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The PALIMPSEST

Adrian D. Anderson, Executive Director

VOLUME 64 NUMBER 5 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1983

Mary K. Fredericksen, Editor

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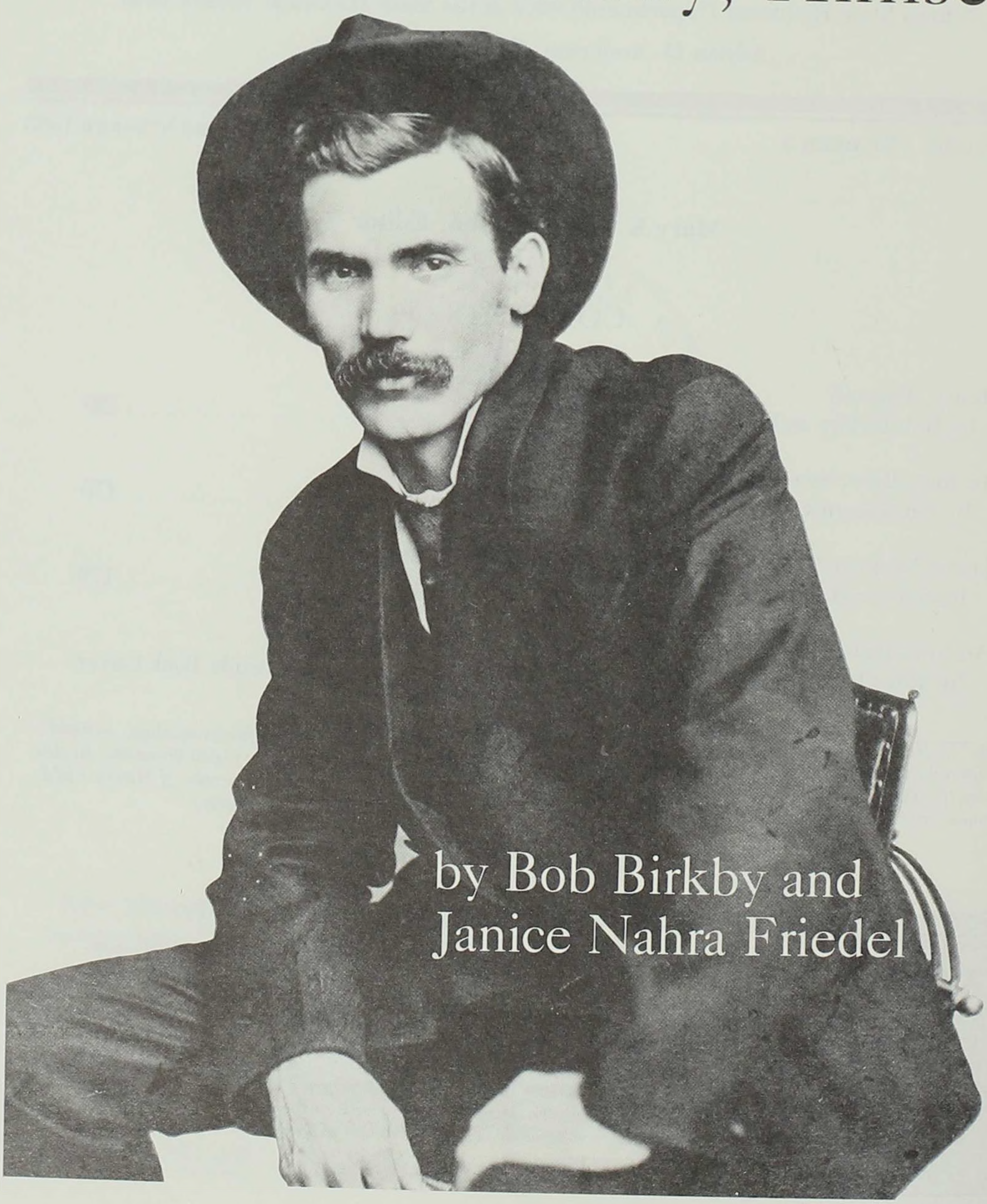
Cover: *The Henry Field Seed Company specialized in striking and colorful cover artwork for its catalogs, as Field's 1918 annual catalog (front cover) and Field's 1921 catalog for Spotted Polands (back cover) both illustrate. In this issue of the* Palimpsest *Bob Birkby and Janice Nahra Friedel examine the remarkable career of Henry Field, seedsman extraordinaire. (cover photography by Robert A. Ryan/Dennett-Muessig Associates)*

The Meaning of the Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete, and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

Henry, Himself



by Bob Birkby and
Janice Nahra Friedel

He was known as the High Priest of the Prairies, the self-made founder of a spectacular business, and a nominee for the United States Senate. National polls proclaimed him one of the most popular radio broadcasters in America. He was a visionary and a simple salesman, a public figure and homespun man. To some he was the Cornfield Sage, to others a country jake. But to thousands of loyal supporters, he was simply Henry himself.

His full name was Henry Arms Field, but Henry was by no means a "simple" man. An early developer of hybrid seed, he was founder and president of the seed and nursery company that bears his name. A pioneer in radio, Henry became the "farmer next door" to millions of Americans who listened to his voice.

Henry was the eldest of the Field clan, a family whose roots are planted deep into the soil of southwest Iowa, and whose influence has been of national and international importance.

* * *

Henry was born in the fertile Nishnabotna Valley of southwestern Iowa on what he described as "a cold wintry day in the latter fall of 1871 in a little 14′ x 16′ shanty, way out on the prairie — not a house in sight — not a fence or tree — just miles and miles of grey prairie." His parents, Solomon and Celestia "Lettie" Field, had only recently come to Iowa from Illinois to homestead.

It was a simple shanty, to which Lettie quickly added a feminine touch. The walls were papered with newspapers and pictures, and white flour sacks draped the windows. A threshing machine platform hinged to the wall served as the dining room table, and a niche in the wall held the books brought from Illinois.

During the winter months Solomon and Lettie taught in nearby schools. They would pass Baby Henry back and forth as they rode their horses to class. On cold mornings he was so completely wrapped in blankets his parents couldn't always tell which end of the bundle was which, and they sometimes inadvertently carried him upside down. Lettie's school, the first in the new town of Shenandoah, met in the back of a grocery store. Henry slept in a basket beside her desk, no doubt relieved he was no longer bouncing across the countryside on his head.

In the year of Henry's birth, the Burlington & Quincy Railroad laid tracks into Shenandoah, and with the coming of commercial transportation the town developed rapidly. Solomon Field found a ready market for his fruits, vegetables, and livestock, and he soon gave up teaching to spend more time on the farm.

The times were hard on farmers. In two days all of the crops could be lost to clouds of grasshoppers that descended onto the prairie. Or in another year corn could be so cheap that it was burned for heating fuel.

Despite the hardships, the Fields believed that God had smiled upon them. The family continued to grow. Their eight children included, in order of birth, Henry, Stephen (who died in infancy), Helen, Martha, Jessie, Solomon Jr., Leanna, and Susan. To accommodate all of the children and the many relatives and guests who stayed with them, a larger, brick home was built. "Sunnyside" seemed an appropriate name for their home. It was at "Sunnyside" that Solomon and Lettie reared their family to revere God, to be honest and hardworking citizens, and to appreciate the abundance of the land.

* * *

When Henry was old enough to get around on his own, he helped his father weed the gardens, and as he watched the locomo-

Opposite: Henry Field in 1904. (courtesy of John Henry Field)

tives chugging through the valley he decided he wanted to become an engineer. Then, at the age of five, he opened a seed catalogue published by the James Vick Company. He had his mother read it to him, and he studied the sketches of vegetables and flowers. He asked her to write to James Vick and tell the veteran seedsman that he, Henry Field, intended to become a seedsman too. When Mr. Vick wrote an encouraging reply, Henry began gathering seeds from flowers in the yard and packaging them in little envelopes he made. Aunt Martha Long, a kind neighbor, purchased the product of his endeavors for fifty cents and Henry Field's career had begun.

By age eight Henry was carrying baskets of vegetables the two miles to Shenandoah and selling them door-to-door, always including an extra tomato or potato in each order. At ten he had a small, thriving trade in seed potatoes, pansies, and strawberry plants, and at fifteen he spent a winter working for $3.50 per week at the Livingston Seed Company in Des Moines to learn firsthand about the running of a seed business.

While Henry's small seed business prospered, he continued his education. As an adult his recollections of his early school days were clouded by those few bitter instances when he was jostled by city youngsters for being from the farm. One afternoon he was caught by some Shenandoah pranksters and put under a basket. He was forced to stay there while the "townies" charged their friends a penny or two for a look at "an authentic country jake."

Henry served as a page in the Iowa legislature in 1888, when his father served as an elected state legislator. During his high school days Henry was known as the "Young Sturgeon," for it was said that he had "lots in

Young Henry Field listened attentively as his mother read the James Vick seed catalog to him. (Henry Field Collection, SHSI)

Henry Field's first sale was to Aunt Martha Long, who purchased 50 cents worth of flower seeds. (Henry Field Collection, SHSI)

him, and the lungs and voice to give bite to it in speech." Henry, along with his thirteen classmates, graduated from Shenandoah High School in May 1889. He then attended Western Normal College in Shenandoah until it burned in December 1891.

Though Henry had been a fine student and was an eloquent speaker, he would later remark that higher learning and the King's English would get him nowhere with country folk, and it would take him ten years to modify his speech to what he called "Missouri English," the language of the people.

After college Henry's activities focused on combining the application of his normal, scientific, and civil engineering training with his interest in running his own seed and nursery business. He did county surveying for about a year through his company, Field and Wilson Engineers and Surveyors, and taught in country schools for three winters.

While Henry juggled several careers, he believed in "getting on" with his life. In 1892, just before his twenty-first birthday, Henry married Annie Hawxby, a college classmate who, like himself, had an avid interest in gardening and seed development. They built their home and established a truck farm at the edge of Shenandoah in an area called "Sleepy Hollow." Henry's farm yields were so successful that customers often asked him for a few of the seeds he had used to grow his crops, and soon he was spending his days tending the fields and his evenings packaging seeds. When winter came he saddled his horse and canvassed the countryside for more orders, discovering in cold, roadside encounters with farmers the importance of a succinct, honest sales pitch. "Now, there isn't any time for a lot of palaver when the wind is blowin' snow in your face and

At age eight, Henry Field started a market-gardening business. (Henry Field Collection, SHSI)

Henry Field learned firsthand about running a seed business while working at the Livingston Seed Company. (Henry Field Collection, SHSI)

By age twenty-one, Henry Field had built a large market business on his truck farm at "Sleepy Hollow." (Henry Field Collection, SHSI)

Henry Field was soon spending his days tending the fields and his evenings packaging seeds. (Henry Field Collection, SHSI)

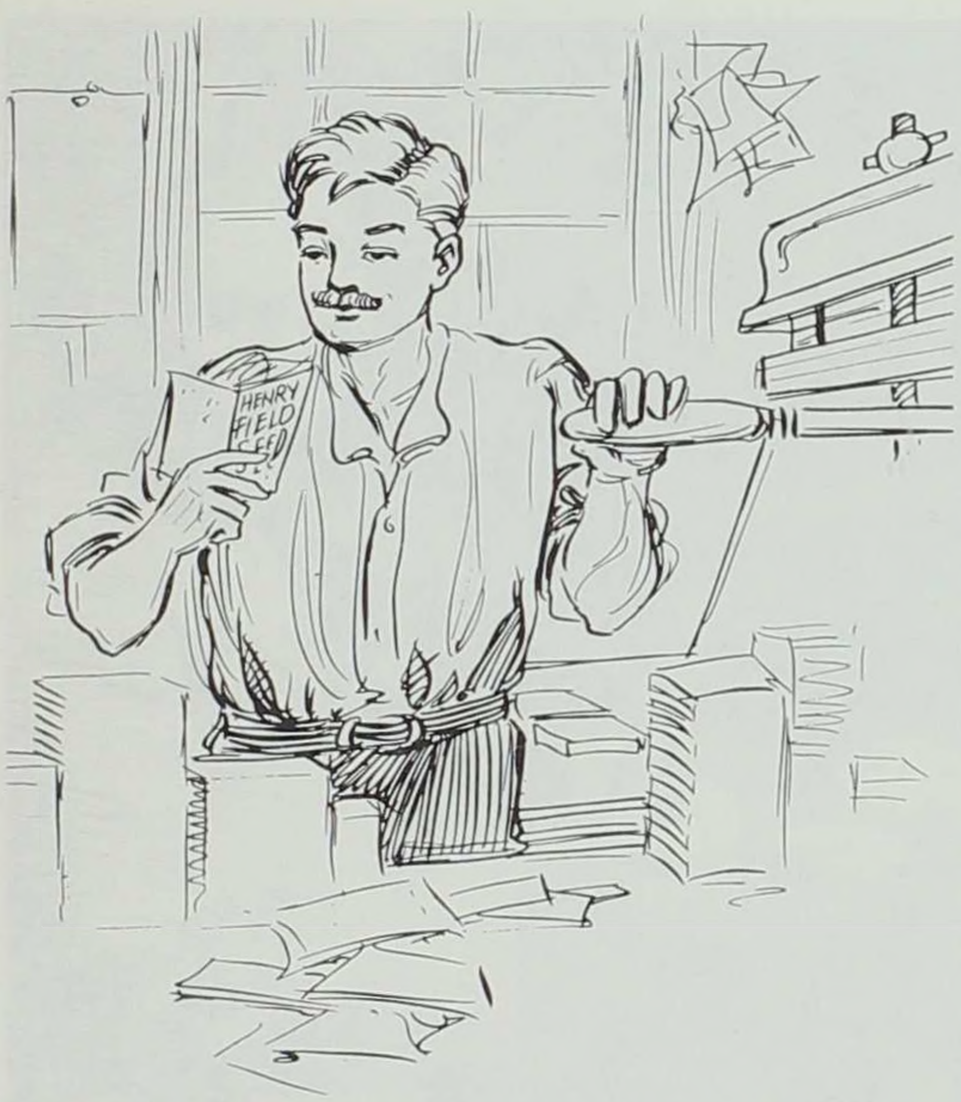
the horses are anxious to get back to the barn," he said. "But there is time to be friendly. You've got about 60 seconds to explain what you have to sell, why this particular farmer ought to buy it, what your price is, and get on your way." The method worked. "I've met many a man on the road and without him getting out of his buggy or without me getting out of mine, I'd sell him and have his order and be gone in three minutes. I made 67 calls one week and sold 62 of them. I went back the next week and got 3 more of the ones I had missed. And I found out how to talk to a customer."

Soon Henry converted a room of his home into an office and made his barn into a seedhouse, and in the late nights of 1899 he cranked out several thousand copies of his own four-page catalogue on a hand-powered press. "I was the whole thing'" he said of his enterprise, "from catalogue to delivery wagon." Henry Field had become a seedsman.

* * *

In 1902 Henry invested $500 in the construction of a new seedhouse in Shenandoah. It was a huge sum of money for him at the time, and he felt a great risk in putting up the structure. His business was expanding so quickly, however, that no sooner was the seedhouse completed than the company had outgrown the structure. Henry built an addition onto it every year until there was nowhere left to add.

In 1907 Henry grossed $63,000. With the encouragement of friends, he incorporated the Henry Field Seed Company, and near the railroad tracks built another large seedhouse. Founded on basic philosophies of honesty and fair dealing, the business was a reflection of its founder. Henry kept his word and expected others to do the same. "We Guarantee Your Money's Worth or Your Money Back" was the pledge on everything he sold, and his customers believed him. Henry's desk was in the center of the main floor of the seedhouse. Though his desk was surrounded by a two-foot divider,



Henry Field's first catalog was a four-page folder, printed using a hand-powered printing press. (Henry Field Collection, SHSI)

By the mid-1920s Henry Field's seed business furnished almost one-third of Shenandoah's postal business. (Henry Field Collection, SHSI)

he was visible and available to his customers. Strangers would walk by and greet him with a slap on the back and a "Hi Henry!" He was their trusted friend. His company consistently offered quality goods, and Henry continued to be simply himself.

Customers ordered their seeds by letter, beginning with "Dear Henry." Thousands of letters requesting his advice or telling Henry of their garden successes were received daily. Often these letters, as well as photographs of his customers and their crops, were included in his catalogue.

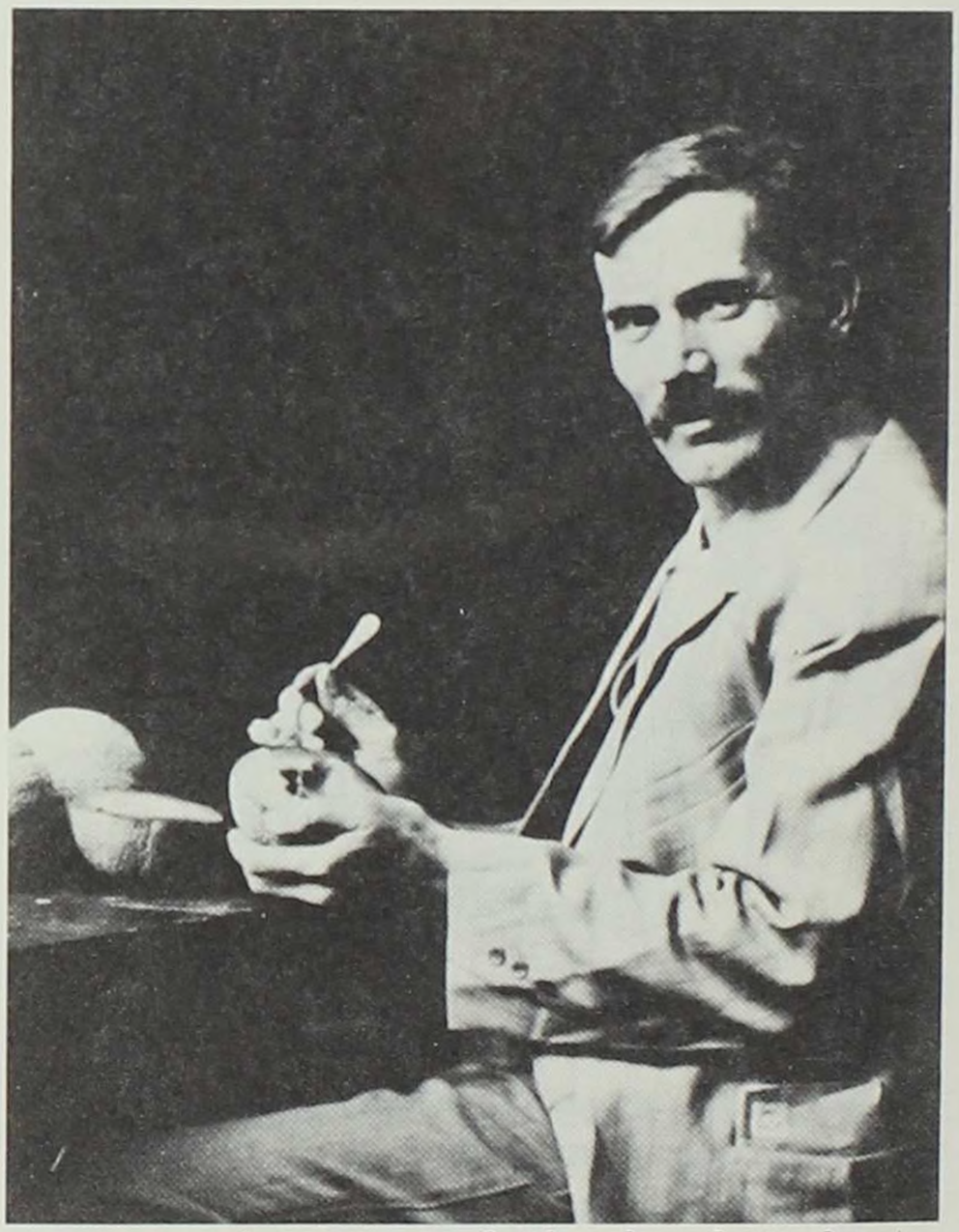
Henry decided that one of the most effective ways to keep in touch with his customers and to increase business was to write letters, and more letters. His were not formal business letters. He instructed his assistants, "Make your letters conform to the spirit and policy of our business. As I see it, it means cheerfulness, liberality, honesty and a spirit of what I might call human nature — the small town or common folk idea. And treating the other man as you'd like to be treated. Don't put on any airs. Don't be upstage, or as we say, 'biggity'. In writing, cut out the antiquated forms. Cut out the book English and talk modern United States — what I call Missouri English."

In order to reach a much broader audience, Henry went on to publish *Seed Sense*, a combination almanac and seed catalogue written "For the Man Behind the Hoe." *Seed Sense* contained letters from customers, articles on improved farming techniques, editorials espousing Henry's own philosophies, photographs and information about the latest additions to the Field family, and his wife's favorite recipes.

It was at this same time that Henry's sister, Jessie, was gaining state and national acclaim as Page County Superintendent of Schools (1906-1912). What Jessie began as an innovative strategy to make education in the country schools more relevant to the needs of the rural community evolved into 3-H and later into 4-H. Jessie wanted her students to appreciate life

on the farm and, like Henry, wanted them to understand the benefits of applying scientific knowledge to farming. Henry donated seeds to the schools so that each school would have a garden planned and tended by the students. One year he gave Jessie 5,000 tulip bulbs to be distributed in the 136 schools in Page County. The following spring marked the first time that many students and parents ever laid eyes on a tulip. Henry also printed and distributed free to the students of Page County a small book entitled *Farm Arithmetic* (1909). Written by Jessie, the book contained problems applying arithmetic principles to real-life farm situations. It was a favorite of the students and their parents, and when all the copies were given out Henry's presses printed a second edition.

Helen, another of Henry's sisters, also had an extensive knowledge of and deep interest in gardening. Her interest and work with flowers would later earn her the respected nickname in the community of the "Flower Lady."



(courtesy Ruth Shambaugh Watkins)

Henry established himself as a pioneer in agriculture. He promoted the planting of sweet clover for feed and as fertilizer at a time when most farmers thought it was a weed. He also encouraged the planting of soybeans, alfalfa, and sudan grass. Henry kept his readers up-to-date on new fertilizers and methods to improve their crop and livestock yields. He was successful in encouraging the breeding of Spotted Poland China pigs in Iowa. Along with Henry Wallace, Henry pioneered what today is called hybrid seed corn. Henry's innovation was called "Mule Corn" because the corn grown couldn't produce its own kind; it was purchased in bags by the thousands.

Customers and visitors to Shenandoah could browse through Henry's Trial Gardens. In the backyard between the family home and the seedhouse, the Trial Gardens were a showcase of the colors and pleasant scents of nature. Most importantly, the Trial Gardens were experimental fields where customers could walk among the new strains of seeds developed by Henry's company or observe the results of using different types of fertilizers.

The company flourished. During peak seasons hundreds of Shenandoah's residents were on his payroll, and two-thirds of the town's postal business was made up of Henry Field shipments bound for points around the globe. Shenandoah became known as "Henry Field's Town."

At home Henry's family grew by similar leaps and bounds. Annie Hawxby, his first wife, had borne him a son, Frank. She died in 1899 from the complications of scarlet fever. He married Edna Thompson in 1900 and had eight daughters and two sons: Faith, Hope, Philip, Josephine, Jessie, Mary, Ruth, Georgia, John, and Celestia (Letty).

Henry was a family man, as interested in his family and home as he was in his business. He never wanted to be away from home at

mealtime or at night. Though he worked fourteen to sixteen hours a day his work was usually just across the yard in the garden or the seedhouse. Thus, his children were able to be with him in his work.

Each evening, at about ten o'clock, Henry would sit down with his children, and while he drank his coffee, they would sip their tea and munch on crackers. Henry's discussions with the children covered practically any subject, from politics to dating. These evening gatherings were more like lessons or lectures, and Henry couldn't have had a more appreciative audience.

During the summer months Henry and his family moved five miles from town out into the country on the site of Manti. Manti, established before the town of Shenandoah, had been an assembly place for a small sect of Mormons. Their local leader had prophesied that a civil war would spread north and that "Blood would flow through the streets of Manti." The prophecy did not come true, though with the coming of the railroad with its tracks laid to the north of Manti, the town of Shenandoah prospered and Manti was deserted.

Henry Field with his son, John Henry, at Manti in 1918. (courtesy John Henry Field)

At the site of Manti Henry built a collection of cabins for the family. The small bungalows measured about 30′ x 12′ and were connected by a boardwalk. The first cabin was for Grandpa and Grandma Field (Solomon and Lettie), the second for Dad and Mama (Henry and Edna), and the next three were for the children. There was also a cabin which served as a community dining hall. About a block away was a separate cabin hidden in the trees. This cabin was designated the "Music House." Complete with a Victrola, piano, and outside swing, it was an ideal place where the older children could entertain friends, away from the sensitive ears and watchful eyes of their parents and the curious younger children. With the death of Edna, however, the family summer outings to Manti came to an end.

Edna died on April 3, 1925, of Bright's disease. For four years Henry was both mother and father to his children, and then on April 10, 1929, he married Bertha McCullen, an employee of his company. Bertha was a loving wife to Henry and a caring mother to the younger Field children.

Years later Henry moved the cabins at Manti to town: the Music House into their backyard, and the six cabins in a row on what officially was called Field Court. Remodeled, these six cabins were rented to company employees at a modest rate. One of these cabins was used as a "weekend getaway" for Bertha and Henry. It was at the "Field Dollhouse," as it was called, that Henry and Bertha relaxed away from work, the seedhouse, and the house full of children.

By the 1920s Henry's company ranked among the largest seed businesses in the nation, yet he still lived modestly. "I have never been ambitious to be a rich man," he explained. "I've wanted a good, comfortable business, big enough to keep me out of mis-

chief, but not so big that I couldn't look after it myself. I've made a lot of things more important than money."

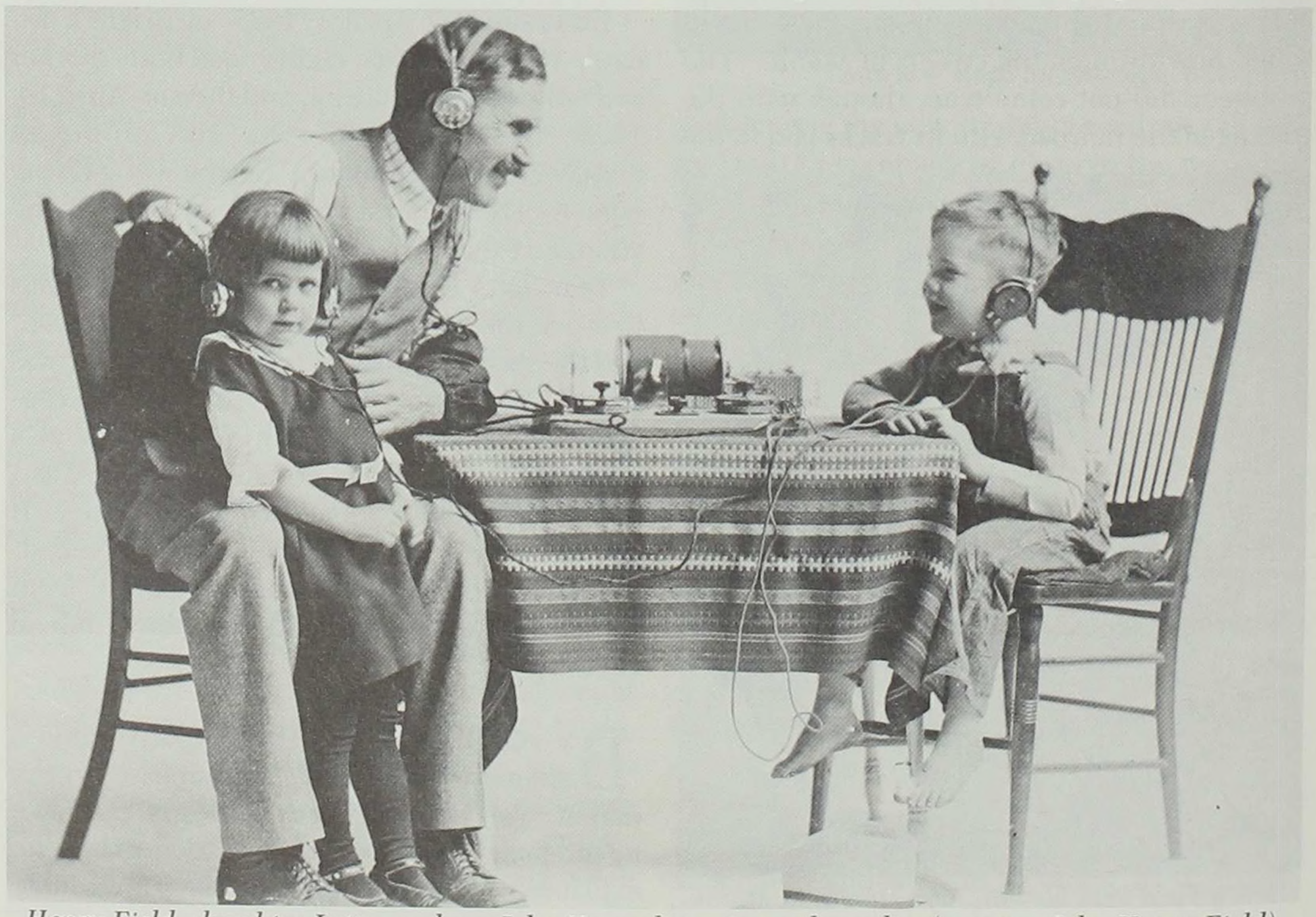
Among the things he had made was a good name for himself. At heart he was still a simple seedsman, dealing on a one-to-one basis with each customer. His children were growing into adults, their father was proud to say, who had "all managed to keep out of jail, and off of relief." Henry at the time was in his fifties, slowing down a bit, and content to let the business hum along while he slipped easily toward retirement.

Then he discovered radio.

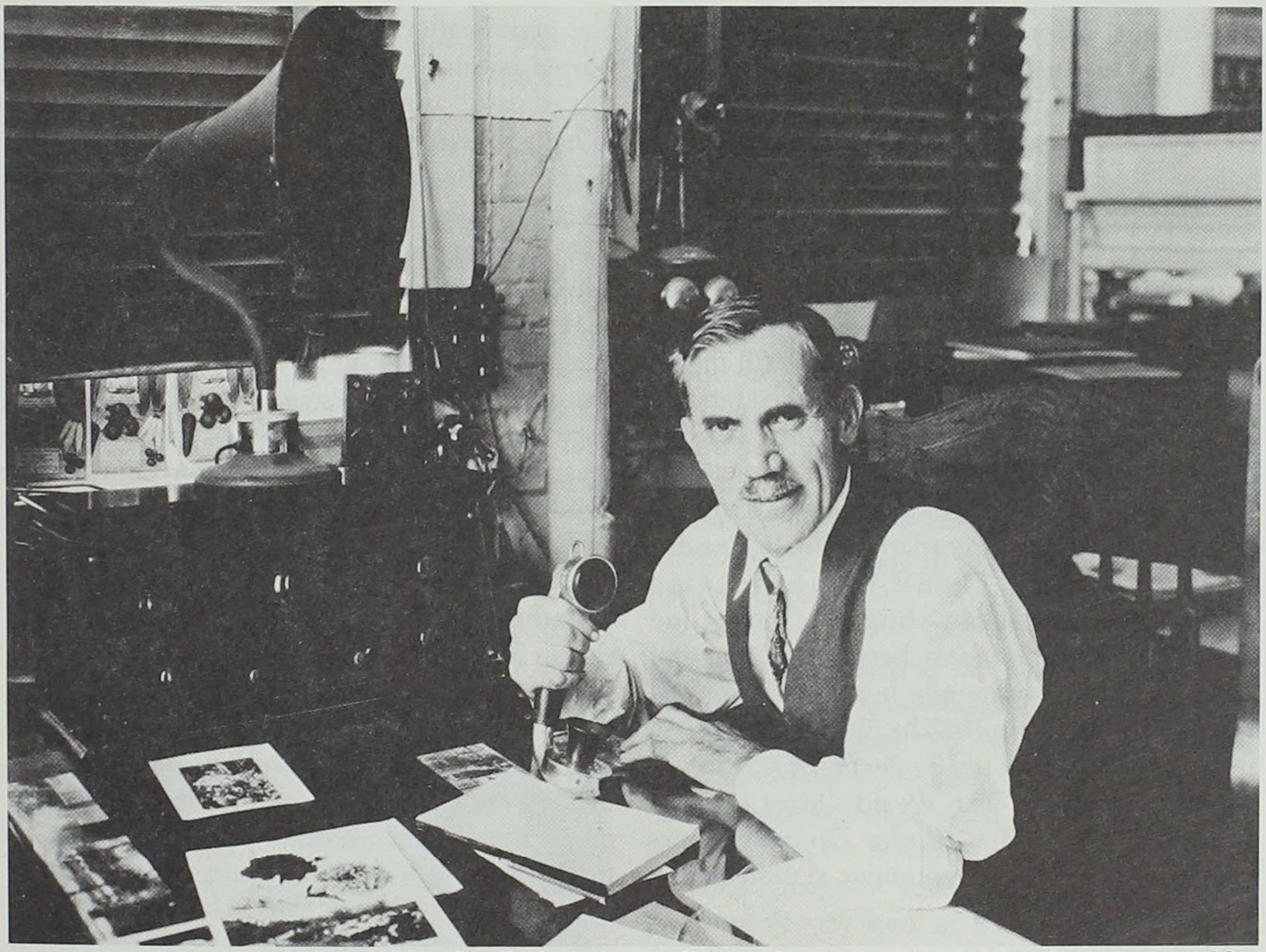
* * *

In the crisp, clear nights of the early 1920s signals from the nation's early radio transmitters began to spread across the midwestern prairies. Throughout the farmlands, people hungry for entertainment rigged up the newfangled crystal sets, slipped on the headphones, and listened eagerly. Pressed for programs to fill the hours, some of the stations turned to local talent. In the fall of 1923 WOW, a station owned by the Omaha Grain Exchange, invited Henry Field to bring some of his Seedhouse Folk to the studio and provide an evening's broadcast.

Uneasy though he was at the prospect of talking into a microphone, Henry was eager to get his brand of culture on the air. He had listened to the long, arid lectures, and more than once had shut off his set after hearing too much music that did not suit his simple tastes. So he loaded up two dozen of his employees, drove them to Omaha, and put on three hours of old-fashioned music. They sang hymns and folk songs. Fiddlers, a banjo player, and a



Henry Field, daughter Letty, and son John Henry listen in on the radio. (courtesy John Henry Field)



Henry Field at his desk in the seedhouse, late 1920s. (courtesy John Henry Field)

guitarist performed the tunes of the prairie farmers.

"This radio idea first struck me after I bought a receiving set. At every station I heard those raggy, jazzy tunes, and I wondered if people didn't really get tired of that sort of music," explained Henry, who couldn't sing and didn't try. "Our idea was to bring back the memories of the simple tuneful music of other days, and to have an entire evening of good music, free from either Jazz or Grand Opera, but to our notion better than either."

The listener response was overwhelming. Five thousand letters of congratulation arrived at the seedhouse from all over the country, Canada, Cuba, and ships at sea, and Henry knew a good thing when he saw it. He applied for an operating license and, with the help of local radio buffs, built a 500-watt station. Towers rose from the roof of the seedhouse, and a small, top floor room was converted into a studio. Burlap seed bags were nailed to the walls to muffle unwanted noises.

In February 1924 Henry took time out of a busy workday to turn on the transmitter and sit before the microphone. He thought about the farm people he was about to address, and cleared his throat. "This is Henry Field, himself," he announced, and then he told them what he'd just had for lunch. He talked about the weather and how it would affect spring planting. He reminded them to write to him about whatever interested them, because he was sure it would interest him as well, and he urged them to fill out the order blanks in their Henry Field catalogues for the latest in seeds

and shrubs. Then he shut off the station and went back downstairs.

Out in the empty countryside people heard Henry's plain, friendly voice coming into their homes. It was as if a good neighbor had just dropped by for a visit, and they couldn't help but believe in him. They wrote letters by the thousands and bought whatever he offered, sight unseen. Often they sent blank checks with their orders, trusting Henry to fill in the amount due. They suggested that the station's call letters KFNF stood for "Kind Friends Never Fail," "Keep Fairness Near the Farmer," and "Keep Friendly, Never Frown." Henry proudly referred to "The Friendly Farmer Station," and as he became accustomed to broadcasting, his noontime "Letter Basket" program became a fixture of farm life. So many people heard and enjoyed Henry's visits that in 1925 he placed second in a national poll conducted by *Radio Digest* magazine to determine "The World's Most Popular Announcer." In 1930 *Radio Digest* readers voted KFNF the most popular station in the Midwest.

The broadcasting room grew from the cubbyhole on the top floor of the seedhouse to the entire floor, and then to a special studio building built between the family residence and the seedhouse. From the new building the station operated twenty-four hours a day. There was no difficulty filling the time, with talks on trees, flowers and vegetables, old-fashioned fiddling, barn dances, morning prayer services and gospel singing, and occasional economic reports from the local banker. "It was a personalized radio station and a personalized business, all built around [Henry's] amazing understanding of his people and a love for the soil." Nine telephone operators answered the station's phones, and the response to one day's broadcasting drew 227,000 telegrams.

Most of the broadcasting of KFNF was done by employees of Henry Field. Local townspeople, civic leaders, bands, and cowboy singers waited patiently to be on the radio. Listeners stayed up all night tuned to the radio, anxious to hear the voices of familiar personalities.

The studio had a raised stage with a huge piece of plate glass set in a steel frame to partition it from the audience. Daily crowds of 200-300 people sat through performances.

Henry's sisters gave him a helping hand with programming on the station. Helen Fischer, the oldest sister, gave listeners tips and answered their questions about how to be successful flower gardeners. Martha Eaton, who lived in Des Moines, read her original poetry and discussed current literature whenever she was in Shenandoah. Jessie Shambaugh broadcast the "Mother's Hour," giving advice on caring for and raising children. Leanna Driftmier broadcast an hour-long daily program called "Kitchen Klatter." Giving the rural homemaker innovative and useful ideas for making life easier, "Kitchen Klatter" would go on to become a regionally-syndicated radio program, whose broadcasting and magazine continue to this day. Finally, Henry's youngest sister, Susan Conrad, who was a potter, filled in on the program whenever she was needed.

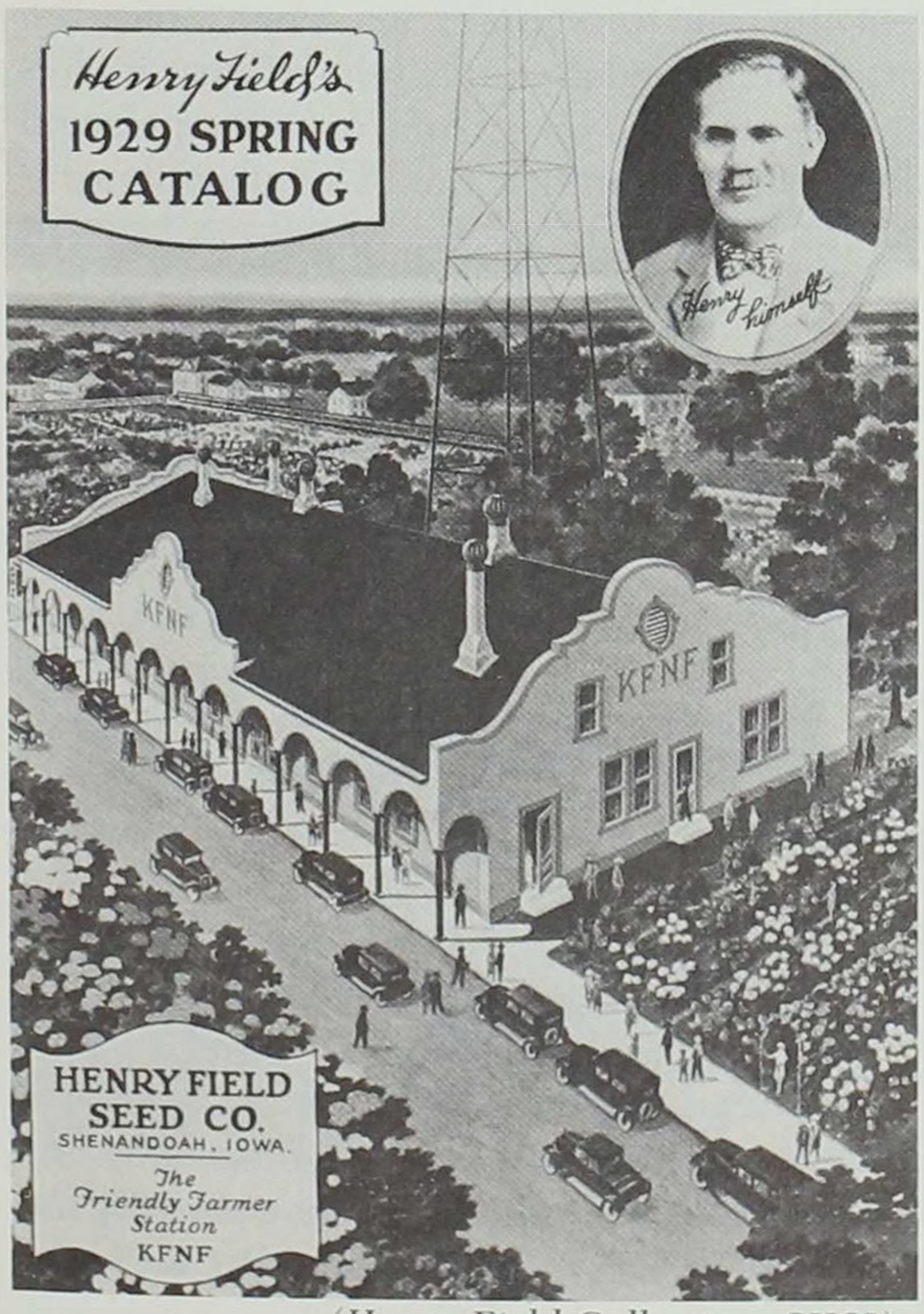
Henry's talks on the radio were friendly and honest. He had no rules governing them. One day he might discuss current farm and crop conditions, and on the next day some article he had recently read. It was his down-to-earth attitude that gained him the trust and respect of his listening audience. As a result, in 1926, one midwestern newspaper referred to Henry Field as the Corn Belt's "guide, philosopher, counselor and friend."

Henry was a Christian whose personal conviction about the importance of religion in one's life was reflected in his radio programming. In the second year of broadcasting Henry originated the Morning Devotion service over the air. His program also included a weekly broadcast of the Sunday school lessons, followed by a discussion. C.L. Hanley, one of

the first radio pastors in the country, was the first preacher with KFNF. Active in the 1920s Firebrand School, Pastor Hanley was known as "The Golden Rule Microphone." There was no Sunday advertising over the air, and since Henry did not personally partake of liquor or tobacco these products were not advertised on KFNF.

As one of the first broadcasters in the nation to use the airwaves as an advertising medium, Henry had only to mention what he had for sale, and listeners flooded the seedhouse with orders. In 1927 alone, Henry advertised and sold the following:

55 railroad carloads of Shenandoah Brand tires
60 railroad carloads of Henry Field Paint
490,000 pounds of Field's Famous Coffee
44 railroad carloads of Field's seeds
20 railroad carloads of dried fruit
51,000 radio tubes
204,000 yards of dress goods
60,000 pairs of Henrisilk ladies' hosiery
21,000 suits



(Henry Field Collection, SHSI)

Henry Field Stores, Incorporated, were set up as a branch of the Henry Field Company. The stores were managed by former seedhouse employees who owned up to forty-nine percent of the business. They were located in towns about the size of Shenandoah that served as farming trade centers and had radio stations. Locations included the Nebraska towns of Norfolk, York, a suburb of Omaha, and Hiawatha, Kansas. With their wide diversities of products these stores rivaled the department stores of the larger cities.

Radio transformed the Henry Field Company from a comfortable business into a booming enterprise. In 1925 total sales were $912,211. Two years later, with KFNF firmly established, sales had risen to $2,571,526. But sales had always been increasing, and the tremendous surge in revenues was not the only pleasure Henry took in KFNF. "We had the darndest rig you ever saw, but it worked," he said of his radio station. "And rules weren't so strict then. On a good clear night we would pour on the kilowatts and really tear a hole across the midwest."

Henry wasn't the only one eager to rip out a piece of the prairie sky and call it his own. In a seedhouse three blocks away, Earl May and his family were fashioning a business that was to rival the Henry Field Company seed for seed, building for building, and, with the establishment of KMA, radio station for radio station. As competitors, innovators, and charismatic showmen, Henry and Earl created in Shenandoah a vigor and excitement that brought people from throughout the Midwest to the small farming community. Perhaps nothing more dramatically illustrated their drawing power than the annual jubilees.

Organized by each radio station to thank

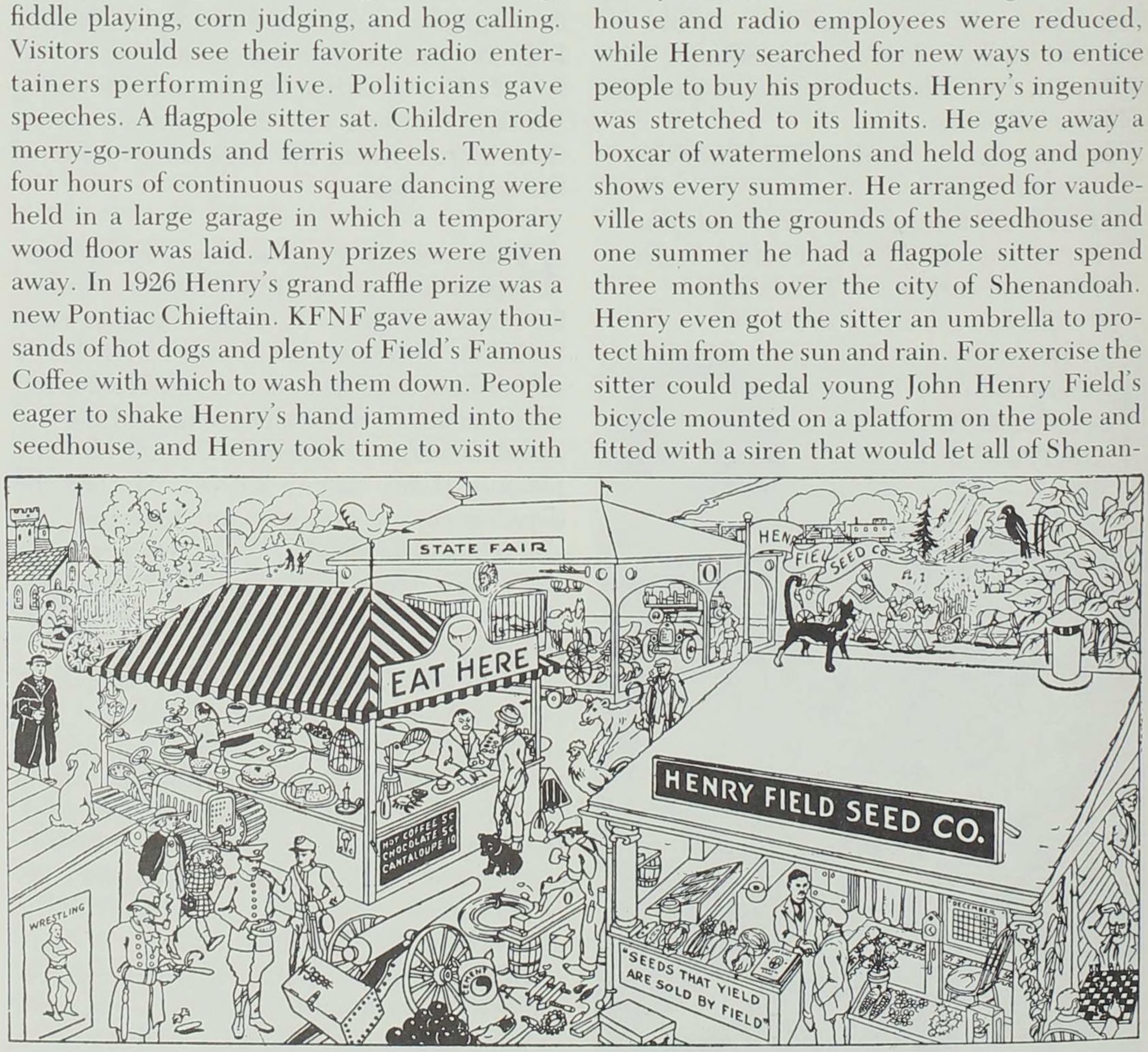
their listeners for their support, the week-long jubilee brought 100,000 fans (and potential customers) to Shenandoah each autumn. The streets were so crowded that visitors had to park several miles from the center of town and walk to the festivities.

On outdoor platforms the stations hosted magicians, country fiddlers, poultry shows, vegetable exhibits, and contests in pancake eating, yodeling, nail driving, hat throwing, fiddle playing, corn judging, and hog calling. Visitors could see their favorite radio entertainers performing live. Politicians gave speeches. A flagpole sitter sat. Children rode merry-go-rounds and ferris wheels. Twenty-four hours of continuous square dancing were held in a large garage in which a temporary wood floor was laid. Many prizes were given away. In 1926 Henry's grand raffle prize was a new Pontiac Chieftain. KFNF gave away thousands of hot dogs and plenty of Field's Famous Coffee with which to wash them down. People eager to shake Henry's hand jammed into the seedhouse, and Henry took time to visit with them all. Henry Field was riding the crest of popularity with a good deal of amused pleasure, content that things would go on growing.

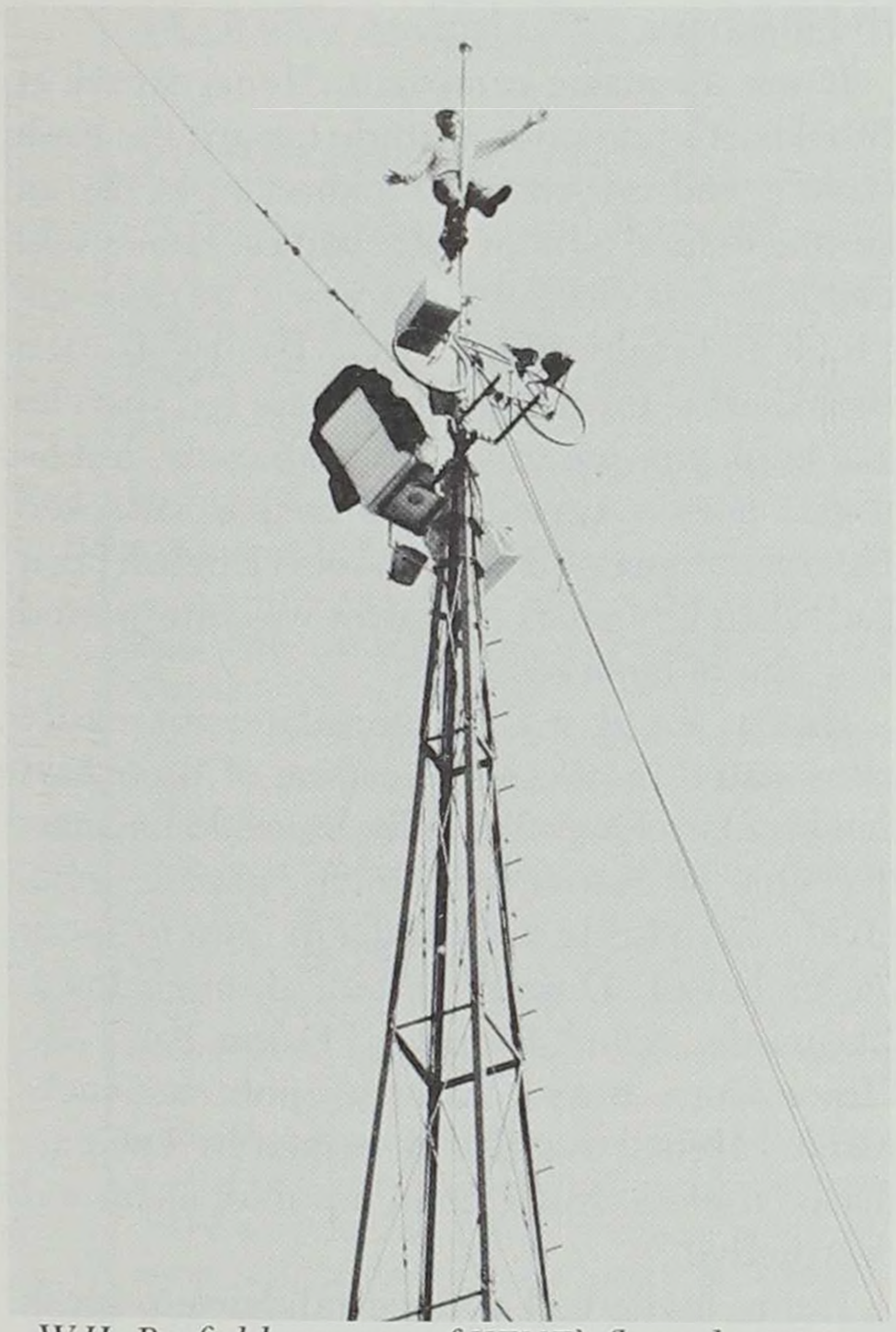
But then came the Depression.

* * *

Southwest Iowa and its farmers were hard-hit by the Depression. And so was Henry's business. Salaries and wages of seedhouse and radio employees were reduced, while Henry searched for new ways to entice people to buy his products. Henry's ingenuity was stretched to its limits. He gave away a boxcar of watermelons and held dog and pony shows every summer. He arranged for vaudeville acts on the grounds of the seedhouse and one summer he had a flagpole sitter spend three months over the city of Shenandoah. Henry even got the sitter an umbrella to protect him from the sun and rain. For exercise the sitter could pedal young John Henry Field's bicycle mounted on a platform on the pole and fitted with a siren that would let all of Shenan-



"How Many Objects Can You Name in This Picture That Begin with 'C'?" was the question posed by the Henry Field Seed Company in this 1922 newspaper contest. The prize for identifying the greatest number of objects was $500. (Henry Field Collection, SHSI)



W.H. Penfield was one of KFNF's flagpole sitters. (courtesy John Henry Field)

doah know Henry Field's flagpole sitter was stretching his legs.

The radio station had two 210-foot towers in the backyard of the Field home. At the base of each tower the legs were twenty-five feet apart. It was in this space that Henry located his zoo, an attraction for both children and adults. Thirty to forty different kinds of animals were on display for all to see: armadillos, badgers, raccoons, alligators, tortoises and turtles, two spider and two rhesus monkeys, and a variety of snakes. Henry's brother, Sol, brought back mountain lions from California for the zoo, and rigged up a mechanical bull for the entertainment of seedhouse employees.

Henry was trying hard to keep his business afloat. In 1930 the Henry Field Company needed operating capital, so bonds were issued totaling $309,000. The bonds were secured by all of the property, both real and personal, owned by the company. The company was worth far more than the $309,000, but times were hard and money was scarce. The Henry Field Company had a good reputation, and with the entire company as collateral, Henry was assured that the bonds would be purchased. What he didn't count on was the extended severity of the poor economic climate. The bonds were due in June 1933, and Henry was unable to keep up the interest payments on these bonds. When the delinquent interest surpassed $44,000 in November, the bondholders began foreclosure of the trust deed. Elbert A. Read was appointed trustee of the bondholders, and a court order appointed him receiver of all of the property owned by the company and supervisor of its operation. The ownership of the company passed from Henry Field to the bondholders. Under Iowa law a new corporation was organized, entitled Henry Field Seed Company (the name originally used for the business). The Henry Field Stores, Incorporated, which owned and operated all branch stores, was a separate corporation and not involved in these proceedings or the outcome.

Despite these setbacks, Henry had never been more popular. He used to brag that he had never run for political office. "Shucks," he said, "I'm too busy to run for anything. Why I don't know anything about politics. I'm a seedsman and a merchant." Nonetheless, Henry was persuaded to change his mind.

In 1932 the Depression was in full swing and the nation was embroiled over the issue of prohibition. And in Iowa the Republicans were alarmed by the voting record of Senator Smith W. Brookhart, who had become an archenemy of Wall Street and big business. Brookhart was a master electioneer, but Henry's friends were convinced that the seedsman was sufficiently well-known in the state to give Brookhart a real

"run."

The primary drew considerable interest and activity. The Republican party had six candidates: incumbent Smith W. Brookhart, Colonel Glenn C. Haynes, George Cosson, Louis H. Cook (all of Des Moines), L.E. Eickelberg of Waterloo, and Henry Field of Shenandoah. The Democratic party primary had six candidates.

The Republican primary ended up being a race between Brookhart and Field. Both were staunch prohibitionists and they were the only two of the six candidates endorsed by the WCTU. Brookhart had become too liberal for many of the Republicans, and the conservatives wanted him out. In order to receive the nomination, one candidate would have to receive a plurality plus 35% of the total vote. If no candidate fared this well, the nomination would go to a state party convention. Several newspapers reported that the rationale for so many candidates was to split up the primary vote so that no candidate would win. It was predicted that the convention would nominate Haynes. These rumors had no effect on Henry Field. He went into the race intending to win, and few party leaders counted on such drive and determination for a man of sixty who had never campaigned for or held political office.

Henry Field led a strenuous, well-organized campaign. He traveled extensively across the state and in one two-week period spoke in over one hundred towns to a total of 100,000 Iowans. Some audiences included well over 5,000 people. Henry's arrival in a town was announced by his band marching down its main street. Henry's campaign car pulled a four-wheeled, rubber-tired trailer, originally built for hauling shelled corn. Loudspeakers were mounted on the trailer so Henry could speak while being pulled through the town. While Henry was speaking, the band traveled to the next town, attracting both attention and a crowd. In one afternoon he spoke to audiences in Spencer, Spirit Lake, Estherville, Emmetsburg, and Algona.

It was a rousing campaign. Henry struck at Brookhart's pompous attitude toward the Iowa farmer, and criticized Brookhart's practice of getting federal jobs for his relatives. Henry said that if he was elected there would be only one Field in Washington, D.C. Henry likened Brookhart to the flagpole sitter: for ten years he had been pumping away on his bicycle, but he hadn't gotten anywhere. Brookhart attacked Henry's language. The "Missouri English" that had taken him years to master was interpreted as a sign of ignorance.

Henry Field was a candidate not easily intimidated by the name-calling of Brookhart and his liberal New York ally, Fiorello LaGuardia. One of Brookhart's worst campaign mistakes was to bring LaGuardia to Iowa to speak on his behalf. During his tour through Iowa, LaGuardia called Henry a "Damn liar," the "Iowa Corn Borer," and a "political cockroach." Henry was also described by LaGuardia as "useless, small, contemptible, mean and destructive."

Henry invited all of the candidates to speak over KFNF, to visit his family in Shenandoah, and to enjoy his wife's famous chicken stew. Brookhart, who had used KFNF in his previous political campaigns, declined the invitation and said in a speech, "If you want chicken stew, vote for Henry Field." Henry replied, "I say that if the people of Iowa want chicken stew they should vote for Henry Field and if they want the same old baloney they should vote for Brookhart." Across the state chicken stew became the campaign dish. Newspapers carried Henry and Bertha's picture with a copy of the famous recipe.

The primary election results startled politicians across the state, and further entrenched the name of Henry Field in the minds of midwestern farmers. Henry Field won the Republican nomination. However, in the national election that year, the sky fell in on the Republicans. Henry Field was defeated by

IOWA STATE HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT

Office of the State Historical Society

news for members

Society's 1983 Annual Banquet Something Special

Dr. Richard S. Kirkendall, the Henry A. Wallace Professor of History at Iowa State University, was the featured speaker at the 1983 Annual Banquet of the State Historical Society. The banquet and other activities drew 120 persons to the Scheman Continuing Education Center on the Iowa State University campus in Ames on June 25th.

The Ames Heritage Association led a group of early arrivals on a bus tour of historic sites in the Ames area. The tour included stops at the Farm House Museum on campus and the Hoggat School, a Civil War era schoolhouse recently restored by the group.

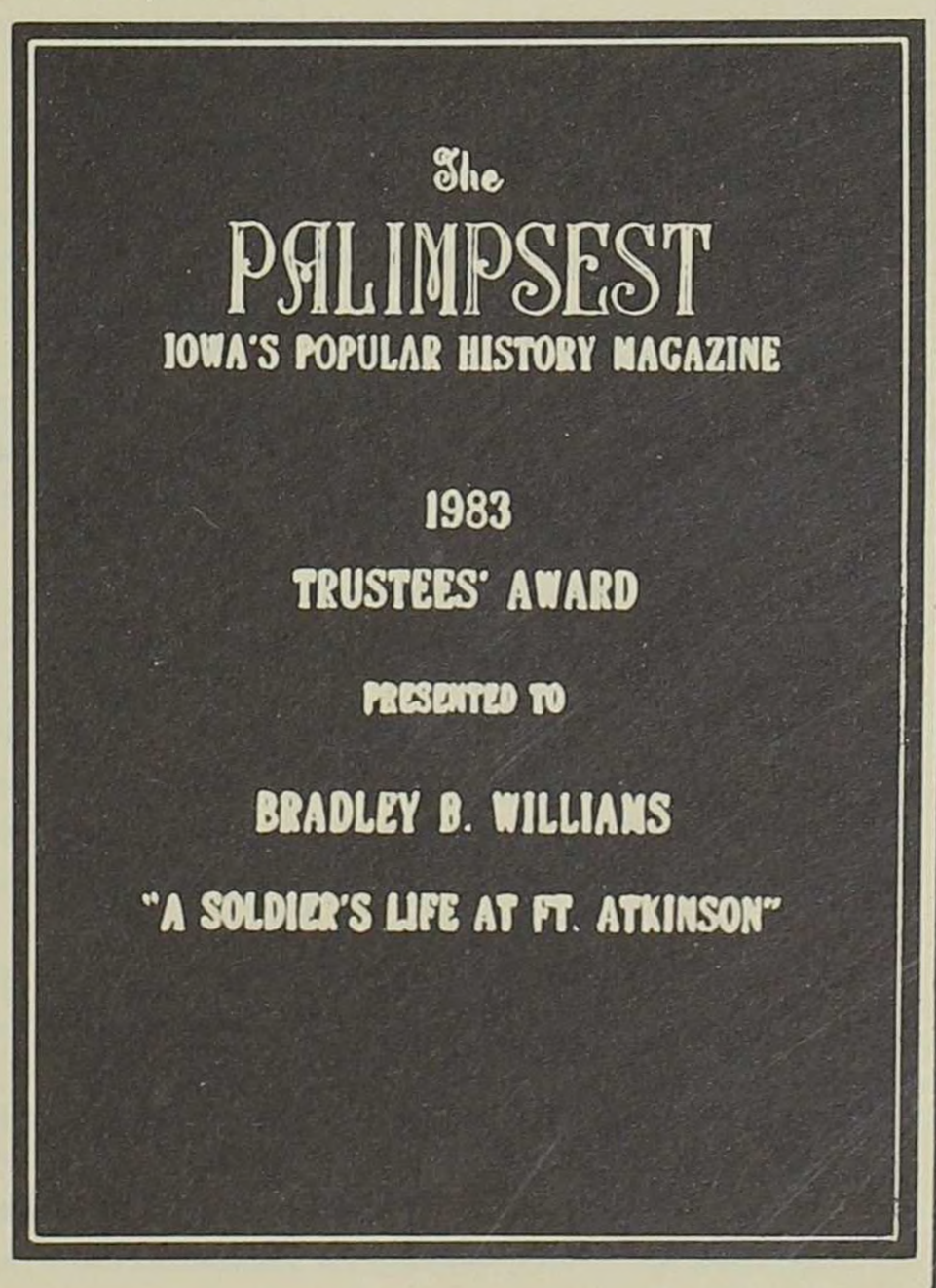
Later in the afternoon many Society members and guests took in the exhibits from more than a dozen Iowa historical institutions, organizations, and publishers. Among these was a display of materials relating to the early career of Henry A. Wallace. This display was prepared by Rebecca Martin, an intern from the University of Iowa Department of American Studies, working under the direction of Dr. Loren N. Horton, Director of Field Services for the Society.

Banquet guests were welcomed by Reverend George McDaniel, vice-president of the Board of Trustees of the Society. Roger Natte, president of the Board of Trustees, and Reverend McDaniel then presented certificates and copies of the Society's recent publication, *Time Like a Furrow* by James Hearst, to the 1983 Annual Awards program winners for achievement in state and local history (see elsewhere in this issue of *News for Members* for a complete listing of the winners). The first recipient of the inaugural Trustees' Award was also announced. According to a vote of the membership, the best article to have appeared in the *Palimpsest* during the previous calendar year was Bradley B. Williams' article in the November/December issue, "A Soldier's Life at Fort Atkinson." The final presentation, a special certificate of commendation from Governor Terry Branstad, was made by Dr. Joseph Walt, chairman of the Iowa State Historical Board, to LeRoy Pratt, former chairman, in recognition of his many years of service to the Iowa State Historical Department.

Dr. Kirkendall's banquet address was entitled "The View From the Editor's Desk: Henry A. Wallace and Rural Iowa in the Twenties and the Great Depression," and it focused on two programs Wallace initiated while editor of *Wallace's Farmer* in an effort to give farmers the recognition from society which he felt might motivate the most intelligent farm youths to remain in farming instead of moving into the cities. Wallace organized corn husking competitions, which are no longer held, and the Master Farmer program, which is still active.

Dr. Kirkendall noted Wallace's frequent boasts that the corn husking competitions sometimes drew larger crowds than University of Iowa football games. Wallace believed this was highly appropriate because economic heroes should be accorded at least as much recognition as athletic heroes to motivate other workers to higher production in pursuit of similar recognition.

The newly-elected members of the State Historical Society's Board of Trustees were also announced at the banquet and they include: Norman Erbe, Boone, Fourth Con-



gressional District; Robert Dietrich, Creston, Fifth Congressional District; LeRoy G. Pratt, Des Moines, At Large; and William Silag, Ames, At Large. — *William M. Cochran*

The display for Iowa Hall, located on the University of Iowa campus in Iowa City, was one of many fine exhibits available to members and guests at the State Historical Society's 1983 annual banquet.

1983 Annual Achievement Awards Announced

Certificates of Merit were awarded to the following individuals: Rosemary Beach, for Special Exhibits; Wendell Benson, for Overall Achievement; Clara Mae Burchett, for Special Programs; Charlene Conklin, for Distinguished Service to State and Local History; John Kemp, for Special Programs; Betsy Lyman and Gary Valen, for Publications; Roger Natte, for Overall Achievement; Richard Slattery, for Overall Achievement; Ben and Lucile Taylor, for Overall Achievement; Ward Zischke, for Special Exhibits.

Individuals receiving Certificates of Recognition for achievement in state and local history included: Fern Goodmanson, for Overall Achievement; Monabelle Hake, for Special Exhibits; Robert Hardman, for Special Programs; Vera Miller, for Special Exhibits; Madeline Roemig, for Special Exhibits; Ruth Thornton, for Service; Amy Walling, for Researching and Writing Local History.

Several organizations also received awards. Certificates of Merit were given to: the Cedar Falls Historical Society, for Special Exhibits; the Lee County Historical Society, for Special Exhibits; Peterson Heritage, Inc., for Overall Achievement; and the Shelby County Historical Society, for Youth Programs.

Organizations receiving Certificates of Recognition included: the Historical Society of Marshall County, for Overall Achievement; and the Sheldon Historical Society, for Overall Achievement.

Editor on the Prowl for Iowa History Manuscripts

The State Historical Society's PALIMPSEST editor encourages the submission of articles on the history of Iowa and the surrounding region that may be of interest to the general reading public. The originality and significance of an article, as well as the quality of an author's research and writing, will determine the manuscript's acceptance for publication. A brief biographical sketch should accompany the manuscript. All manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced, on medium weight paper. Ordinarily, the text of an article should not exceed 25 to 30 pages. Citations should be worked into the body of the text as far as possible. In this and other matters of form the *Chicago Manual of Style* is the standard guide. Black and white and colored illustrations are an integral part of the PALIMPSEST. Any photographic illustrations should accompany the manuscript, preferably five-by-seven or eight-by-ten glossy prints (unmarked on either side) or color slides. Send inquiries to: Mary K. Fredericksen, Palimpsest Editor, Office of the State Historical Society, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

September 1983

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS, 1983

September 24	Iowa Chapter, Victorian Society in America, Cedar Falls
September 27-30	Midwest Museums Conference, Flint, Michigan
Sept. 28-Oct. 2	National Oral History Colloquium, Seattle, Washington
October 4-7	American Association for State and Local History, Victoria, British Columbia
October 5-8	Society of American Archivists, Minneapolis, Minnesota
October 11-15	Mountain-Plains Museum Association Annual Meeting, Colorado Springs, Colorado
October 12-15	Western History Association, Salt Lake City, Utah
October 16-17	Iowa Museum Association, Fort Dodge
October 20-21	Museum Computer Network Conference, Rochester, New York
October 21-23	Midwest Archaeological Conference, Iowa City
October 22	Iowa Local Historical and Museum Association, Des Moines
October 22	Iowa College Teachers of History Annual Meeting, Marshalltown
October 26-30	National Trust for Historic Preservation, San Antonio, Texas
November 4-5	Iowa Genealogical Society, Ames
November 9-11	The 17th Conference on Archives and History, Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri
November 9-12	Annual Meeting of the Plains Conference, Rapid City, South Dakota
November 9-12	Southern Historical Association, Charleston, South Carolina
November 17-19	Midwest Archives Conferences, Champaign, Illinois
December 27-30	American Historical Association, Washington, D.C.

Society Receives NEH Grant for Iowa Newspaper Project

The State Historical Society recently received a small grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to plan a program to catalog and microfilm all Iowa newspapers. The grant project will be directed by Society librarians Nancy Kraft and Peter Curtis. Using the Society's publication, *A Bibliography of Iowa Newspapers, 1836-1976,* as a starting point, the project staff will determine how many changes and corrections in the bibliography are required to make it accurate for current conditions. A conference will be held next spring which will focus on the role of newspapers in research and describe the future course of the Iowa newspaper project.

These planning activities are aimed at preparing for the second and third phases of the newspaper project. Each of the later phases will, hopefully, also be partially funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities with grants that could total $300,000. The second phase will involve identifying all existing Iowa newspapers (of the 6500 titles in the *Bibliography* more than half have no copies known to exist). Existing titles will then be cataloged into a nationwide computer data base, and a second edition of the *Bibliography* will be produced. The third stage will involve a massive effort to microfilm all of Iowa's newspapers.

The Society's receipt of the first phase grant for the newspaper project — the planning grant — marks the beginning of what the Society staff hopes will be a long and exciting project. We will be needing the assistance of many Society members to bring it to a successful conclusion. — *Peter H. Curtis*

AASLH Attacks the "Paper Mountain"

NASHVILLE, TENN. — Help is on the way to more than 81,000 political subdivisions in the United States struggling to protect vital local government records from the ravages of time, neglect and the elements.

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) has awarded the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) a $145,000 grant to assist local governments in preserving documents essential not only to the everyday work of government itself, but also to the work of historians and other researchers.

The financial burden of records management at the local level is staggering. The annual cost of state and local government paperwork in the United States may be as high as $500 per person. But only a handful of local governments have recognized that good records management can result in substantial savings. For example, using high-density records centers can cut the annual cost of merely storing the contents of one file cabinet by up to 90 percent.

Economic considerations pale in comparison to the threat current conditions pose to preserving government records. Many essential government documents sit deteriorating in damp basements or

scorching attics. Many others have already been destroyed by fires and floods that struck poorly constructed and inadequately protected storage facilities.

Laws governing local records are often ambiguous, contradictory or fragmented. Public records systems frequently lack management continuity — those who create, use and save the records all treat them differently, which leads to confusion, mistakes and loss. Until recently there has been no national leadership to focus on the problems caused by what records experts refer to as a "paper mountain," and to take the steps necessary to solve these problems.

In 1982, the American Association for State and Local History, a national nonprofit association serving museums, historical organizations and agencies of all kinds interested in preserving local heritage, formed the National Advisory Committee on Management, Preservation and Use of Local Records. Composed of representatives from the Association of Records Managers and Administrators, International Institute of Municipal Clerks, National Association of Counties, National Association of State Archives and Records Administrators, National Center for State Courts and the Society of American Archivists, the committee identified specific records problems and recommended ways to meet the needs of local governments swamped by a "paper mountain."

The committee called on each state that does not have a comprehensive records management plan to develop one and recommended action in the interim to encourage state agencies to help local officials understand better the legal requirements for saving records. In addition, the committee recommended that local officials be provided technical assistance through training programs and publications.

NHPRC awarded AASLH the grant to put the committee's recommendations into effect. The grant carries with it a matching funds provision that requires AASLH to raise an additional $53,000. AASLH will use the grant to develop audio-visual programs, training materials and publications on various aspects of local records management, as well as to establish a clearinghouse of information on public records programs.

For a complete copy of the committee's report or for more information on the project, write George Rollie Adams, Project Director and Assistant Director for Planning and Development, AASLH, 708 Berry Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37204.

This is the last issue of *News for Members* for the 1983 calendar year. The next issue of the newsletter will be published in the January/February 1984 issue of the *Palimpsest*. The editor welcomes any news of the activities of local historical organizations, and will try to include mention of as many of these activities as possible in future newsletters. Send information to: Mary K. Fredericksen, Palimpsest Editor, Office of the State Historical Society, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

Louis Murphy in the national Democratic landslide that swept Hoover from office.

After the election of 1932 the ownership and operation of KFNF was separated from the Henry Field Company and incorporated on its own. Private companies and businesses across the nation were forced by court order to divest themselves of radio stations.

Though the ownership of his company had passed to others, Henry Field continued to play a vital role in its growth and expansion. Henry Field was a respected seedsman whose honesty had gained the company the trust of the consumer. Both in his writing and on his radio talk shows Henry urged people to plant gardens — not because he was selling nursery stock and seed, but because be believed that man's place was close to the soil and the fruits and flowers that come from the soil. Henry practiced what he preached. His home was surrounded by the beauty of shrubs, trees, and flowers of his own growing. The cellar shelves were stocked with his wife's canned goods: fruits from Henry's orchard and berry patch, and vegetables from his garden.

The Henry Field Seed Company would later become the Henry Field Seed and Nursery Company, and would consist of four businesses: a hatchery, nursery, field seed business, and garden seed business. Today Henry Field Seed and Nursery Company is owned by AMFAC, Incorporated. Begun in 1898, AMFAC is involved in growing sugarcane, food processing, horticulture, retailing, pharmaceuticals, wholesale distribution of electrical, mechanical, and plumbing supplies, hotels, restaurants, resorts, and property management.

In 1938, at the age of sixty-seven, Henry Field retired from management of the Henry Field Seed and Nursery Company. At that time it was the largest retail mail-order seed and nursery firm in the United States. Henry never fully retired, for he retained the title of president. He still had a deep personal interest in the company and the "Seedhouse Family," and seemed to be driven by the same ambitious spirit that launched his company back in 1899. He continued as editor of *Seed Sense*, and thousands of friends and customers from across the country wrote to him seeking advice and answers to their gardening problems. Henry maintained his correspondence until a month before his death. He also continued his six-day-a-week radio talks. At that time his noontime "Letter Basket" program was considered the oldest continuous commercial program in the United States. Henry maintained control of KFNF until 1948, when it was sold to the Capitol Broadcasting Company of Lincoln, Nebraska.

With the radio station gone and the children all grown, Henry and Bertha divided their time between a cabin and fruit farm in the Ozarks and their home in Shenandoah where they also raised fine vegetables and fruits.

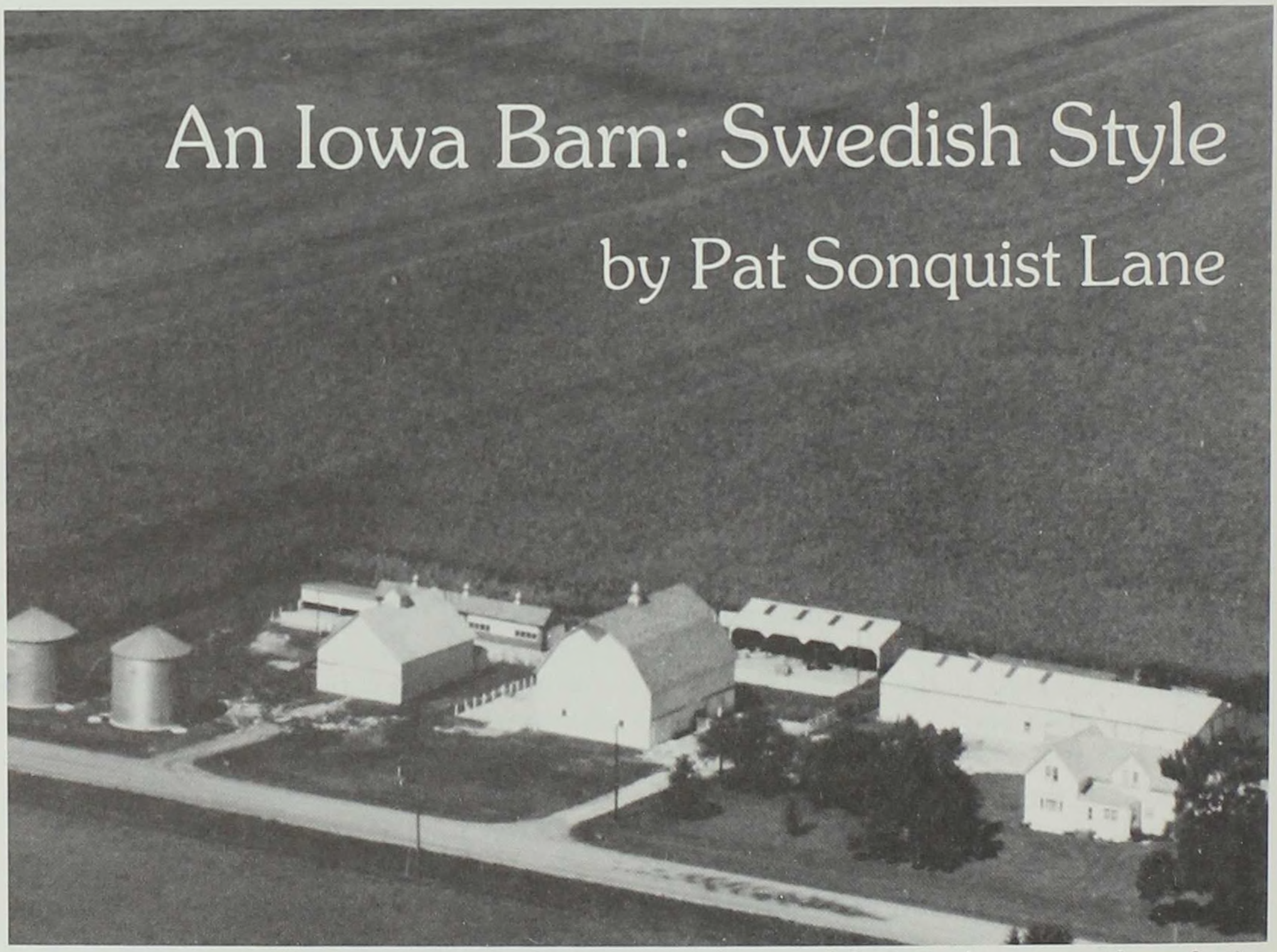
Henry Field died on October 17, 1949, after a two-year battle against prostatitis. On October 20, the day he was buried, Page County received 2.16 inches of much needed rain. As W.L. Wilson, one of Henry's high school classmates said, "The heavens could not restrain their grief, and she weeped all evening over Henry's death." The next day broke light and sunny, with nature recovering her equilibrium. And with a new day would come new life, and with that thought Henry would have smiled. It was business as usual at the seedhouse and KFNF. □

Note on Sources

The Henry Field Collection at the State Historical Society proved to be a rich source of written materials for the preparation of this article. Additional information was gathered from interviews with C.W. Fishbaugh of Shenandoah, Iowa, John Henry Field of Denver, Colorado, and Ruth Shambaugh Watkins of Clarinda, Iowa. Another valuable source of information was Lucile Driftmier Verness' *The Story of an American Family* (Shenandoah: Driftmier Publishing Co., 1950).

An Iowa Barn: Swedish Style

by Pat Sonquist Lane



The Sonquist Home Place in 1981. (photograph by J. Haub, courtesy the author)

John Sonquist was born in Ockelbo Socken, Gästrikland, Sweden, on October 13, 1829, and married Martha Person on September 25, 1854. They came to the United States in 1857, settling in Oneida, Illinois, before moving to Iowa in 1870. They just missed the 1870 census for Iowa but in the 1880 census we find the family: John Sonquist, 50, born in Sweden; Martha, 48, Sweden; Robert, 20, Illinois; Alfred, 15, Illinois; Emma, 11, Illinois; and Charles (Charley), 6, Iowa. There are family stories about walking the animals all the way from Illinois and about it raining most of the way. It is a matter of record that John Sonquist purchased the SE 1/4 of S27-T86N-R28W of the 5th PM on November 26, 1870. It was Charley who was born on the Home Place, and Charley who later stayed on to farm it.

The Frank Peterson family (Frank, September 3, 1850, Ostra Tolstrd Parish, and Caroline Carlson, April 20, 1843, Westra Harg Parish, both Östergötland) did not emigrate until 1889. Frank had been a land overseer for a baron in Mjölby, where he had lived comfortably. When the family came to this country, they spent their first few days in Iowa in a log cabin owned by an uncle.

* * *

Charles Sonquist and Hilda Helena [Ella] Peterson were married in the Methodist parsonage in Dayton by Charley's uncle, Reverend J. E. Berggren, on March 15, 1895.

They began their family which would grow to seven children.

Charley had a forge, anvil, and bellows, and people came from a distance for his services. While they waited for their work to be finished, Charley, being hospitable, would ask them for coffee or meals. What an addition to Ella's responsibilities! One of the worst years was 1902 when their new house was built. Gerald was born just prior to the building of the house and had a stomach disturbance which kept him vocal without respite. Ella had to cope with all of it: meals, lunches, new baby, and regular duties. The hired man often knew and understood a family better than anyone else and filled in wherever needed, in many roles. In 1902 their hired man was Charley Bloomquist, a 6′6″ man with noticeably large feet. Without being asked he would come into the house at mealtime and pick up the squalling baby, walking the tiny bundle to and fro, quieting him, and giving Ella a little peace and quiet in which to finish dinner preparations and get everything on the table.

In 1902 John deeded the west eighty acres to his son, Charley, and the east eighty acres to his daughter, Emma. This became the Nordstrom Home Place. After his wife, Martha, died in 1904, John lived several years with Charley and later with Emma, until his death in 1912.

Charley wrote with an elegant script and was township assessor for several years. He took the initiative in the drainage of the wetlands, was active in the Netzell school which his children attended, the Farm Bureau in Webster County, and the development of the Dayton Grain Co-op. He always took pride in his livestock. It was Charley who planned for and built the present basic buildings on the Home Place. It was Charley who built the barn.

In 1913 Charles Sonquist was 40 and his wife, Ella, was 38. The children living at that time were Leslie, Myrtle, Gerald, Helen, and Verner, ages 15, 13, 11, 9 and 2.

* * *

"The barn was built as they were in Sweden, no nails in the frame, put together with pegs. It was 50 feet long and 40 feet wide. Frames were made lying on the ground." In her letter containing this description of the barn on the Sonquist Home Place, Hazel Manguson Sonquist included a photograph of it. It was built in 1913 and is "still standing straight and strong."

The barn was started in the spring of 1913 and took about two months to build. Since the corn crib and machine shed were built at the same time, work went on into the summer. Nels Peterson, a 60-year old Swede, was the contractor. His helpers were Eric Carlson, 50, Ira Campbell, 28, and John Malmberg, 22. All four lived eight miles away in Pilot Mound and Charley or Les would drive down in an old surrey on Monday to pick them up and on Saturday the men would be driven home. Sometimes they took the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad (M & StL) to South Dayton and were picked up there. During the week the men slept on the farm and were fed the entire time by Ella. The carpenters worked eleven hours each day, from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. with an hour's rest from noon to one o'clock. Their wages per hour were 25¢ for Nels, the foreman, 20¢ for Eric, and 17½¢ for Ira and John. Axel Carlson, the hired man at that time, sometimes helped too.

They decided to locate the barn, corn crib, and machine shed about 150 feet north of the east-west road, giving plenty of room for the work which would take place around the buildings. Building on a north-south axis meant that the hay mow would have good air circulation in summer and all of the buildings would have their more closed ends toward the winter north winds.

The lumber was purchased from the Dayton Lumber Company and Charley hauled it out to the farm, about four miles, on a wagon-box

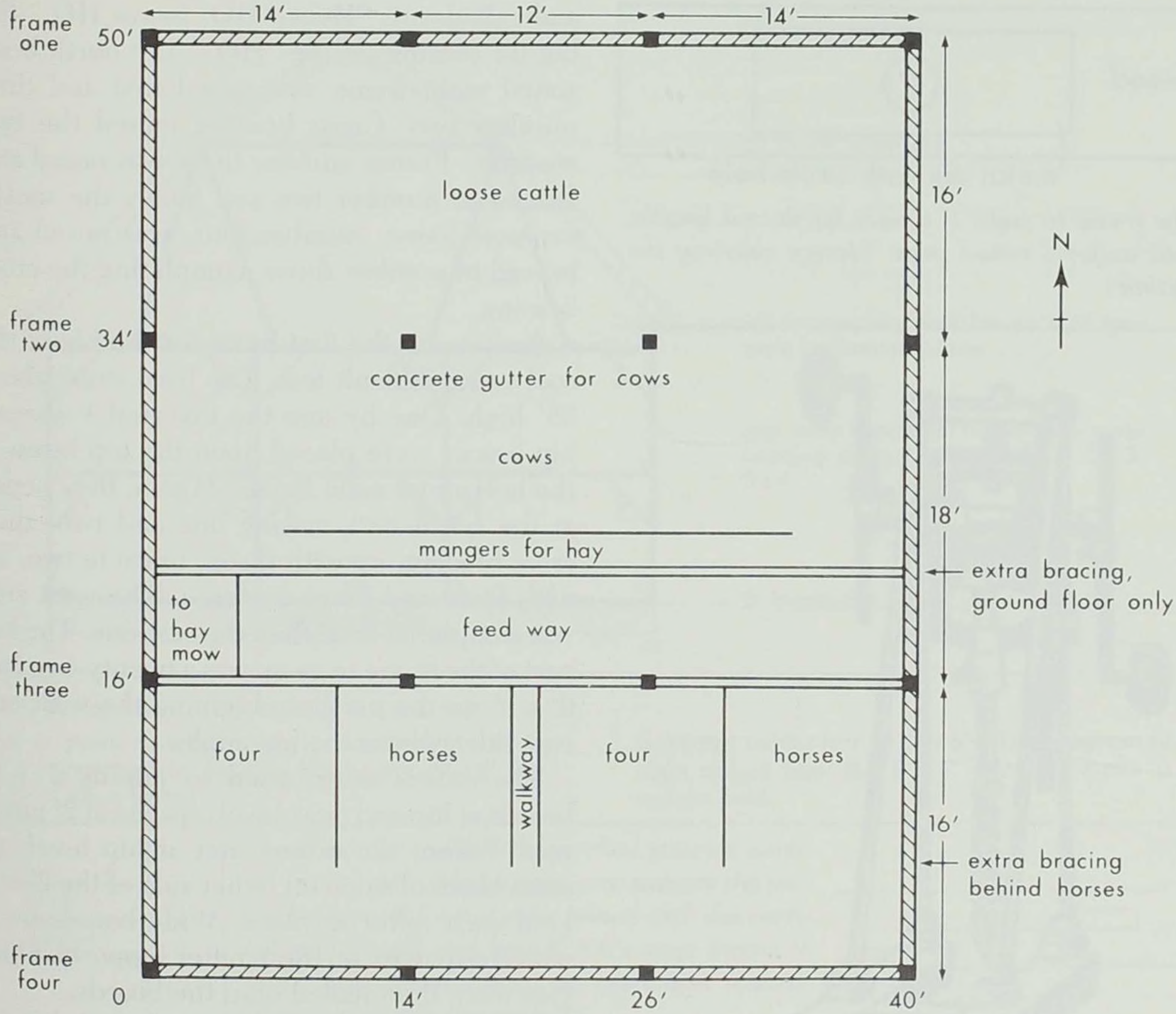
frame. Foundation materials and equipment were also readied for use.

Concrete was mixed by hand in a mortarbox and hauled to the building in a wheelbarrow. The mix was 3½ or 4 units of sand to 1 unit of cement. First the sand and cement were mixed together very carefully. Then the proper amount of water was added to make the right consistency. John and Ira did all the mixing, using a mortar hoe to work the cement. The hoe blade was about eight inches wide with two holes in it for the mix to pull through.

The 40′ x 50′ concrete foundation was completed in one day and left to dry while the carpentry continued. The foundation was 8″ wide and averaged about 24″ high, except for the northwest corner, which needed 30″ to be level. A 6″ x 6″ sill was bolted to the entire cement foundation, except for the twelve 6″ x 6″ openings into which the legs of the four horizontal main frames would be pulled into place. Carbide cans 2′ long and 15″ wide were used as forms for the four interior supports. A bolt was placed in this support form and the 6″ x 6″ post was set on the bolt. A concrete floor for the cows with a gutter to the back was poured, extending around the four concrete interior supports. There was dirt under the horses at that time, a cement block being added much later.

The frames and cross-supports were cut, pegs were made, brace openings or grooves were drilled and chiseled, and the four horizontal main frame supports were completed on the ground before any portion was placed on the cement foundation. All of the sawing was done with handsaws, a ripsaw for the ripping and a crosscut saw for cross grain work. The

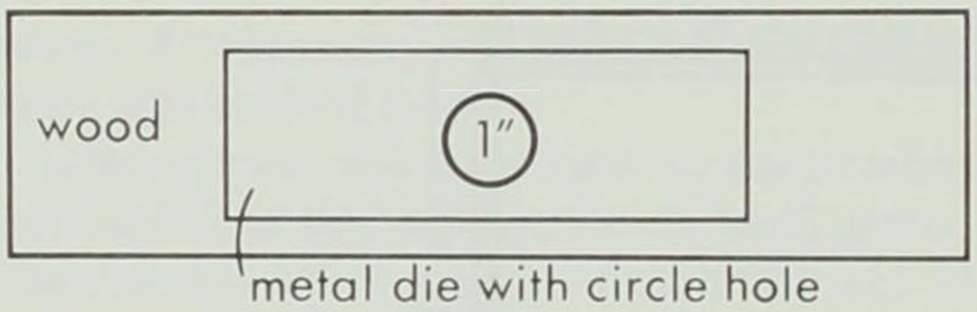
The Sonquist barn, built with a pegged frame using the Swedish method, in 1913. From left to right: Charles Sonquist holding the horses, Ernest Peterson, Verner, Leslie, and Helen Sonquist, and Frank Bloomquist. (courtesy the author)



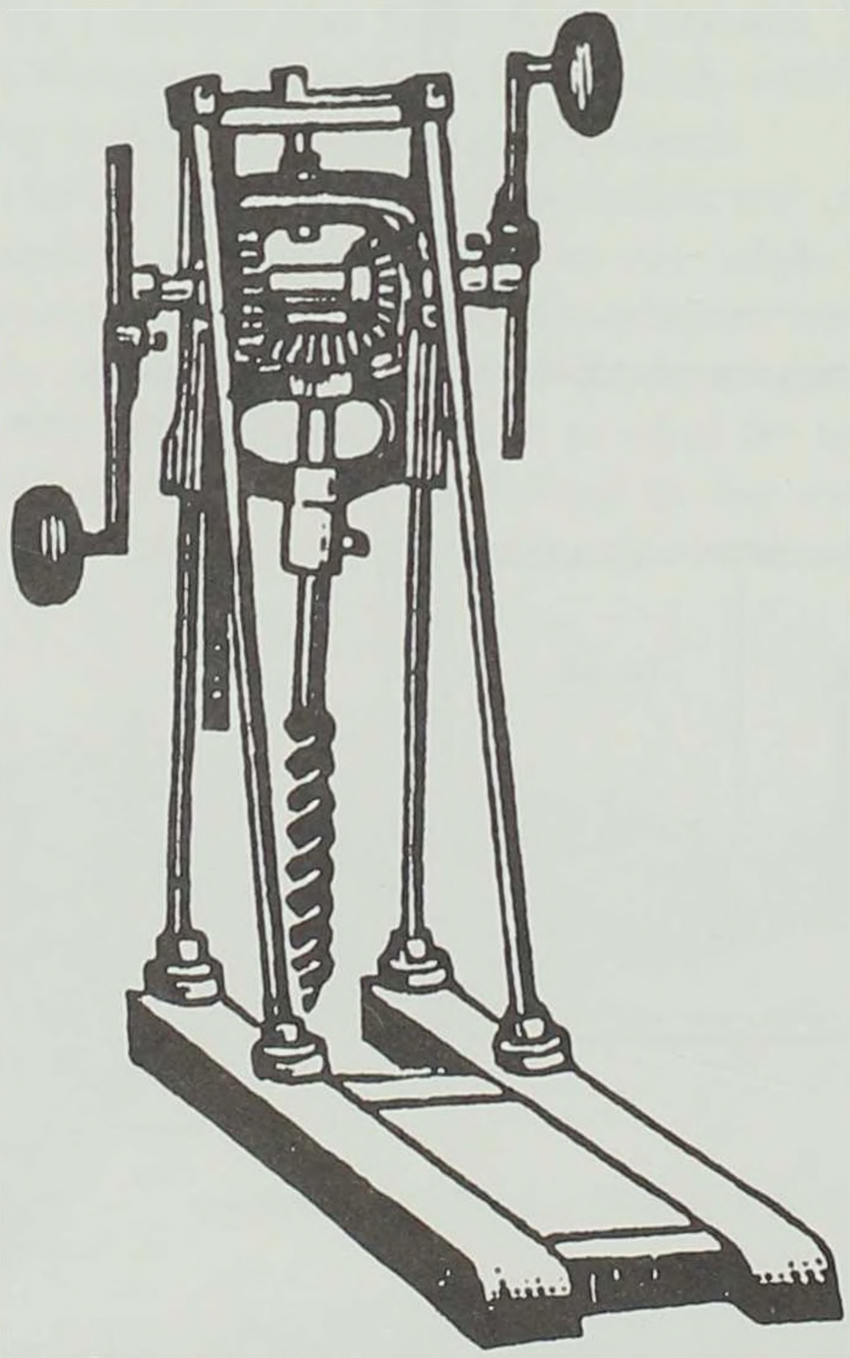
The floor plan of the Sonquist peg frame barn. (design courtesy the author)

pegs were made out of hardwood. Lengths of oak about 1″ square were cut, then driven through a metal die attached to a strong frame. This made a uniform wooden peg. The pegs were sawed off flush with the wood surface after being hammered into place. A drilling machine with a seat for the operator was used to drill the holes for the pegs. The drill could be adjusted to enter the wood at different, uniform angles. It was also used with a 2″ wood bit to drill out three circles close together where a groove was needed for 4″ x 4″ or 6″ x 6″ braces on the frame of the barn. A large wood chisel was then used to chisel the opening to the right size. Finally the horizontal frames were constructed on the ground and all the other supports and braces prepared.

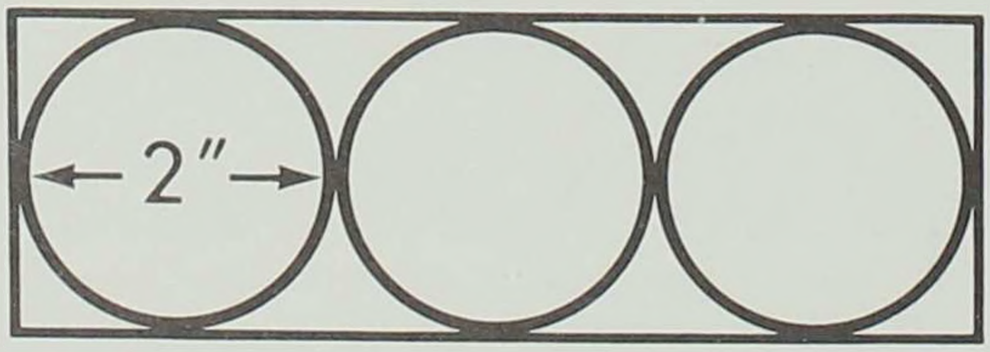
The barn raising required about twenty people, some using pikes made of 2″ x 4″s with pointed ends to hold the frame steady, and some using ropes to hoist and steady the frame after the pikes had raised the sections high enough. Nels had a high-pitched voice



The frame to make 1" square hardwood lengths into uniform round pegs. (design courtesy the author)



An adjustable drilling tool for peg holes and brace grooves.



Circles were drilled with a 2" wood bit, then chiseled to make a rectangular notch to receive the braces. (design courtesy the author)

and called out, "Heave HO, heave HO," the big lift coming on the "HO." The north horizontal main frame was raised first and then number two. Cross bracing joined the two securely. Frame number three was raised and braced to number two and finally the southernmost frame, number four, was raised and braced to number three, completing the cross bracing.

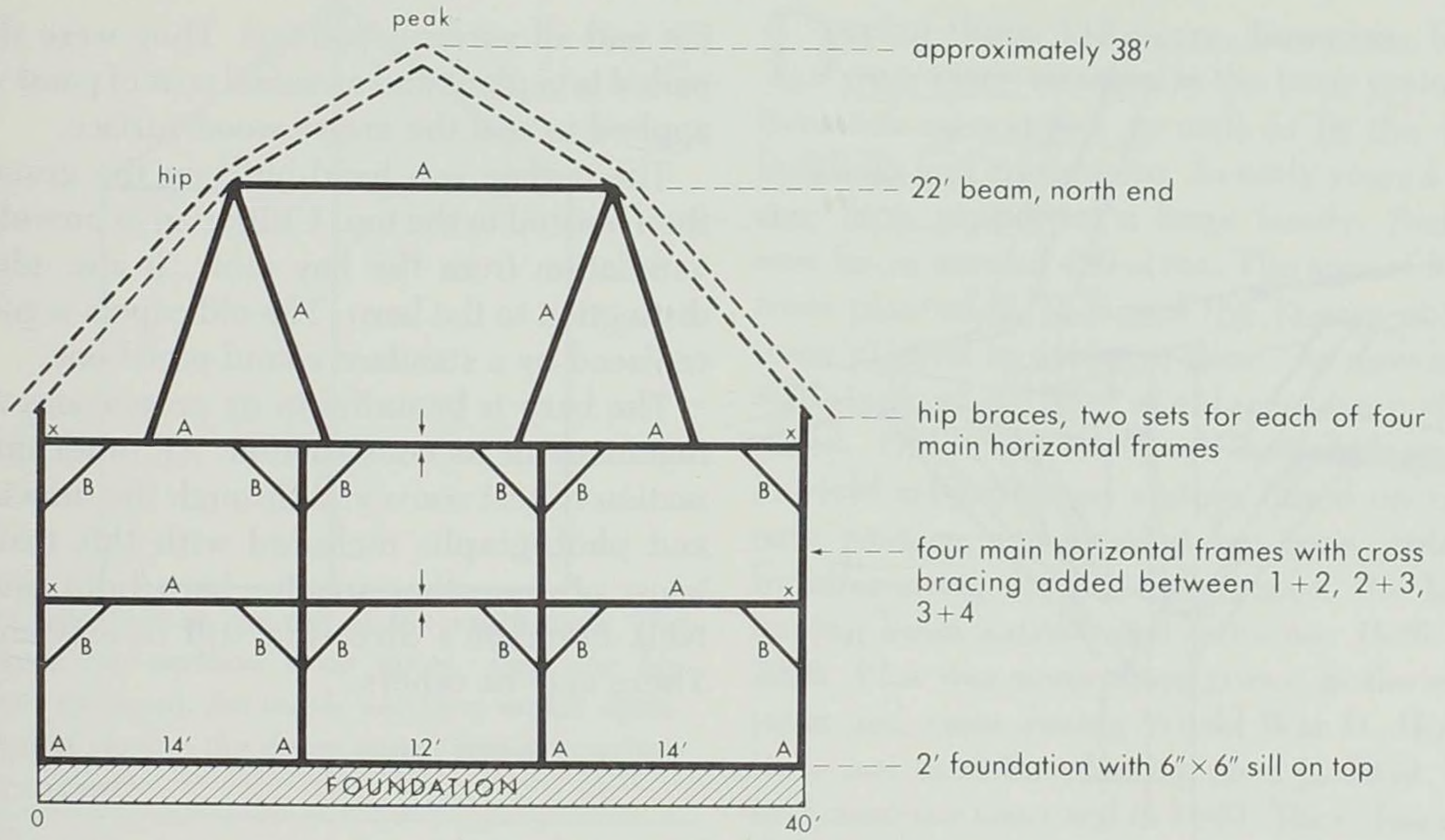
Positioning the first brace for the hip of the roof was a difficult feat. The barn stood about 38′ high. One by one the inverted V-shaped hip braces were placed upon the top beam of the horizontal main frames. Again, they began at the north end, raising one and two, then cross bracing, up with three, brace to two, up with four, and brace to three. The west side was completed first, then the east side. The last part of the frame to go up was a twenty-two foot 6″ x 6″ on the north end joining the west and east sides where the hip angles.

The rafters were raised by joining 2″ x 6″ boards at hip and peak levels spaced at 2′ intervals. Where the rafters met at hip level, an extra block of wood on either side of the 2″ x 6″ held each rafter in place. Wide boards were nailed crosswise on these rafter supports. Shingles were then nailed onto the boards.

The siding used was 1″ x 12″ stock boards which stood flush on the concrete foundation and were notched at the top to fit tightly under the roof rafters. The doors were cut as the boards went up and finished later. On the south end were the big barn doors for the hay mow. The hay door at the top of the south wall had a hinged top section which was dropped down before the big doors opened out. A substantial platform, ladder, and two windows on the south end made the hay mow doors very easy to use. A bar inside across the doors held them steady when closed. There was a small platform and ladder inside on the north end to permit window access.

The barn surface was painted. Battens to cover each vertical between the boards were

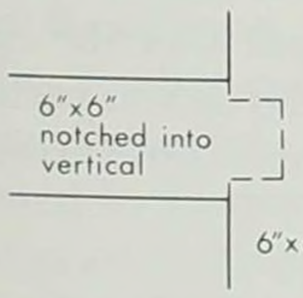
The barn, front elevation. (design courtesy the author)



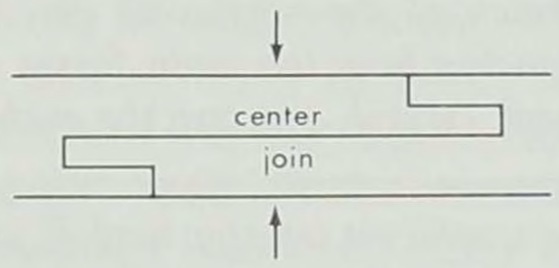
A = 6″×6″ B = 4″×4″ C = 4″×6″

x = point at which exterior vertical 6″×6″ is notched to receive horizontal 6″×6″ on main frame

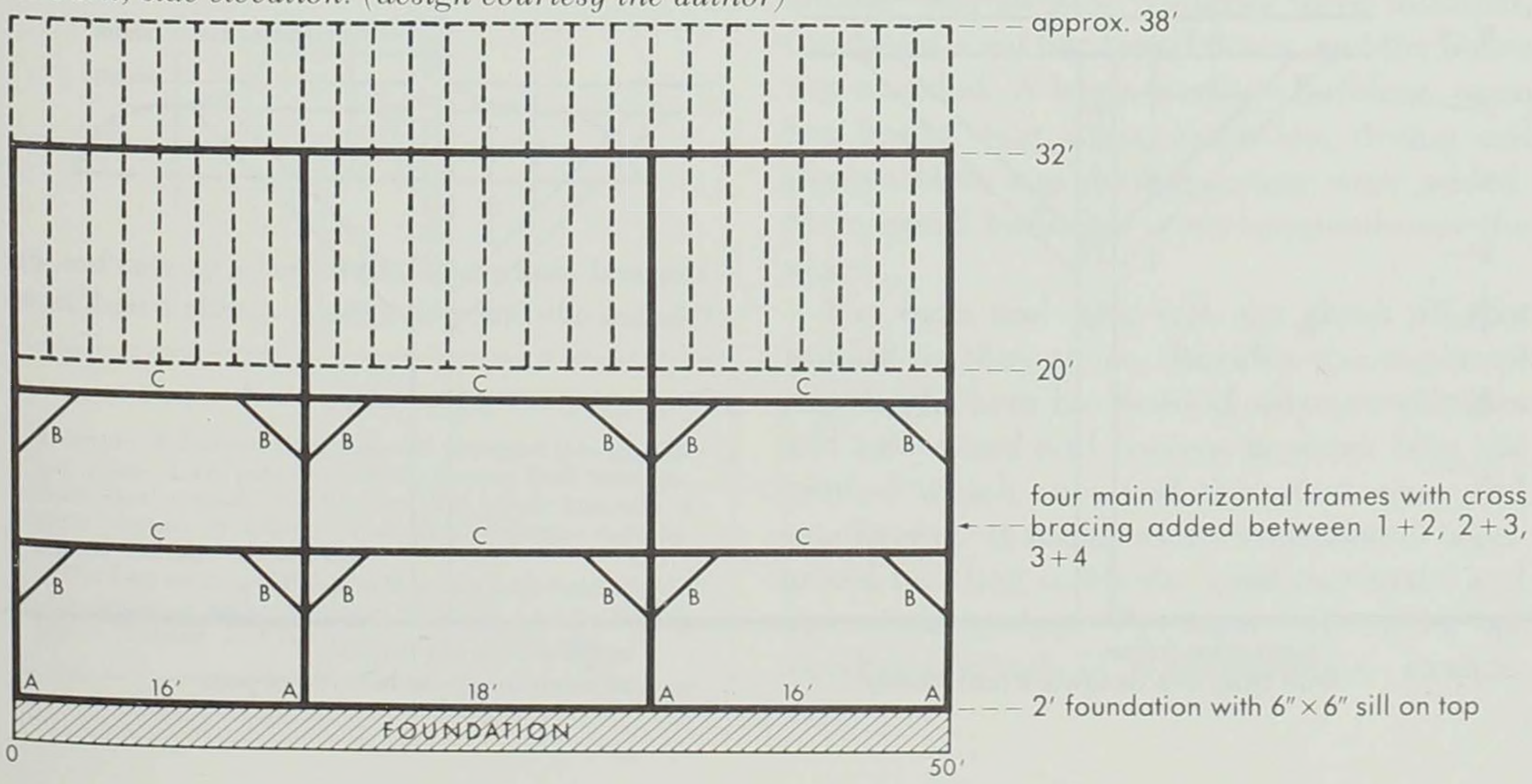
‡ indicates center join of 6″×6″s. The diagram at right shows how the 6″×6″ is cut to make a secure joint.

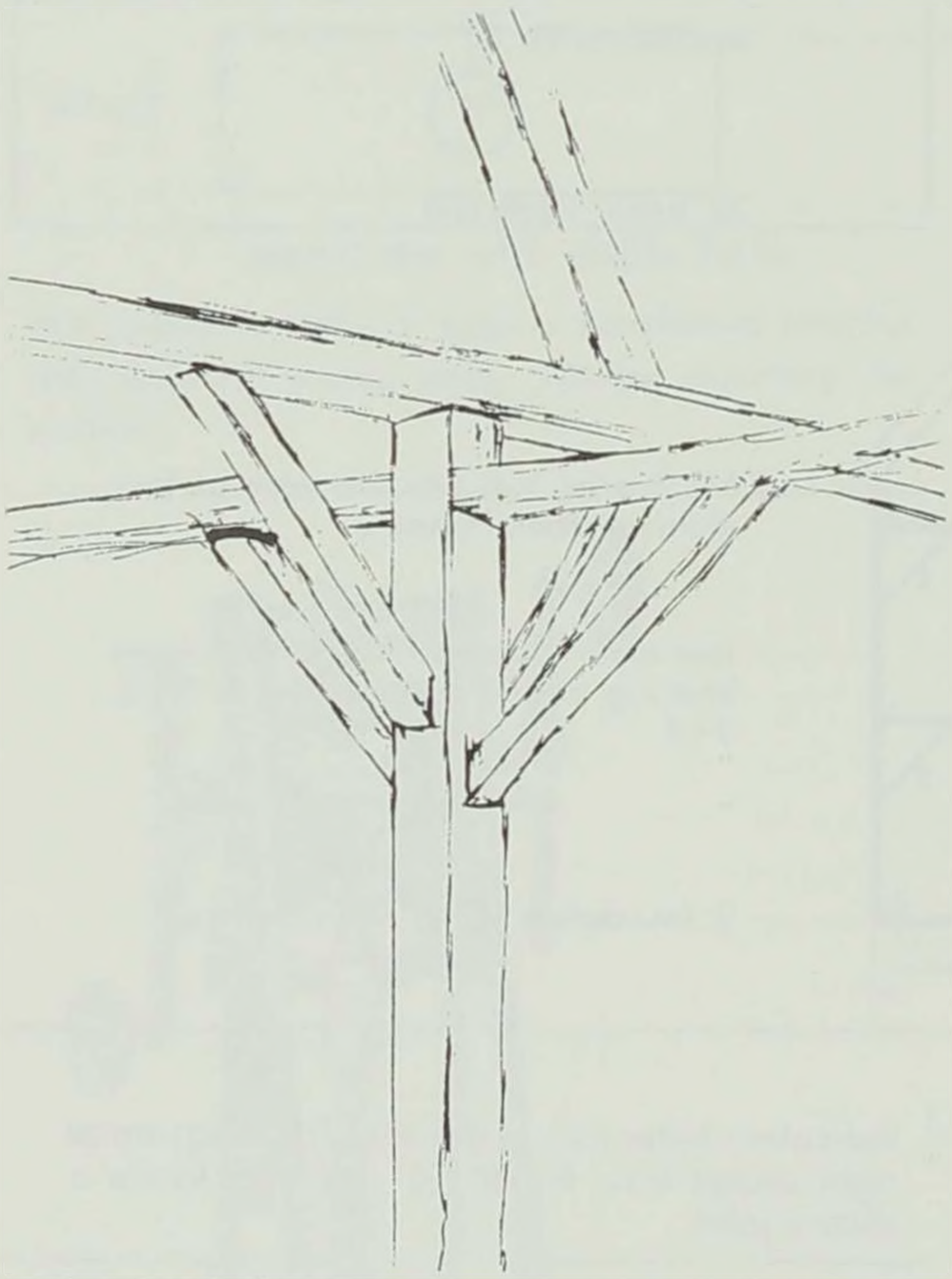


The drawings to the left (notched exterior vertical frame) and right (center join) suggest the way the horizontal frames were joined with the vertical main frame and how 6″×6″s were joined to make horizontal beams of sufficient length. (design courtesy the author)



The barn, side elevation. (design courtesy the author)





Sketch of the northwest pier in the hay mow showing how the main frame and cross frame meet. (sketch courtesy the author)

cut and all surfaces painted. They were then nailed into place and a second coat of paint was applied to seal the entire wood surface.

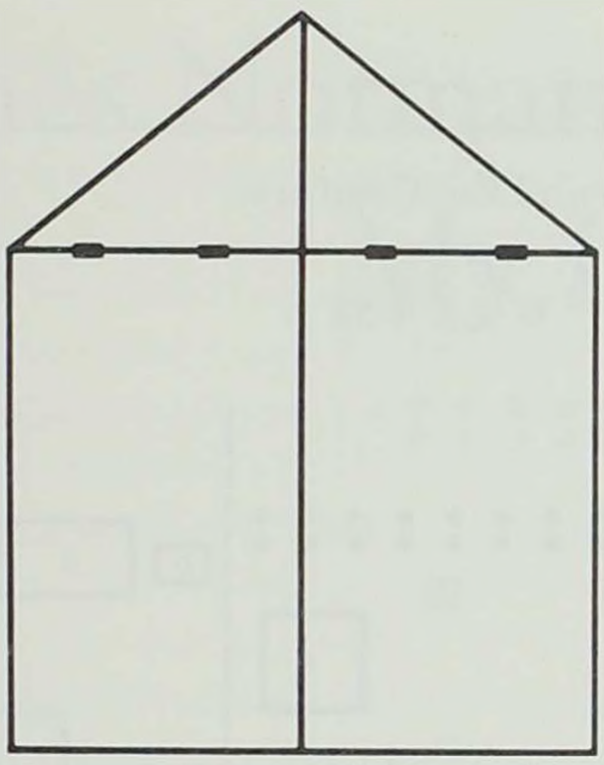
The cupola was hand-built on the ground, then hoisted to the top. Utilitarian in providing ventilation from the hay mow, it also added distinction to the barn. The old cupola is gone, replaced by a standard round metal one.

The barn is beautiful in its proportions and ingenious in its construction. All other information is best conveyed through the drawings and photographs included with this text. I know of one other smaller barn built under Nels Peterson's direction still in existence. There may be others.

* * *

There was a great deal of excitement around farms when such major projects were in progress. Each process was carefully watched. During the construction of this barn, Ella Sonquist had a hard time because her children used the frame as a jungle gym after the carpenters quit work each day. Myrtle was particularly agile, but there were no serious

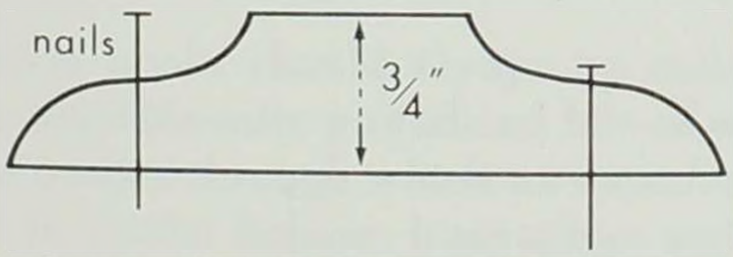
The northwest interior hayloft pier. (design courtesy the author)



The hay door at the top of the south wall. The hinged top sections drop down, then the big doors open out. An inside platform makes opening and closing the doors easy. (design courtesy the author)

accidents.

After Charley and Ella retired to Dayton, Verner and his wife, Lillian Peterson, lived on the Home Place from 1938 to 1946. Then the buildings were rented until 1950 when Leslie and Hazel's son, Richard, moved in with his wife, Twylla, and took over operation of the farm. Since July 15, 1952, the farm has been owned by Leslie. Single-family ownership for 113 years and residence for 109 years reminds one that there is some stability in a changing world.



An end view of a batten to cover cracks between stock board siding. (design courtesy the author)

Note on Sources

A variety of documentary material provided the base for this article. Land patents, military bounty land warrants, assessment records, tract books, and family histories of early settlers in Dayton Township, Webster County, offered revelant information.

The final writing of this article would have been impossible, however, without help from Gerald, Linnea, Leslie, Hazel, Richard, and Twylla Sonquist. Thank you.

During these 113 years, however, there were many changes in the basic grain and livestock operations as well as in the farm buildings and equipment. In early years a 160-acre farm supported a large family. Richard now farms around 400 acres. The acre of forest trees planted in 1878 and the ¼ acre of fruit trees planted in 1882 are gone. As new roads were built whole lines of old trees were eliminated. Old trees lost were not replaced. A fourfold crop rotation system based on corn, oats, pasture, and meadow has been replaced by alternating corn and soybeans, the latter having been introduced between 1935 and 1940. Flax was sometimes grown in the early years and again during World War II. Horses were last used for planting corn in 1939. The first combine was used in 1940. There has usually been a livestock operation, now made easier by much concrete flooring and automated feeding and watering.

The buildings reflect the same changes. The size, number, and types of buildings explain the evolution of farm life and operation. After 1950 the basic house, built in 1902, was retained but a basement was dug, a gas furnace and air conditioning were added, the porch was enclosed, the chimneys removed, water was piped in, two bathrooms were added, a new kitchen and all new windows were installed, the upstairs got hardwood floors, and the house was re-sided. A large machine building, open hog house, hog house extension, drying and storage bins, and double garage were added. Many small buildings were removed over the years.

The barn and corn crib are about *all* that remain as they were. Besides the replaced cupola, the barn has needed only new shingles and new wood and battens in areas near the ground which received the most wear and weathering. It stands as a testimonial to time-tested building methods, good materials, and fine workmanship. The barn built using old Swedish methods is "still standing — straight

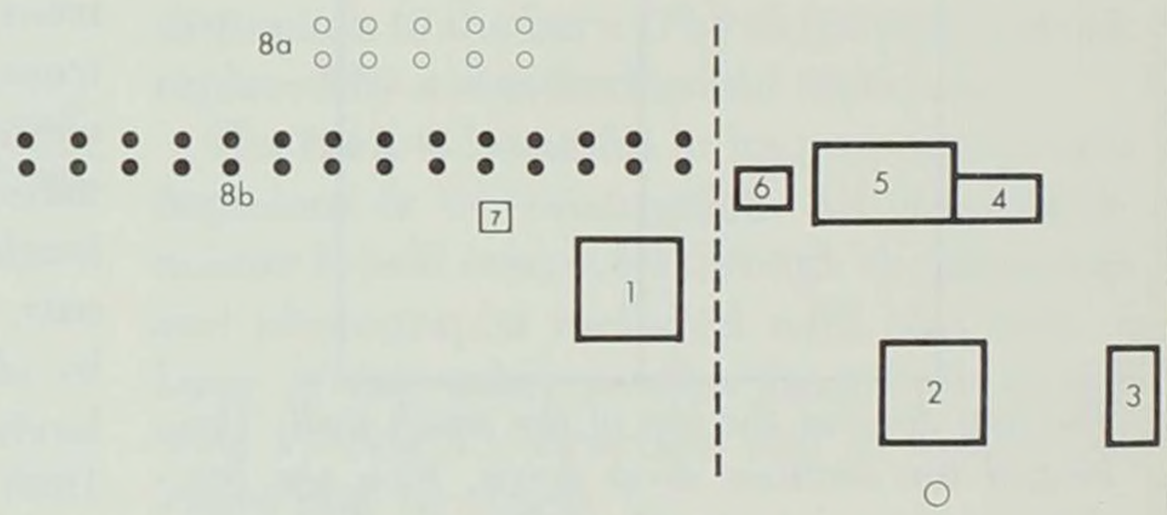
and strong" on the Sonquist Home Place. □

The Buildings on the Sonquist Home Place Since the Turn of the Century.

Before 1902

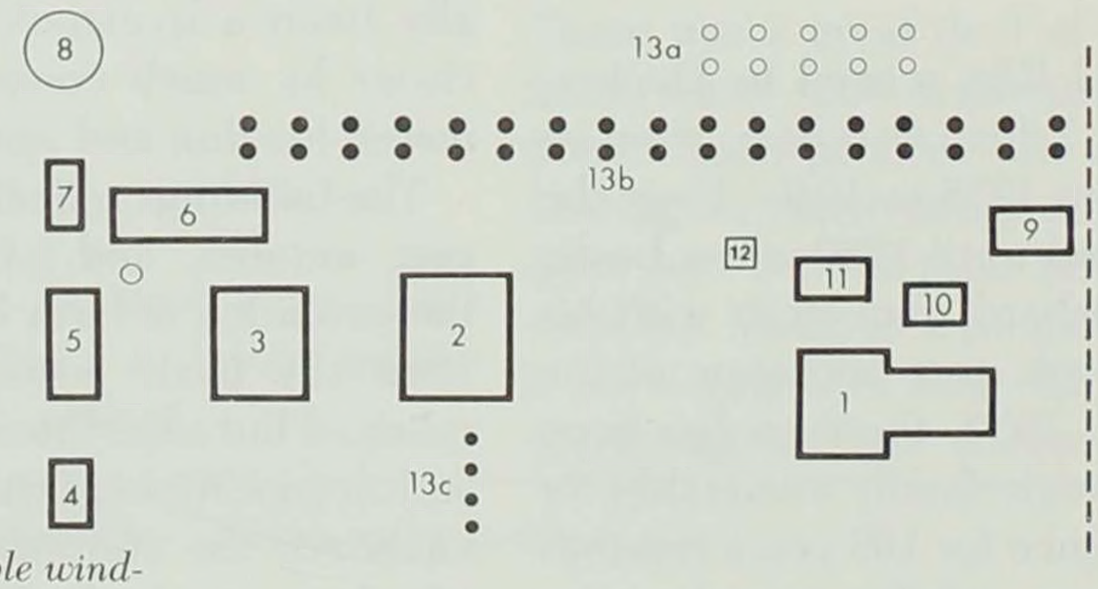
W ½ E ½ SE ¼

1 Old house
2 Old barn
3 Small pig house
4 Chicken house
5 Blacksmith shop
6 Oat bin
7 Outhouse
8 Trees: a) fruit b) windbreak
0 Well



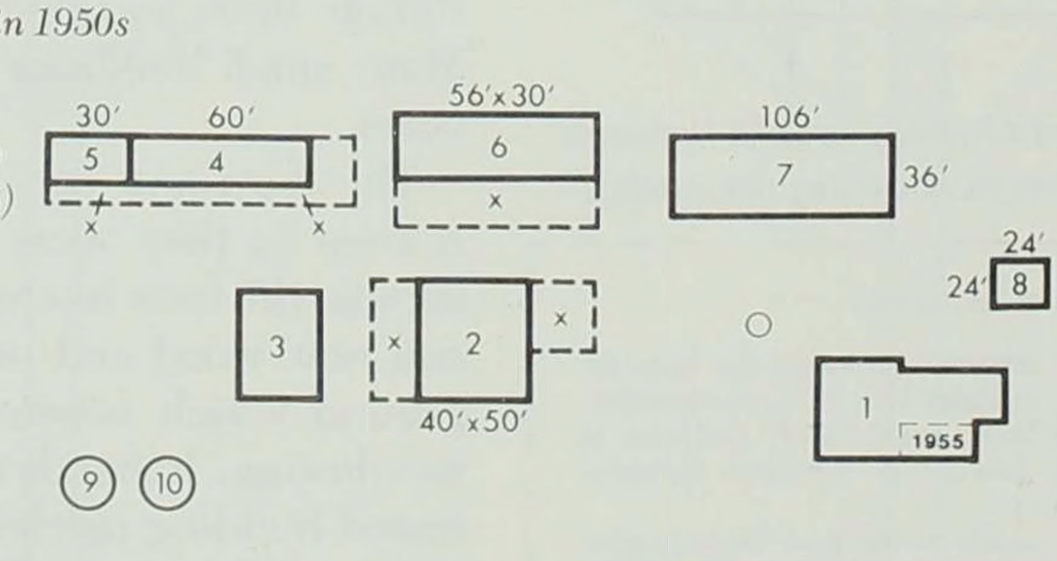
From 1913 to 1950

1 House
2 Barn
3 Corn crib
4 Blacksmith/tool shed
5 Machine shed
6 Hog house
7 Boxcar grain storage
8 Large tank/wire pile
9 Chicken house
10 Wash house
11 Cob house
12 Outhouse
13 Trees: a) orchard b) maple windbreak c) willows, short-lived
0 Well



After 1950

1 House (1902), remodeled in 1950s
2 Barn (1913)
3 Corn crib (1913)
4 Old hog house (pre-1950)
5 Hog house addition (1955)
6 Open hog house (1971)
7 Machine building (1969)
8 Double garage (1980)
9 Drying bin (1973)
10 Storage bin (1977)
0 Well
x Automatic waterers
--- indicates cement floors



James Norman Hall's *My Island Home:* An Overdue Review

by Raymond A. Smith, Jr.

There are a number of books which contain descriptions of life in Iowa at various times in the historical past. Many of the authors of such books have dealt with Iowa in passing or peripheral fashion, however. One such work was written by Emily Post in 1915. It was entitled *By Motor to the Golden Gate* and in seven of its middle chapters the author described the Iowa portion of her trip. It was a story filled with mud, punctured tires, a bakers' convention in Cedar Rapids, and booster headlines on Des Moines newspapers. It is an obvious period piece but it can be read by Iowans with historical profit as well as pleasure.

Travel books should always be culled for those magnificently prejudiced bits of writing about locales through which an outsider traveled. In similar fashion, biographies and autobiographies should be consulted for the passages which deal with whatever portion of the subject's life was spent in an area of one's interest. A worthwhile example of this kind of literature which concerns Iowa is James Norman Hall's *My Island Home.*

James Norman Hall was an Iowan by birth, upbringing, education, and even temperament. The fact that he became a wanderer has led some to believe that he spurned the state in his writings. Since he preferred to live on a Pacific island some people even refuse to consider him as an Iowa writer. Be that as it may, there are good reasons for reading (or rereading) James Norman Hall's *My Island Home.* First, the book is a superb autobiography by an Iowan who was a talented, sensitive, modest, and very private person. Though he had not completed the book at the time of his death, it is a most worthwhile effort even in partial form. Secondly, it is a very idealistic work by a very idealistic man. And there are at least two times in one's life to read idealistic literature: when one is very young and knows that such works contain great truths and have great value; and, when one is a bit older and wants desperately to believe that such works contain great truths and have great value. Another reason is that *My Island Home* is a book about the first half of the twentieth century, a time which is fast receding from the national memory.

Finally, Hall's autobiography is a book about Iowa. Only in the last third of the volume does Hall finally arrive in the South Seas. The focus in the volume is clearly on all the things that

transpired in the life of James Norman Hall prior to his arrival in Tahiti. It is a book about growing up in Colfax, Iowa. It is a book about the Skunk River, railroads, books, a ten-year old poet, attitudes of pre-World War I America, and about Milton, Coleridge, and Burns. It is a good book for people who spent their early years in Iowa especially if those early years came sometime in the first half of this century.

Born in 1887, James Norman Hall grew up in a world in which the romance of the railroads was still a part of one's life. His accounts of nocturnal visits to points along the Rock Island line near Colfax remind one that there was a time when railroads in great number put trains on the tracks of the state in even greater number. Changing conditions have noticeably altered our notions of what is and what is not romantic. Is it possible to be nostalgic about either of the Amtrak trains which presently cross Iowa?

Growing up in Colfax, Hall was not denied culture. There was the culture of books and his recollections of his mother reading Dickens and Cooper and other volumes flow naturally into recollections of his own reading of Milton and Coleridge at an early age. He commented at length on Burns, whose verses became a kind of model for him as a pre-teen poet, or the "Woodshed Poet" as he called himself. Hall wished to become the "Hawkeye Poet" but he settled for the more modest and self-proclaimed title. And, admittedly, being a poet of quasi-romantic inclinations when one lived on the Skunk River was difficult. Other people have felt similarly about trying to deal poetically with the Nishnabotna River or with Pottawattamie County. One has to admit that even the best of Iowa place-names can set the creative individual back on his heels.

How strange the world of James Norman Hall's boyhood seems today. He described a time when "war was no threat of the future but a fading memory of the past." He talked of the "deep tranquility of 1899." He described glee clubs in torchlight processions at Grinnell in an era when music or song was much more a part of one's life than perhaps has been the case in more recent years. Hall ultimately became a nostalgic conservative and, as such, was thoroughly representative of a kind of Iowa thinking with which we are all familiar. He described the Skunk as a river which meandered and bent and looped and he decried the changes which occurred over time to turn it into little more than a ditch. At one point in his autobiography he wrote, "My belief is that Mother Earth knows best how her rivers should flow."

Hall was at his nostalgic best, however, when he described the joys of smoking past as compared with the joys of smoking present. His employer in the Colfax clothing store where he worked for a short time after graduating from high school was a man who enjoyed his cigars in pure fashion. His enjoyment led Hall to delight in watching him prepare and then light and smoke a cigar. He contrasted the experience with watching the nervous and frenetic manner in which his contemporaries in later life filled ashtrays with half-smoked and "mangled" cigarettes.

Hall's nostalgic conservatism was apparent in his attitudes toward the world as he found it when he returned from the First World War. He did not care for the boosters and forward-lookers; he was not at all keen about the impact of the motorcar, particularly as more and more roads were cut through the Iowa countryside. He stated at one point that he wasn't against change but he preferred a measured approach to change. "I love change only in its aspect of slow and cautious advancement and slow and imperceptible decay. And I dislike change in manners, customs and habits of thought as much as I do in material aspects." It is the kind of statement which would have been worthy of Edmund Burke. Moreover, Hall believed what many Iowans would come to feel — the

continent had been developed at a cost far too high in terms of sheer ruin. He eventually explained his expatriation on the basis of his conservatism.

But before taking up life in the South Seas, Hall had fought in the Great War, and before that, he had worked in Boston after having graduated from Grinnell College. Hall's descriptions of his years at Grinnell, from those first night visits by train when he was but an adventurous boy through that momentous autumn visit when he and his young traveling companions witnessed the glee club on parade through his years as a student and on to those occasional visits to the campus as an alumnus, culminated in a description of his last visit to the campus in 1950. On that occasion, the fortieth anniversary of his graduation, he received an honorary degree. *My Island Home* ends literally in Colfax on the eve of the reunion and the conferring of the degree. But in all of the passages in the book in which he wrote of Grinnell there is a revealing warmth to the prose. Grinnell did for James Norman Hall what a liberal arts college should do for its students. It was well summed up by Professor Stoops, head of the philosophy department, in a conversation which Hall once inadvertently overheard. Professor Stoops and another professor were discussing the future of liberal arts colleges such as Grinnell. Stoops' companion was pessimistic in the extreme, but the professor answered him by suggesting that such institutions would last as long as they adhered to their "long-range purpose. . .And that is to teach young men and women that the bird in the bush is worth two in the hand."

There are a number of similarly nice touches in Hall's accounts of his Grinnell years. He wrote, for example at one point, "A young man who has never imitated Walt Whitman has missed one of the joys of youth." Or he described how he came across the poetry of Francis Thompson when two volumes of his works were given to him as a tip by a gentleman at the Bristol House where Hall worked as a student waiter. It was Thompson's poetry that struck the chord which convinced Hall that he would henceforth be a wanderer. Hall, the young poet, seemed to be almost incapable of coming to terms with the prosaic life of his times.

Before Grinnell he worked in a clothing store in Colfax and had so much impressed his employer that he had been offered a store to manage in South Dakota. He rejected that prospect to continue his education and "to hold to the Muse." Upon graduation from Grinnell, he went east to Boston to become a social worker. During one college summer, he took work at the University of Chicago and there discovered slums. In Boston he discovered poverty, more slums, and social classes. Classes, he later pointed out, had not been readily apparent in Colfax, Iowa. While employed by the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Hall handled a number of cases, published a poem or two or three, and was gently seduced by a lady whom he described as "a Benevolent Individual" although she herself termed her motives "not wholly benevolent."

One might comment at this point upon the sensitive and very private nature of Hall as evidenced in his autobiography. Sex, in any real sense, crept into the autobiography only twice. In the first instance there was the magnificent realization that came to Hall at the Bristol House that he was actually waiting tables in a bawdy house. He was trying to figure out why the numbers of waitresses and traveling men seemed to increase so noticeably over the weekends when a fellow student who had worked at the establishment for a year longer than Hall explained the situation to him. Hall wrote, "I was astonished, and with reason, for a more modest-seeming, decent set of elderly girls, insofar as their general behavior and their attitude toward us student waiters

were concerned, could scarcely have been found." Hall's entire chapter on the Bristol House deserves to an anthologized. The two major figures in the chapter, Grandma Ridder and a potato-peeler named Addie, were masterfully sketched in quasi-humorous yet quasi-heroic fashion.

The second instance of creeping sex was the seduction scene mentioned earlier, which was done so gently and inoffensively as to remind one of that collection of poems by Samuel Hoffenstein, "Poems of Passion Carefully Restrained So as to Offend Nobody." Beyond that point Hall did not literarily stray. The privacy of the man was not marred by any autobiographical detail concerning his wife or his family except in those comments near the volume's end when he talked a bit about his daughter's family in Hawaii and his son who graduated from U.S.C. at the time Hall received his honorary degree from Grinnell.

In April 1914 Hall left his position in Boston with the M.S.P.C.C. and journeyed home to Colfax before departing for England with a little money and the hope that he could avoid either returning to Boston or going into teaching. He was in England for only a short time when the whirlwind summer of 1914 moved from the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand to the "blank cheque" to the mobilizations and war. James Norman Hall thus had a reason for not going home for, if he didn't have a professional goal of some kind, he had found a cause. Having at first admitted to the recruiting people that he was an American, he then uttered a small lie about actually being an Englishman and he was soon in the Royal Fusiliers. He was to be a part of Kitchener's Mob and his experiences in England and France in 1914 and 1915 formed the basis for his first full literary effort which was appropriately entitled *Kitchener's Mob*. The book resulted from the fact that when his unit was sent back home to England on leave, Hall asked whether it would be possible to go on leave to the United States (and Iowa). He was offered a discharge and told that when he had had enough leave he could always return, reenlist and rejoin his old unit. He took his discharge, went home, wrote the book, puzzled over whether to return, and ultimately did return but not to his old unit.

If James Norman Hall's military record in the Great War was distinctive, it was because he served under three different flags in the course of that conflict. Initially, he was a part of the British Expeditionary Force. He later enlisted in the French Foreign Legion so that he could fly in the Escadrille Lafayette. And, when given the opportunity to transfer to a U.S. military unit when this country entered the war, he joined the United States Air Service. Hall experienced the worst of trench life, flew with such as Raoul Lufbery and other American volunteers in the French service, and finally flew with Eddie Rickenbacker in the 94th Squadron. He knew what it was to live in the trenches, to score victories in the air, and he learned what it felt like to be shot down and taken prisoner. He entered the war an idealist and he was, in a sense, still an idealist at its conclusion, however much his idealism had been tempered by bitter experiences. As he wrote of the war's end, "I doubt whether, in all European history, there had ever before been a time when the hearts of men were so filled with serene hope for the future." Unfortunately the feelings did not last long.

In the immediate postwar days Hall met the man with whom he would collaborate for more than twenty years. The man was Charles Nordhoff. Their first joint authorship effort produced a history of the Lafayette Flying Corps.

Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall are perhaps the most intriguing literary collaborators of the twentieth century. They began by doing a travel book which allowed them not only to go to the South Seas but to

remain there. The book, *Faery Lands of the South Seas*, was published in 1921. The pair did not publish another book under joint authorship until 1929 when *Falcons of France* appeared. In 1932 they scored their greatest literary triumph. After years of meticulous research and a skillful blending of writing chores, they completed *Mutiny on the Bounty*. It was a story which had not been told in any complete fashion in over 100 years and it was an adventure story *par excellence*. Because of Nordhoff and Hall, because of the masterful acting of Charles Laughton, Clark Gable, and Franchot Tone in the roles of Captain Bligh, Mr. Christian, and Mr. Byam in the 1935 film of the book, and because of the inherent qualities of the mutiny itself, an American generation and more became intimately acquainted with the HMS *Bounty*, its officers and crew, and their various fates. Nordhoff and Hall eventually filled out the story with two other books, *Men Against the Sea*, and *Pitcairn's Island*, which, together with *Mutiny on the Bounty*, form the *Bounty Trilogy* which still remains good reading for the young, the idealistic, and the adventurous. If one chooses to read them, add enough time to the commitment to include one other fine collaborative effort of Nordhoff and Hall, *The Hurricane*.

With the great success of their works published in the thirties, Nordhoff and Hall became, for their publishers, "the boys in the South Seas" who helped them through the Depression years, and for their readers they became writers of exquisite adventure tales involving the sea. But during these years James Norman Hall lost any public understanding of the fact that he was still a man with deep roots in the Midwest. He became less an Iowan for many, and yet, with the publication of *My Island Home* in 1952, it became clear that he was one of the many Iowans who had wandered but had not strayed. It wasn't simply that he had wandered to the South Seas. He had also wandered to such places as Iceland and Spain long after he had virtually settled in Tahiti. But Tahiti was his island home and he found there what he could no longer find in Iowa or elsewhere in the United States. He found a tempo of change which was slower and more to his liking than he could find elsewhere. He found an enjoyment of life and what life could give. Even with all of that, however, he was forced to admit in a conversation with Nordhoff that his roots were still in the United States, "in the prairie country of the Middle West."

To those people who have wandered from Iowa themselves, who have found the gentle tug of home pulling on them, who have gone back to find that Iowa is the one place to which they must return at least occasionally, James Norman Hall left words which will ring true and feelings which can easily be recognized. No fitter conclusion to a review of *My Island Home* could be found than a short paragraph from the book itself:

> *As the westbound local crossed the Mississippi into Iowa I had an immediate sense of an altered Spirit of Place. Ever since my Chicago summer the influence of that city seemed to spread westward across Illinois until it reached the Mississippi and there the rivers halts it. "Thus far but no farther," it says. To this day I am a kind of Tam o'Shanter, not feeling safe until the train has crossed the bridge to the Iowa side; then I leaned back*

Note on Sources

The basic source for this review (overdue or not) is James Norman Hall, *My Island Home: An Autobiography* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1952). Use was also made of James Norman Hall, *Kitchener's Mob: The Adventures of an American in Kitchener's Army* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1918), Nordhoff and Hall's *The Bounty Trilogy* and *The Hurricane*. One might also consult Ellery Sedgwick, *The Happy Profession* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946), or Edward Weeks, *In Friendly Candor* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1959). Robert Roulston, *James Norman Hall* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978) is a compact but interesting biography of Hall. All quotations in the review were taken from *My Island Home*.

in my seat and thoroughly enjoyed the rest of the journey, through West Liberty, Iowa City, Marengo, Brooklyn and other towns on the C.R.I. & P. that bring back so many happy memories of boyhood days.

He may have preferred to have lived in the South Seas, but only a perceptive, sensitive, and very passionate Iowan could have written the passage just noted. □

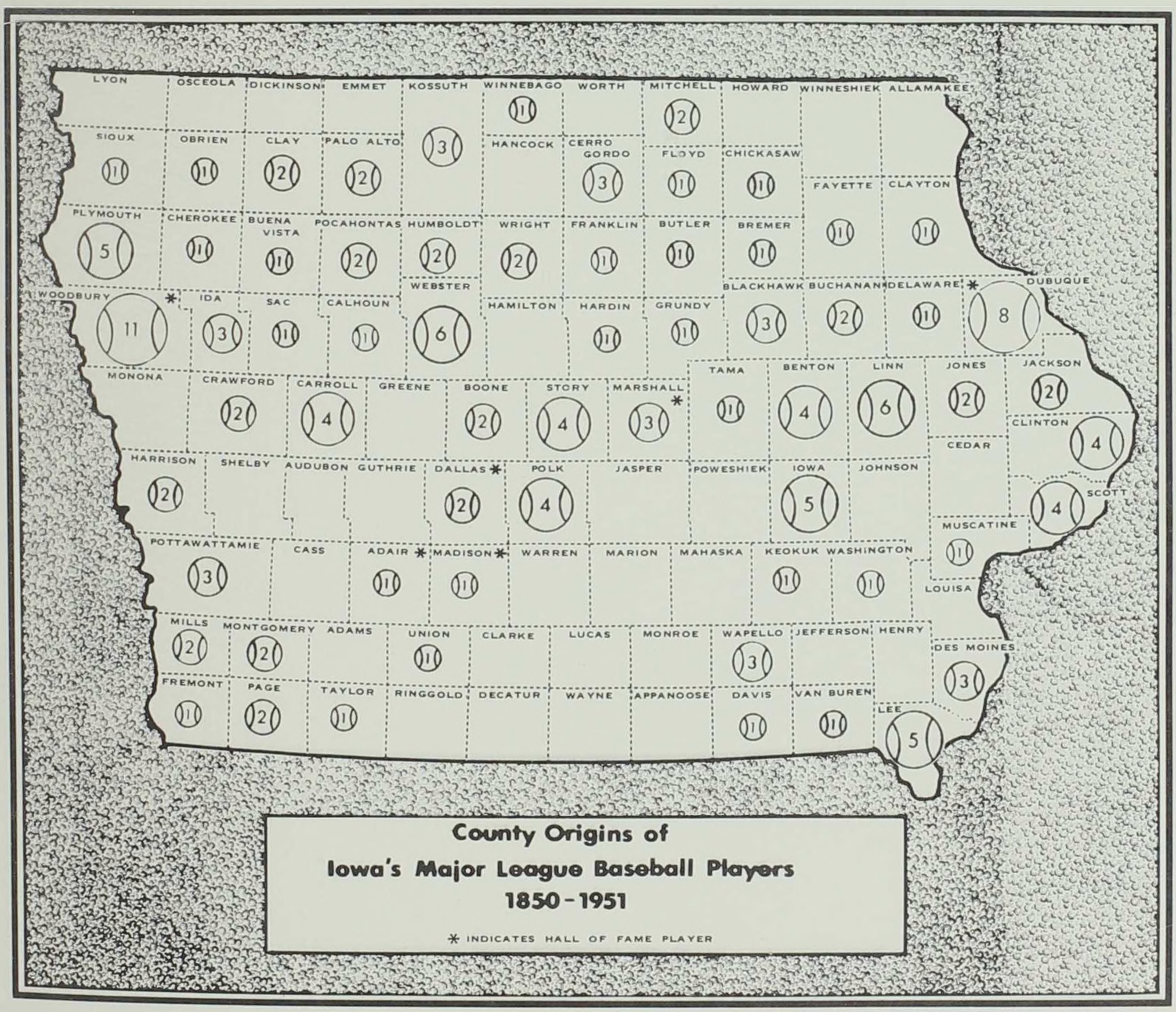
CONTRIBUTORS

BOB BIRKBY was born in Shenandoah, Iowa, and raised in Sidney, fifteen miles west of Shenandoah. He grew up listening to KFNF and KMA, and planting many seeds from Henry Field's. He received his B.A. in English from Morningside College, Sioux City, Iowa, and his M.A. in English from the University of Arkansas. Birkby taught English at Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri, for three years, and he is currently a free-lance writer in Seattle, Washington, involved in editing a revision of the *Scout Fieldbook* for the Boy Scouts of America.

JANICE NAHRA FRIEDEL received a B.A. with honors in history in 1972, an M.A. in secondary school curriculum, specializing in women's history, in 1976, and a Ph.D. in education in 1980, all from the University of Iowa. She has taught junior and senior high social studies, as well as college courses in American women's history. Dr. Friedel is currently Associate Dean for Community Education at Scott Community College, Bettendorf, Iowa. Her interest in Henry Field began when she was conducting research for an article about Jessie Field Shambaugh, published in the July/August 1981 issue of the *Palimpsest*.

PAT SONQUIST LANE was born in Dayton, Iowa, and attended Iowa State University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, New York University, where she received her B.A., and the Johns Hopkins University, where she received her M.A. Her main interest of late has been documenting the early settlement of Dayton Township, Webster County, Iowa.

RAYMOND A. SMITH, JR. is a Professor of History and Humanities at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington. He received his B.A. from Washington State College and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Stanford University. He was born and raised in Council Bluffs, Iowa. His article about John C. Mabray, "A Con Artist in the Corn Belt," appeared in the July/August 1983 issue of the *Palimpsest*. He is presently engaged in a comparative study of the territorial experiences of Iowa and Washington.



Map prepared by Mary Patricia "Molly" Smith

As the baseball season nears an end and World Series time approaches, the *Palimpsest* offers its readers a map indicating the Iowa counties in which major league baseball players have been born. Riverine counties, counties in which minor league teams played, and the tier of counties running eastward from Woodbury to Dubuque have all had their share of major league ballplayers. But how does one explain all those south-central counties with no major leaguers' birthplaces?

Six Iowans have earned a place in baseball's Hall of Fame. Their birthplaces are as follows:

Adrian "Cap" Anson, Marshalltown, Marshall County
Frederick Clarke, Winterset, Madison County
David "Beauty" Bancroft, Sioux City, Woodbury County
Urban "Red" Faber, Cascade, Dubuque County
Arthur "Dazzy" Vance, Orient, Adair County
Robert "Bob" Feller, Van Meter, Dallas County

Sources: David S. Neft, Richard M. Cohen, and Jordan A. Deutsch, The Sports Encyclopedia: Baseball *(Revised Edition; New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1981); Joseph L. Reichler, ed.,* The Baseball Encyclopedia *(Fourth Edition; New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1979).*

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