same deposit exposed a few yards north in the pit. The till is in contact laterally, with buff loess about the middle of the exposure and the loess appears to extend downward to a considerable depth below the base of the till. Since the exposure had slumped, it was not possible to determine whether gravels were present under the loess.

In the process of studying these deposits evidence of an ancient soil in the loess more than twenty-five feet below today's surface was found and a few bits of charcoal were collected from it. The zone which may be a soil is underlain by a dark red zone of clayey sediment which appears to have washed into place since it makes sharp contact above and below with the loess and at the till contact slopes abruptly up to it. This horizon as viewed at right angles to the exposure is virtually horizontal (east-west), but cross-sectioning reveals that it dips southward at an angle of approximately forty five degrees. Whether or not this zone has any relationships to the buried soil above the level of the human remains is unknown at present. However, any evidence which may lead to a better interpretation of the geologic deposits at the site will be of value.

When charcoal is found, as at Turin, the question always comes to mind, "Was the fire man-made or accidental?" As is well known to

students of archaeology, charcoal, through tests which reveal the percent of radioactive carbon remaining in it, can now be made to reveal the secret of its age. Therefore, we save all such material which may have some bearing on the dating of the earth's covering.

Scientists interested in the age of the earth and the cultures of Man have become extremely cautious about destroying any evidence which might some day be a key to the information they seek. A few years ago wood and charcoal in geologic sediments and archaeological sites were seldom saved unless the pieces were large enough to make wood identification possible. Today, the smallest of carbon flakes which can be separated from the surrounding matrix are saved.

Now, a method of dating burned rocks and clay is being developed by Dr. George C. Kennedy at the Institute of Geophysics, University of California, Los Angeles. This process, not yet explained, is believed to be useful for dating such objects if they were heated some time between two and seven thousand years ago. If this method proves successful, it would be a tremendous boon to archaeologists who could submit pieces of pottery from sites and thus have an accurate method of establishing a chronological sequence of cultures. Locally, this would mean we could more accurately date the occupation periods of prehistoric groups and add to our knowledge of the past.

Central Iowa

R. W. Brockenridge

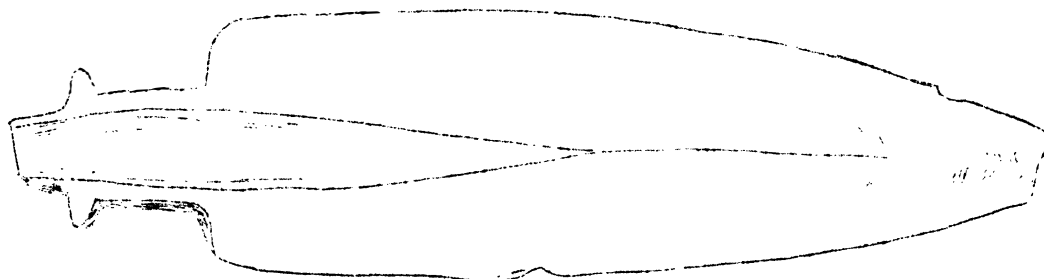
On May 2, S. Angstrom and R. W. Brockenridge of Iowa State College went to a site near the confluence of the Boone and Des Moines Rivers where a farmer had reported having turned up bones with his plow. The spot was on the very summit of a small but sharp glacial mound. A few bone fragments were found on the surface. Raking down a few inches revealed the presence of more bones in a limited area, and by carefully digging down a few more inches a compact mass of human bones were found. They occupied an area roughly four feet by five feet and they were just below the plowline. They rested on a subsoil of clay and small gravel. As nearly as could be determined, there were eleven skulls. Most of these were crushed out of shape. The teeth indicated adults and possibly one child. The teeth of the adults were badly worn as if by much chewing of food containing grit. No vertebrae nor finger nor toe bones were found. None of the bones were articulated and many were broken. There were no ornaments of any kind. No fragments whatsoever of hair or gristle were present. Apparently this was a bundle burial of bones collected after exposure to scavenging birds and animals. While the excavating work was in progress, two buzzards sailed by, far overhead, lending strength to the guess. Clam shell fragments were found mixed with the bones. These may have been used as grave digging tools.

Pieces of bone are being submitted with this report. They may be useful as a basis on which to estimate whether they are those of Woodland people or more modern Indians. Woodland village sites are near by. In later times the occupancy of this region was in dispute between the Sioux and the Sacs and Fox.

A large gravel pit is being developed north of Ames near the Skunk River. Dr. Charles Gwynne of the Geology Department at Iowa State College suggested to the operators that they watch for any unusual bones that might be brought up by the excavating machinery. Recently the huge leg bone of a mammoth or mastadon was turned up. It will be put on display at Veishea, which is the annual college exposition on May 7, 8, and 9.

Northcentral Iowa

Mr. Ole Fjetland of Humboldt has found an interesting ground slate spear head which is illustrated below. This was found near Goodell in Hancock County. The piece was carefully ground to shape but the grinding marks show and it was never polished. Sharp edges have been dulled through use. We are somewhat puzzled by this artifact which is extremely rare in Iowa. Ground slate knives are found in the Archaic cultures of northeastern North America, and the Dorset culture of the Eskimo area.



actual size

Northeast Iowa

Dr. H. P. Field writes us of further excavation on Oneota burials in Allamakee County along Bear Creek. A few weeks ago, Mrs. Field was in Iowa City and brought to the lab two skeletons which Dr. Field had excavated from an eroding bank about two miles east of the large burial area where so many skeletons were uncovered last fall. On May 3, Robert Brower, a college student from Gaines, Iowa, found and excavated with the assistance of Dr. Field and George Kjome, another Oneota burial a few feet from the others found last fall at 13AM43. Dr. Field writes: "Some of the artifacts are rather interesting... especially the steel trade object which actually has a bit of wood adhering to one end - evidently what is left of a handle. The skeleton was completely articulated, buried about three feet below the surface... The steel implement was near the head; a copper bracelet was on the right arm near the wrist; and beads were near the wrists. There was evidence of matting underneath the skeleton."

Mr. Brower has presented the skeleton to the laboratory, and has lent the artifacts to us for further study. We are slowly emmassing details on Oneota burial practices, ornamentation, use of trade objects, general artifacts, and physical type, none of which has been

recorded before. Darrell Henning, with the aid of Gavin Sampson, has written a report for us on the artifacts from 13AM43 which are in Mr. Sampson's collection. With the cooperation which we have been receiving from collectors in northeast Iowa, we will soon have enough information for a valuable and interesting monograph or Journal.

WEEK-END EXCAVATION AT THE WITTRUCK SITE, 130B4

Richard E. Flanders

During the week-end of the meetings of the Iowa Archaeological Society, April 25-26, a team of students from the State University of Iowa carried out a limited amount of test excavation on the Wittrock Site, 130B4, northeast of Sutherland, Iowa. The team consisted of Hester Davis, Tyler Marshall, Richard Flanders, and Ada Stofflet, and was ably assisted by Mr. Earl Brewster of Sheldon, Iowa.

The Wittrock Site is situated in NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 11, T94N, R39W on the east bank of Waterman Creek. The site is surrounded by a rectangular ditch, possibly the remains of a stockade or defensive structure of some kind, and several depressions can be seen within the stockade which may have been the locations of houses or other buildings. The adjacent fields are cultivated to within about 60 feet of the ditch and the southwest corner of the ditch is cut by the creek bank.

Two five foot square test pits were opened and excavated to culturally sterile soil. One pit was located in the center of one of the depressions in the northeast corner of the site and yielded very little material, finally ending at about 20 inches below ground level in hard, gravel-filled sand. The other pit in the middle of the site near the east wall, exhibited a lens of sand at about the same distance below ground level under which no more cultural material was found. The relatively shallow depth of the site and scarcity of cultural material in comparison to other Mill Creek sites, as well as the well-defined features on the surface of the site, tend to support the contention that the site represents a single, fairly short occupation. A good surface collection was taken from the adjacent fields (which, incidently, yielded the bulk of materials from the area) and evidence was found of houses close to the "stockade" in the form of pieces of fired clay daub, presumably from house walls

There was an unusual amount of stone present in the excavated pits, a large percentage of which was limonite (yellow ochre) in the form of unworked concretions. Four well-used milling stones were found on the surface of the site and three triangular Mississippian projectile points were uncovered in the course of excavation. The pits yielded some bone fragments which included a few bones of small mammals plus several large pieces of what appear to be bison long bones and part of a bison scapula.

The ceramic content of the pits and surface collection consisted of 21 rim sherds and 497 body sherds and seems to point to a fairly

late date as far as Mill Creek chronology is concerned. There was a large percentage of incised pottery as compared to plain, a late feature, and the percentage distributions of types correlates fairly well with the upper levels of the Phipps Site and with the other late surface collections (notably Braunschweig, 130B2, and Waterman Crossing, 130B3). Four of the seven Chamberlain Ware sherds are late variations found also at the above-mentioned sites (Fig. 1, a, b.) Two other late forms were a Chamberlain rim decorated with single cord-wrapped stick impressions and a Mitchell Modified Lip without the usual lip punctates. (Fig. 1, c.) The pottery classification used here is from A Study of Mill Creek Ceramics, by John C. Ives, (MA thesis, State University of Iowa, 1956).

It is hoped that more extensive excavation at Wittrock during the spring and summer will clarify the somewhat hazy picture of relationships of the site with other Mill Creek manifestations, based as it is on a rather limited sample. The shallow depth of the site should make possible a much more extensive uncovering of area (including house patterns) than has been possible at other Mill Creek sites.

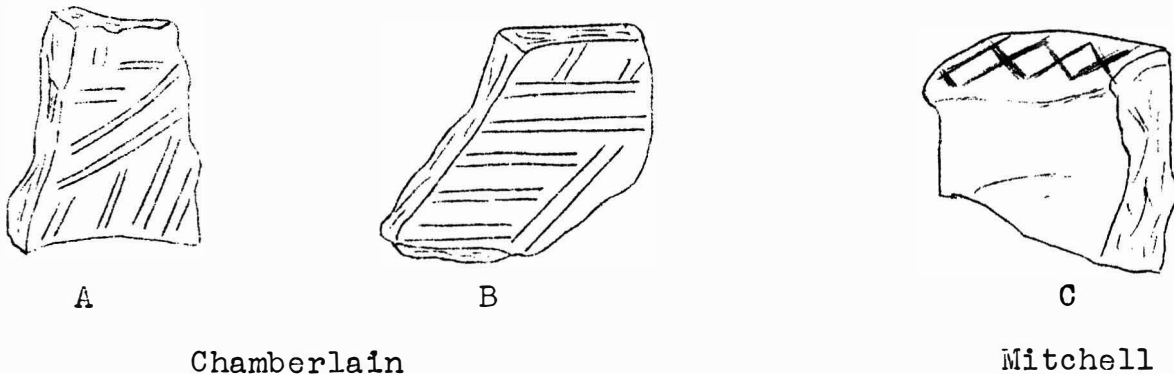


Fig. 1

BOOK REVIEW

Stirling, Matthew W. Indians of the Americas, Washington, D.C., National Geographic Society, 1959, 3rd printing. 432p. \$7.50.

This book, in its third printing, is a reprint of some articles on American Indians which have appeared in past issues of the National Geographic Magazine, plus some accounts of anthropological expeditions, many of which were co-sponsored by the National Geographic Society. The most outstanding feature of the book is the excellent art work by W.L. Kihn and H.M. Herget, and the many full-color reproductions are well worth the price of the book alone.

Indians of the Americas is divided into three sections; Indians of North America, Ancient Life in the New World, and Indians Today, from Amazon to Arctic. The first section begins with a brief historical sketch of first contacts in the Eastern United States and includes "thumbnail sketches" of the way of life of the major culture areas of North America. Kihn's illustrations are based on both archaeological materials and ethnographic accounts and are augmented by photographs of archaeological artifacts and of present day inhabitants. The second section deals with the advanced civilizations of Central and South America. Herget's art work is based on actual representations of the prehistoric peoples from sculpture and paintings recovered in the course of excavations. This section also contains excellent photographs of the major excavated sites and artifacts found associated with them as well as a series of maps locating the areas of major influence. The third section deals with the present-day descendants of the original inhabitants of North, Central, and South America. Especially good are the articles on the Indians of the tropical rain forests in South America by Clifford Evans and Betty Meggers, and the account of an Eskimo whale hunt by Froelich G. Rainey. The article on contemporary Indian painters includes some examples of this "pure American" art form.

This volume would make an excellent addition to the amateur's library as a reference for anyone with an interest in North and Central American prehistory and ethnography. The art work places into context and brings to life much material that is all too often dealt with in isolation from the way of life of which it was an important part.

Richard E. Flanders
Graduate Assistant
State University of Iowa

LIST OF MEMBERS, 1958-1959

Antisdell, Don, 507 2nd Avenue, N.W., Milford, Iowa
 Atwood, R. R., LeMars, Iowa
 Beals, Joe, Cherokee, Iowa
 Breckenridge, Prof. R. W., 2236 Storm St., Ames, Iowa
 Brewster, Earl, Sheldon, Iowa
 Burnmeister, John, Preston, Iowa
 Carnegie Museum, Upper Ohio Archeological Survey, 440 Forbes St.
 Pittsburg 15, Pennsylvania
 Chapman, Cliff, Cherokee, Iowa
 Cherokee Public Library, Cherokee, Iowa
 Council Bluffs Free Public Library, Pearl Street, Council Bluffs, Ia.
 Davenport Public Library, Davenport, Ia.
 Davenport Public Museum, 704 Brady St., Davenport, Iowa
 Davis, Donald D., P.O. Box 375, Glenwood, Iowa
 Eaton, Edward E., Sidney, Iowa
 Effigy Mounds National Monument, McGregor, Iowa
 Ennis, Harold J., Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa.
 Evans, Harold, Sheldon, Iowa
 Evans, Jay., R. R. #1, Lucas, Iowa
 Field, Dr. H. P., Decorah, Iowa
 Fisher, Dr. Alton K., Rt. 1, Iowa City, Iowa.
 Frankforter, W. D., Sanford Museum, Cherokee, Iowa.
 Freriks, Dorothy, Cherokee, Iowa
 Matilda J. Gibson Memorial Library, Maple Street, Creston, Iowa.
 Thomas Gilcrease Foundation, Tulsa, Oklahoma
 Gilmore City Public Library, Gilmore City, Iowa.
 Griffith, David R., 3115 Vilura Parkway, Des Moines, Iowa.
 Henry W. Grout Historical Museum, Park Ave. at South St., Waterloo, Ia
 Gwynne, Dr. Charles S. Dept. of Geology, Iowa State College
 Ames, Iowa.
 Hamilton, Henry W., Marshall, Missouri.
 Hankens, Don R., 920 West Cedar St., Cherokee, Iowa.
 Hayes, Dr. Warren, Waukon, Iowa
 Heikens, George A, Sr., RFD 3, Spencer, Iowa.
 Heikens, George A, Jr., RFD 3, Spencer, Iowa.
 Henning, Dale, R. 302 5th Avenue, Decorah, Iowa.
 Holland, Warren, 500 W. Monroe St., Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.
 Hughes, Dr. Paul L. 737 W. Belden Ave., Chicago 14, Illinois.
 Indiana State Library, Indianapolis 4, Indiana.
 University of Iowa Library, Iowa City, Iowa.
 The Iowan Magazine, Box 446, Shenandoah, Iowa
 Iowa Masonic Library, Box 271, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
 Iowa State Teacher's College, Library, Cedar Falls, Iowa.
 Ives, Mrs. F. L., 439 8th Avenue, S, Clinton, Iowa.
 Jacques, L. H., 404 W. Park Road, Iowa City, Iowa.
 Johnson, Lynn, Hamburg, Iowa.
 Jones, M. L., Conservation Officer, Estherville, Iowa.
 University of Kansas Library, Periodical Dept. Lawrence, Kansas.
 Keslin, Richard, Switzler Hall, Univ. of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.
 Kent, F. W., Director of Univ. Photo Service, SUI, Iowa City, Iowa.
 Kline, Paul, 711 Avenue A, Vinton, Iowa
 Kullbom, Leonard, R. R. 1, Council Bluffs, Iowa.
 Lambert, H. T., 1903 Ross Avenue, Sioux City, Iowa.

Lindsley, George M., Tripoli, Iowa.
 Luebben, Dr. Ralph A., 1107 Park St., Grinnell, Iowa.
 MacMartin, Mrs. Faye Brice, 602 State St., Tama, Iowa.
 McCrory, Dr. Wallace W., 621 Holt, Iowa City, Iowa.
 Meldvedt, Burton W., Paullina, Iowa.
 Miller, George L., 2403 Carey Avenue, Davenport, Iowa.
 University of Minnesota Library, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
 Mitchell, Mrs. Florence Keyes, 413 South 3rd St., Mr. Vernon, Iowa.
 Mittendorf, Mr. Edward, 528 W. 5th St., Davenport, Iowa.
 Library, National Museum of Canada, Ottawa 4, Ontario, Canada.
 Nebraska State Historical Society, 1500 R Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.
 Nelson, E. H., 605 West K St., Forest City, Iowa.
 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.
 Oklahoma Anthropological Society, Dept. of Anthropology, Univ. of
 Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.
 University of Oklahoma Library, Norman, Oklahoma
 Patten, Prof. L. M., 2022 Friley Road, Ames, Iowa.
 Pavlik, Norman, Box 655, Union, Iowa.
 Peabody Museum Library, Harvard University, Cambridge 38, Mass.
 University of Pennsylvania Library, Acquisitions Dept., 34th and
 Woodland Avenue, Philadelphia 4, Pennsylvania.
 Pilgrim, James S., 504 6th Avenue North, Clinton, Iowa.
 Plaehn, Erma B., Soc. Science Dept., I.S.T.C., Cedar Falls, Iowa.
 Public Library Des Moines, 100 Locus St., Des Moines 9, Iowa.
 Rosenfield, Mrs. Meyer, 207 37th St., Des Moines, Iowa.
 Ross, Orlandes, 406 W. Madison, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.
 Rowe, Paul R., Route #1, Glenwood, Iowa.
 Sanford Museum, 117 East Willow St., Cherokee, Iowa.
 Schneberger, Dr. C. J., 305-6 Howes Bldg., Clinton, Iowa.
 Simonsen, M. W., Quimby, Iowa.
 Skewis, Dorothy, 303 Lake Avenue, Storm Lake, Iowa.
 Smith, Isabella, Battle Creek, Iowa.
 Soday, Frank, 5301 Caroline, Decatur, Alabama.
 Speight, Glenn, West Branch, Iowa.
 St. Louis Public Library, St. Louis, Missouri.
 Stoflet, Ada M. 327 N. Capitol St., Iowa City, Iowa.
 Sutton, L. L., Plymouth, Iowa.
 Tidrick, Dr., R. T., Dept. of Surgery, Univ. Hospital, SUI,
 Iowa City, Iowa.
 Timberland Museum, Arlo C. Johnson, Route 1, Box 195, Forest City, Ia
 Thomas, Otho S., 205 South Greene, Rock Rapids, Iowa.
 Uchytel, Edward, 806 7th Ave., Belle Plaine, Iowa.
 University of Texas Library, Serials Acquisition, Austin 12, Texas.
 Whittaker, Miss Jennie, Apt. #3, 2917 West St., Ames, Iowa.
 Wickliff, James, 3217 West St., Ames, Iowa.
 Wirth, J. E., 457 Euclid, Cherokee, Iowa.
 Wisconsin State Historical Society, 816 State St., Madison 6, Wisc.