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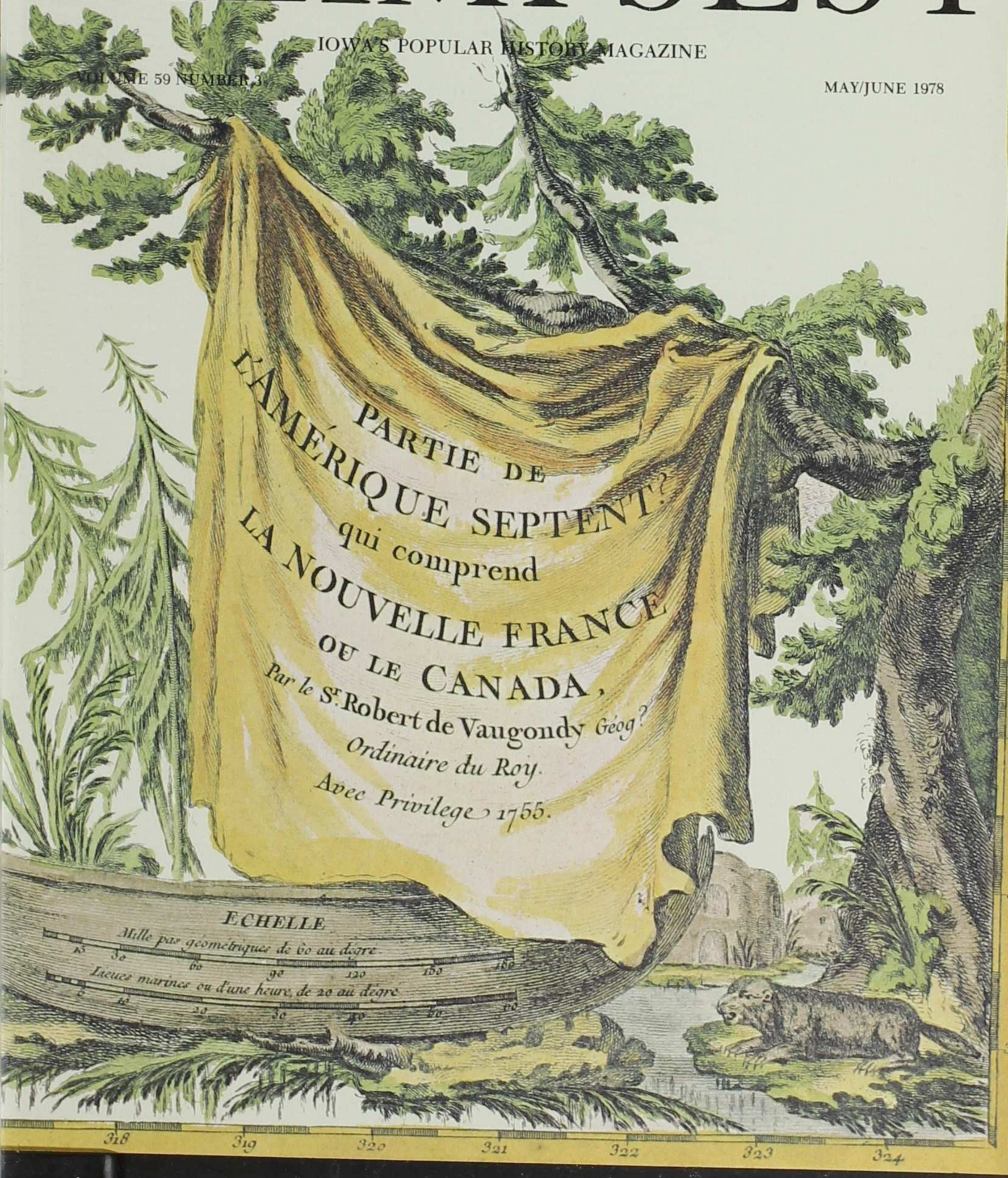

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The PALIMPSEST

Peter T. Harstad, Director

VOLUME 59 NUMBER 3

MAY/JUNE 1978

Charles Phillips, Editor

CONTENTS

Cover: *A hand-colored "cartouche" from a 1755 map by Robert de Vaugondy when Iowa was part of New France. For a look at early maps of Iowa and the Americas see page 77.*

(Photo on page 66 courtesy Division of Historical Museum and Archives)

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.

WE ALL WORKED TOGETHER

A Memory of Drought and Depression

By

James Hearst

James Hearst is a poet whose work, as he says, "came out of the Midwest, out of the life and the reality and the nature of the Midwest." His grandfather came to Iowa in 1859. Grandfather Hearst bought a farm southwest of Cedar Falls, planted a large maple grove there, and called the place Maplehearst.

James Hearst's father was born and raised on Maplehearst Farm, as were his father's brothers and sisters, his own sister and two brothers, and James himself. "My mother's father, Grandfather Schell, came from Bavaria to escape service in the German army," he writes. "It is to my mother that I owe my love of books and good taste in literature." After his father left the farm, James and his brother Charles worked it in partnership. They fed cattle and raised hogs.

In 1941, Hearst was invited to join the staff of the department of English and Literature at the University of Northern Iowa, where he taught for 34 years. He rose to full professor, though he had no degrees, and UNI awarded him an honorary degree in literature.

Hearst has published eight books of poetry, written articles on assignment for Wallaces' Farmer *and* The Nation, *and done many book reviews for the* Des Moines Register *and the* Chicago Sun. *He worked for a short time as farm-editor for a newspaper. But most of his life, he farmed and taught school.*

The following is James Hearst's memory of the Depression years, a personal history by someone who knows – through experience – what he writes about, and who knows how to write about experience.

Ed.

The worst of it began for us in 1934. I remember how the dust settled so thickly on the pastures that the cattle would not eat and cows, and calves, and steers wandered about bawling their hunger. We found it hard to believe. We all knew about dust storms in the dry plains of the Southwest, but for drought and wind and dust to sweep, like a plague, over the fertile fields of Black Hawk County, Iowa seemed a bad dream, not real. But it was real, all right.

We endured it for three years. I think it was the dust that gave Mother the shivers. She stuck paper strips along the window sills, rolled rugs against the doors, but still it sifted in, dry and fine as talcum powder but gritty to taste and touch. The dust left a film on dishes in the cupboard, on sheets folded in drawers, on woodwork and chairs, on people's faces and hair. Outside if the wind blew, visibility would be cut to a few yards. Autos ran at mid-day with their headlights turned on. Drifts of dust piled against fences like snow, sometimes two and three feet high. Years later after the ground had been plowed and planted many times, the stain could still be seen where the drifts had been.

Spring came with no rain. That was the first sign. The winter snow melted and ran off during a sudden thaw in March. The water could not soak into frozen ground and it ran off down gullies and creeks. Even then, on the bare and frozen ground, the wind chiselled furrows and filled the air with dust. In April and May the ground baked in summer temperatures. Farmers stirred the ground as little as possible, and the damp patches dried almost before they turned up. But we sowed the oats, harrowed in the clover, and planted corn when the time came. This is what farmers do.

An old farmer once said, the time to plant corn is at corn-planting time. Crops are planted in their season. This wisdom lies deep in the farmer's blood. When spring comes he rises early, looks at the sky, tests for wind and temperature and impregnates the earth with seed. He is his own almanac.

In the spring of 1934 we came in at the end of the day exhausted from the heat

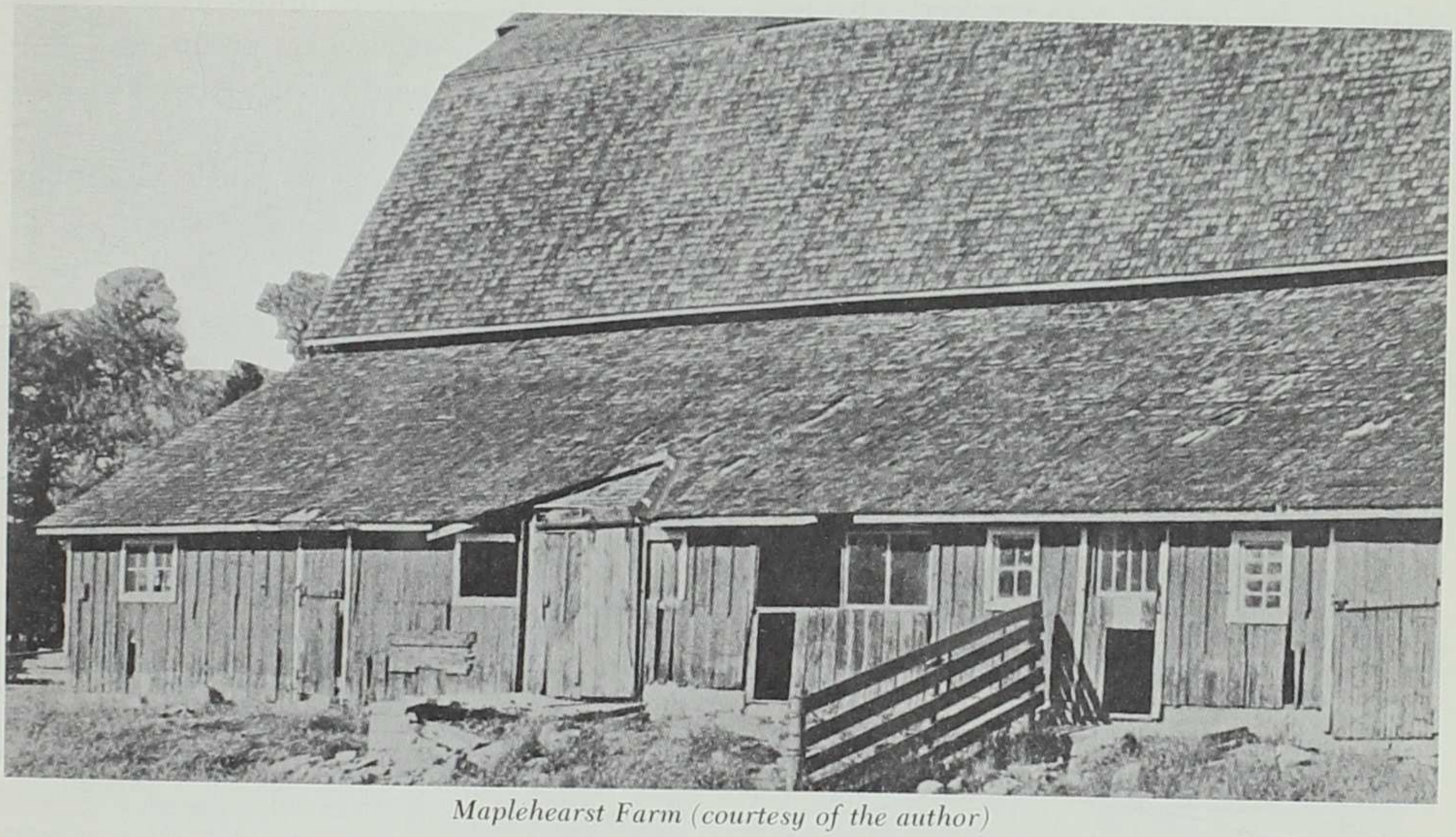
Maplehearst Farm (courtesy of the author)

and flying dirt, and feeling there was no sense in what we were doing. In some places in the field where the dust devils came whirling, seeds were pulled right out of the ground. In other places the seeds lay dormant in dry earth. It takes moisture for any roots to grow, but my brother Charles did not dare set the corn planter deep enough to reach damp earth because the seeds would smother. So we hoped for rain and plowed and disced and harrowed and planted just like our neighbors without knowing what else to do.

Late in May a few showers fell and some of the kernels sprouted. But in July, when the corn needs an inch of rain every week, even the clouds burned off. The sun fired the stalks that had grown and left them waving dead white tassels with no live pollen. The ears turned out to be stubby cobs with a few kernels on them. That fall, we chopped one hundred and twenty acres of corn to fill the silo, when eight acres should have done it.

The corn had to contend with more than the drought. Hordes of chinch bugs marched out of chinch bug country to attack it. Think of a voracious appetite surrounded by legs and equipped with a mouth and you have a chinch bug. It feeds on corn in its tender, succulent stage and leaves the corn rows in tatters, flapping like a row of scarecrows. I saw them as barbarians swarming over the land of cultivation. We tried to defend our fields. We took post hole augers and dug holes along the edges of the fields, holes a foot deep and about a rod apart. We half filled them with creosote. We trapped a lot of the bugs, and often only the first half dozen rows of corn suffered. Once the plant became mature, stalks tough, leaves hard and shiney, the chinch bugs went away.

But more mischief came. Grasshoppers, like the locusts of the Bible, clouded the skies and settled on our oat fields. Grasshoppers have a nasty habit of eating just the small stem that fastens the oat kernel



Maplehearst Farm (courtesy of the author)

to the stalk. We were left with a field where empty heads of straw waved in the wind and the ground was covered with kernels. Brother Chuck said, "We ought to have a flock of turkeys and let them clean up the fields."

Alfalfa was the one crop we had that did not wither. Apparently its roots dig deep enough to find moisture. It stayed green, bloomed, made two cuttings of hay. The grasshoppers did not harm it, I don't know why. But when we cut the last few rounds in the center of the field, grasshoppers hung from the alfalfa plants in bunches, a strange yield for a hayfield.

July was the worst month. Day after day the temperature rose above one hundred degrees. When we came out to the fields after dinner, the machines were almost too hot to touch. We wound the iron steering wheels with tape to protect our hands. One day at noon as we quit for dinner, one of the men jumped on my tractor fender to ride to the house. He jumped off faster than he jumped on. "Hells bells," he yipped, "it's like sitting on a hot stove."

In September rain came, rain that should have fallen during the summer. It had been a starved, withered, dried up crop season. People just did without and we all tried to hold together our livestock and machinery. A worn out feeling slowed steps and lowered voices. No one died of despair but we were glad when the year became history. We harvested what crops we had, feeling that we had done all we could.

The drought had followed the Great Depression. That really was a time that tried men's souls. One of our neighbors once said, "When you break a horse's spirit, he's no good any more." I wondered if it was the same with men. I thought about it one night sitting at the desk in my study. All of us, father, mother, brother, sister and myself involved in sweat, worry, debt, trying to keep the farm going. It seemed to me like a law of diminishing

returns, the harder you worked, the less you received. I saw no way out.

Depressed prices for farm products existed years before the stock market break. Most city folk did not realize that since the end of World War I farmers had been ground between the millstones of high overhead and low prices. Many farmers blamed Herbert Hoover for pulling the rug out from under them when he withdrew support for the prices he had guaranteed. When the war was over, Hoover no longer needed hogs, corn, butter, eggs, sugar to feed the troops and our Allies. And so prices fell and stayed low all during the '20s.

By 1930 our family reached out all its hands to stay alive. We knew we had the muscle and we proved it. Father took a job with the Farm Bureau (he was President of the Iowa Farm Bureau for 13 years) and his pay check helped bolster the bank balance. My sister, Louise, taught school and her check, when she got one — during the Depression school teachers were not paid regularly — went to the same place. Mother made cottage cheese and sold it and eggs to the Blue Bird restaurant in town. I had a small check from my army insurance. Chuck ran the farm, tried to keep worn machinery in action, the pigs healthy, the hired men paid. Farm families suffered from the Depression in a way that was different from town families. When a factory worker lost his job and pay check, he knew where he stood — probably in the bread line. A banker knew where he stood, too, and when his bank closed its doors, unable to meet its obligations, he jumped out of a ten-story window, or shot himself, or just went home and shrivelled into a sick old man.

But on the farm the situation was not as clear. Farmers knew about debt. Most farms had a mortgage on them, the machines were not paid for, the livestock had been bought on loans. In normal times these obligations were paid off with money from the sale of crops and livestock. Now, with such low prices, the money failed to appear when loans, bills, interest came due. We ate what we produced — no one went hungry on farms. But the effort to hold together all the things he had worked for sometimes marked a man and his family for life.

One day Chuck and I received a phone call from a man who had once worked for us. He was working in the John Deere factory in Waterloo. John Deere paid better wages than a farmer paid. Now he felt the abrasive touch of unemployment. "Come and get me," he said over the phone, "I'll work just for my food. I ain't going on relief."

Already our two hired men worked on pretty slim wages. They each had a house to live in and food to eat. Chuck said, "What will we do, we haven't work enough for another man."

But we cranked up our Model T Ford and drove to Waterloo. I will never forget the sight of empty parking lots, taverns closed, the factory, dirty and silent. No smoke from the forges, no hurrying men, no railroad cars shuttling in the yards, no clatter of machines, nothing but emptiness and the stale brassy smell of poverty.

We found Herman, standing in line at the Salvation Army headquarters. "I knew you'd come," he said, "but I thought maybe I'd get a bowl of soup."

We took him home, fed him and turned him over to Mother. She needed help in the garden, trash cleaned up, spading done, lawn mowed. "Do you want to stay

A Farmers' Holiday roadblock (courtesy The Des Moines Register*)*

with us?" she asked.

"No," he said, "I'll walk. It ain't but four miles. I'll come everyday. Why, Mrs. Hearst, I don't know when I've eaten a piece of meat."

"What about your wife and children?" Mother asked.

"My wife, she works at a little cafe and eats there. The kids get a free meal at school. She brings home scraps for the kid's supper."

That's the way it was. Herman walked out in the morning and back at night. Mother's cooking filled out the hollows in his cheeks and the sun soon changed his factory pallor. We had plenty for him to do — on a farm, work has a habit of appearing whenever there is a spare pair of hands to do it. He kept the lawn mowed, the garden weeded, the chicken house repaired, and he chopped down a couple of dead trees. He screwed new hinges on sagging barn doors, shored up loose window panes with putty, and reshingled a spot on a shed roof where a tree limb had fallen during a thunderstorm. When summer came he worked in the fields loading hay bales and shovelling off oats from the combine. Late in the fall Chuck found him a job with a farm machinery dealer, and he walked four blocks to work instead of four miles. He earned enough to feed his family. Perhaps President Roosevelt did not lead the country into the promised land, but he

pulled the economy out of its rut, dusted it off, and began to make it run again.

The terrible days of the Depression put marks on folk never to be erased. Families found themselves penniless when the banks closed. These were good hard-working people whose entire savings disappeared like smoke. Retired farmers begged for jobs as janitors in schools and churches, as nightwatchmen in factories. One morning I heard on the radio that one of our neighbors had gone out in the field with his shotgun and killed himself so his wife and children could have his insurance. The mortgage on his farm had been foreclosed. He had nowhere to go.

"What's the good of foreclosing a mortgage?" Mother asked. "The bank or insurance company can't sell the farm, can't even rent it and expect to get the rent?"

"But that's the way things are done," Chuck said, "it's an old custom to kick a man when he's down."

The Farmers' Holiday movement spread like an epidemic. When a farm was foreclosed and the farmer's goods and livestock sold at auction, the neighbors made it a "penny sale." Everything the auctioneer offered for sale brought the bid of one cent. When the sale ended, the livestock, grain, machinery, household goods were returned to the owner for pennies. And one look at the hard determined faces of the men surrounding the auctioneer discouraged any outsider from raising the bid. In western Iowa a judge tried to stop such a sale with a legal writ and found a rope around his neck, and the other end over a tree limb, and there were plenty of hands to pull it tight.

Creameries were picketed, cans of milk and cream dumped into ditches, tons of butter destroyed. It was violence born of desperation in an attempt to call attention to the farmer's troubles.

One July morning I drove two miles north to the Benson creamery to see with my own eyes what was going on. About a half a mile from the creamery a truck slowly moved across the road and blocked me. Two men with rifles got out, and I was shocked to see old Einer Clausson and Jake Miller.

I said, "What in hell do you guys think you're doing?"

Old Einer looked me right in the eye. "You ain't going any farther, Jim. No one but us members can go down to the creamery. What are you doing over here anyway, you boys don't milk?"

"I just came over to see if what we heard is true."

"If you heard we was dumping milk and cream, you heard right. Right now that creamery is a dead horse."

I shook my head. "You, Einer, and you, Jake, with guns for god's sake. Are you really dumping the trucks?"

"You damn right. Just look down that road and see that big new truck upside down in the ditch? You think the fairies did it?"

The truck lay on its side, and you could smell the milky suds that filled the ditch. I looked down the road past the creamery and there was another group of men with guns. I said, "Do you really think this kind of monkey business will raise prices?"

"We can sure raise hell and maybe some of the big bugs will get it through their thick heads that we're hurting out here."

I thought about it. "I suppose the papers are sending out reporters and photo men?"

"You bet," Jake said, "and more are

A Farmers' Holiday roadblock (courtesy Division of Historical Museum and Archives)

coming. Now Jim, you get out of here before you get in trouble. This ain't any business of yours, no skin off your nose."

It seemed ridiculous but I didn't want to laugh. I said, "Go to hell, Jake. You going to shoot me?" These men were my neighbors.

For the first time Jake grinned. "I might have to if you get fractious."

"Well," I said, "I'm all for you if this will help. But I think you have things bass ackward."

"Listen, boy," Jake said, "you go get you forty cows to milk night and morning, seven days of the week and find the milk isn't even worth the feed. You can get damn tired of pulling tits."

I shifted into reverse. "OK, I guess I'm in the wrong pew. Good luck."

The Farmers' Holiday movement did startle the newspapers into headlines, even the staid *New York Times*. The farmer's predicament began to haunt the public — and Congress. It helped elect Franklin D. Roosevelt.

When I drove in the yard Chuck had started for the house to wash for dinner. At the table he asked, "Are they really doing it?"

"They're doing it and they mean business too."

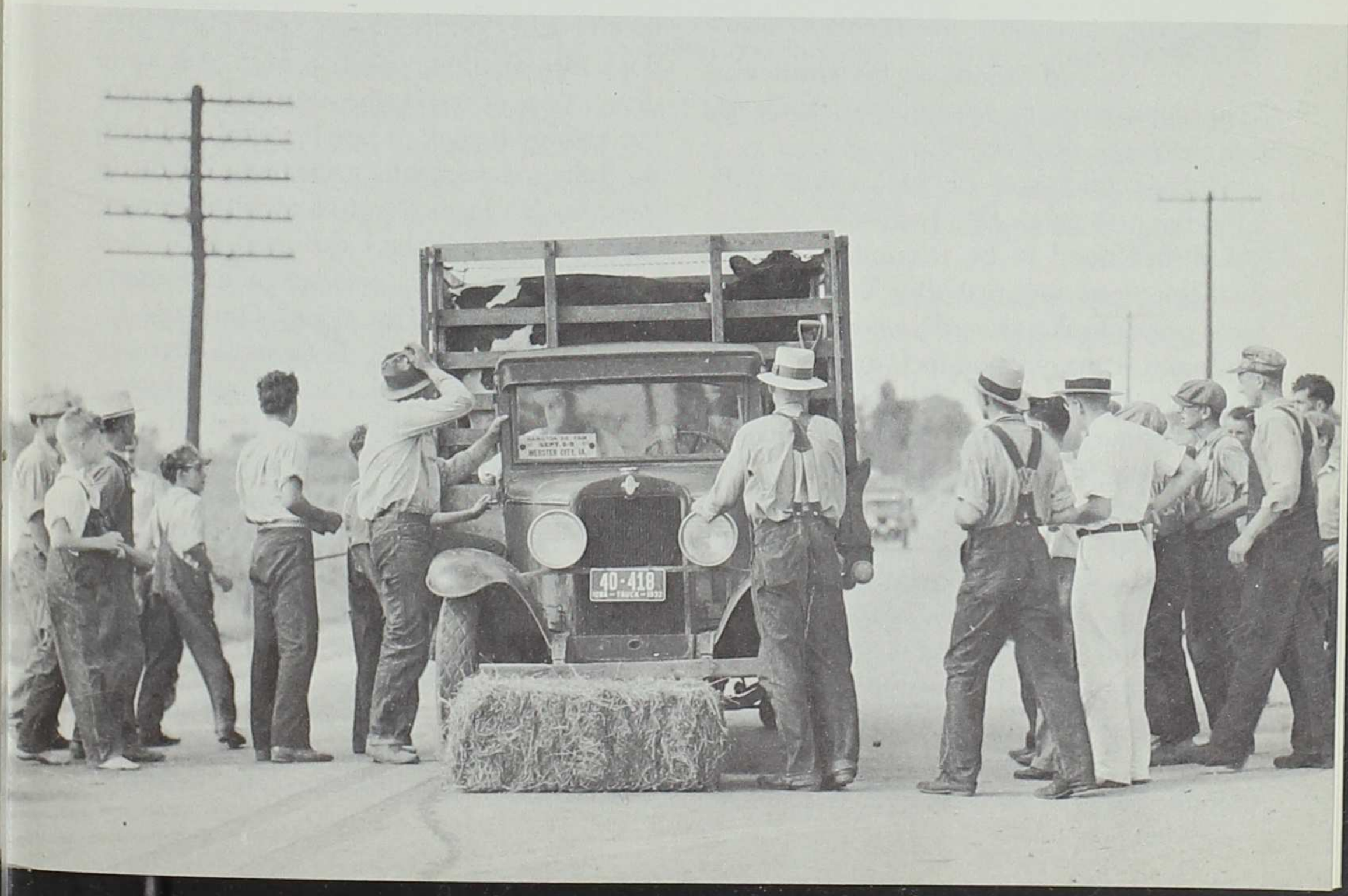
"Crazy as coots," Chuck said.

"That may be, but our friends Einer and Jake are on patrol with guns and they aren't kidding."

Mother asked, "Do you suppose the National Guard will be called out?"

Chuck said, "Probably some jackass will blast away and kill somebody. Then they'll run for cover."

I didn't think so. "Not these boys, they aim to stay until the whole affair gets na-



tional publicity. That's what they're after. They know dumping a few trucks of cream won't bring up prices."

"They give you a bad time?"

"They thought I was nosey. We aren't dairymen, they made a point of it."

Mother said, "You should have told them what you boys got for the last load of hogs you shipped to Chicago."

"After freight, commission and trucking, just about enough to wad a shotgun." Chuck spoke in harsh tones.

"I never thought of it," I said, "I doubt if they'd listen. They're all hepped up over the dairy situation."

We ate slowly, thinking about our neighbors out on the roads with guns. Mother said there was strawberry shortcake for dessert. It lifted our spirits a little. All she had to say was, "There is a flag in this water pitcher," and we knew by this family saying we must save room for a special dessert.

Chuck poured cream on his shortcake. "Those bastards in Washington can't get the sleep out of their eyes."

Mother said in a choked voice, "We have been through this before."

I didn't need to be reminded. A little over ten years ago, just after World War I, farm prices took a nose dive while city folk whooped it up on the stock market. Even our own banker said, "If farmers would stay at home and tend to business and stop complaining, they'd be all right."

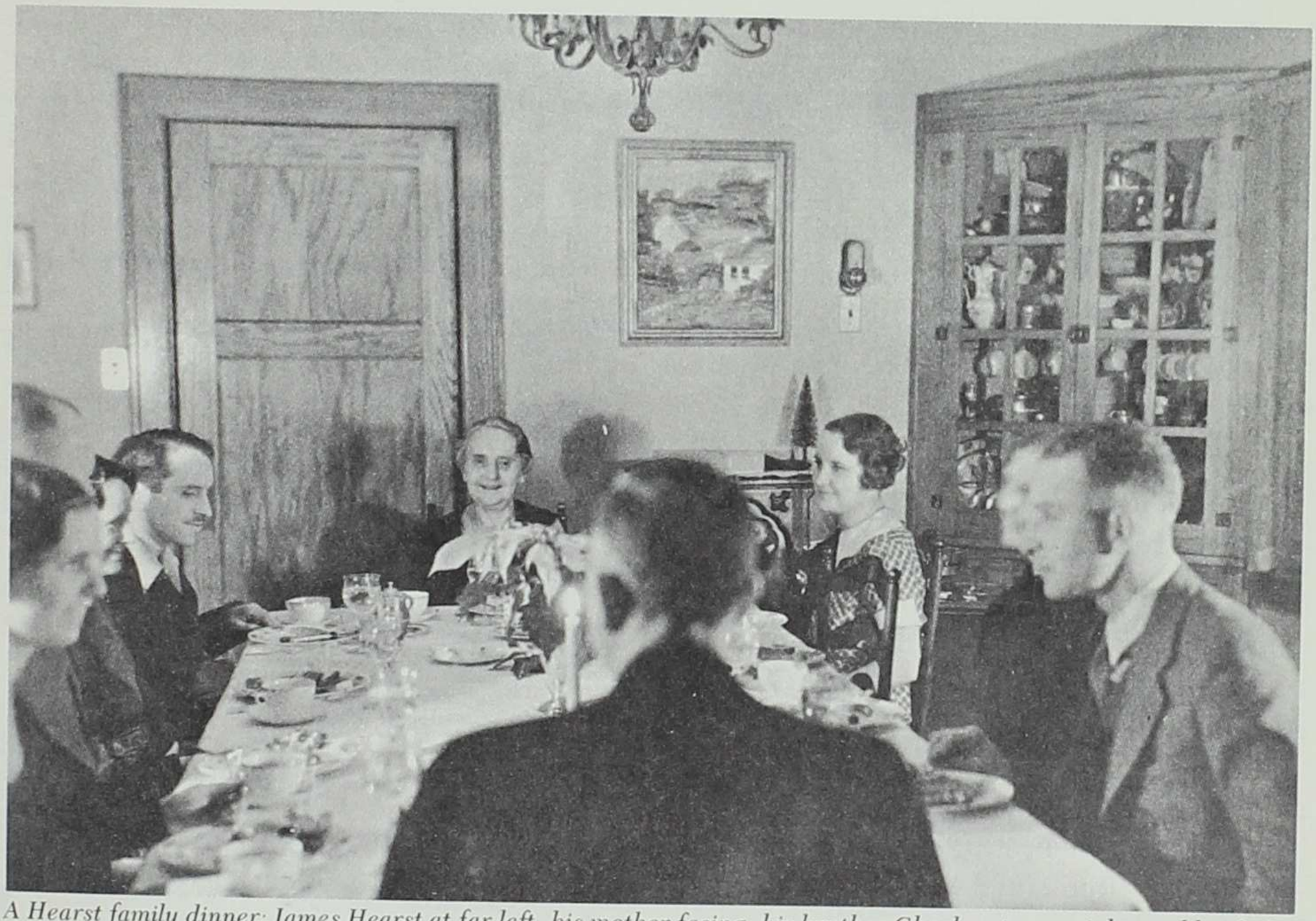
Our memories ran back over the years. Grandfather came to Iowa in 1859 and bought the farm. The whole family, uncles, aunts, Father, was born and raised there. Then Father bought out his sisters and brothers but still owed for some of the shares.

Late in May, the corn was planted, the oats up, the cows out to pasture. But the taxes had not been paid for over a year. How could they be paid, there was no money. Robert, the second son, who once stood six-feet tall and weighed two-hundred pounds and was a star tackle on his high school football team, was now slowly dying of cancer. All those trips to the University Hospitals, all those radiation treatments, all the medicines cost money.

There Bob sat like a ghost of himself, slowly wasting away. Never a word of despair, never a complaint, never any signs of anguish so often seen in people when they ask, Why does it have to be me? He still drove the truck to take gasoline and seeds to the field, and the car to take Mother to town. He tried to mow the lawn and help with the garden. We all felt something in us dying too as we watched him die.

I was just home from a two-year stay in the hospital after a bad accident. At the end of the college year we had had a fraternity party up the river. I dove off a boat dock into shallow water, a high jack-knife dive. Two years in the hospital! Imagine the money it took to pay hospital and doctor bills. How could a farmer already in debt for his farm stand so much expense? And farm prices had dropped in a well once the war was over, when no longer, "Food Will Win The War." One son dying, one on crutches, both in their early twenties. How could Father and Mother rally from crushing blows like that? It must have hurt Father to walk into the bank knowing he owed so much money and could borrow no more. And so the taxes were not paid.

During World War I the government had urged farmers to plow up every acre of land they could find, raise all the hogs they could, and guaranteed prices. When the war ended the government forgot prices, forgot the huge food factory that now had



A Hearst family dinner: James Hearst at far left, his mother facing, his brother Charles at near right, and his father with back to camera (courtesy of the author).

that the Sheriff would serve papers for non-payment of taxes and offer part of the farm for sale. This seemed a humiliation that Mother and Father need not suffer and on the day the Sheriff was to come, Uncle George took time off from his busy medical practice to take them out to lunch. The Sheriff who was a friend of Uncle George agreed to come while they were gone. The three brothers offered to act as a reception committee for Sheriff Wagner.

That day the weather seemed ordinary. Neither the cattle nor the hogs behaved in an unusual way. Leaves moved in a light wind. The windmill wheel turned slowly. The sun shone with the same light it gave to the battles of the Somme and Gettysburg. Peas and carrots in the garden grew in the straight or crooked rows in which they were planted. But it was a portentous no buyers for its products. Fertile Iowa land went begging. No one wanted to buy it. In the city people bought stocks on the feverish stock exchange, all hoping to be rich.

A family is not always crushed under the weight of misfortune. The family ties grow closer, ties of courage and strength. Louise and Charles assumed duties they knew must be carried out no matter how young and untested they were. The family did not sink into the quicksands of despair. Louise brought her friends home, and they filled the house with music and talk, jazz, cheese-on-rye bread, and spiked near-beer. Chuck dropped out of college to run the farm and help look after his two invalid brothers. Family life pulled itself up by its bootstraps.

One day, in 1923, we received notice

day for us and we three brothers sat at the dining room table and ate our lunch.

The dog barked as a car drove in the yard. A tall lean man without a hat stepped out, picked up his briefcase, walked briskly to the front door. Chuck opened it. "I'm Cap Wagner, the Sheriff," he said. "This isn't my idea of a good time but I wish you young men would listen while I read this summons to you."

He opened his briefcase, took out some papers, put on a pair of spectacles with silver rims and in a dull low voice read the summons. He folded the papers, put them in an envelope and tossed it toward the center of the table. "OK," he said, "that's it. Give the papers to your Dad when he comes back."

He went over to Bob and put his arm over Bob's shoulder. "How are you getting along, young man," he said, "you're having a tough time and I admire your guts."

Bob's voice trembled, "Will the farm really be sold?"

The Sheriff shook his head. "You have a year to redeem it. Don't worry, Bob, your Dad will get the taxes paid. It's just that the law says we have to do it this way. Remember me to your folks. So long." And he was gone.

It was a day burned in our memories. To lose part of the farm would be more than the family should have to bear. The farm was home. It was part of our life, like our own flesh and blood. I remember when a man we knew who lived in town called up Father and asked him if he was going to pay the taxes or would the 80 be for sale. We young folk took an instant dislike to the poor man and always treated him coldly.

Years later when Bob was gone, and anxiety and grief had dulled, the family thought of this as the low point in our lives. Eventually, the taxes were paid and the land redeemed. We just dug in and faced what had to be faced and survived. But no one who weathered the Depression ever escaped without a kind of obsession for security.

A couple of good crop years, and we were on the way up. We had discovered that working together made all the difference as we faced illness, death, felt the abrasive touch of despair. It was the working together that kept us going. President Roosevelt said once, "There is nothing to fear but fear itself." That may have been just a political ploy, but after he said it, there was hope.

One morning, a couple of years after the worst of the Depression, I was out on the tractor discing in oats in a field along the road. Einer Clausson drove by with his milk truck and we waved to each other like the neighbors we were. □

Iowa and Early Maps

By
Diana J. Fox

The discovery and subsequent exploration of the Western Hemisphere generated a flurry of surveying and map-making, and, as a result, the North American continent has been mapped more frequently than any other continent on earth. At first glance, the earliest of these maps draw our attention as works of art rather than as representations of actual geographical conditions. Explorers and travelers brought back rough field notes, general sketches, and hearsay information that the finest craftsmen of the day transformed into colorful likenesses of the continent.

Iowa began its map "career" as a great void somewhere between the known possessions of the French on the northeast and the Spanish dominions to the south. There is some speculation that early Spanish expeditions that have been documented in Kansas also reached into Iowa. No record of the Iowa journeys have been found, however, and the Spanish maps of the day include no unique features belonging only to the area that was to become Iowa. It was natural for Iowa to be represented as an empty space for many years. Cartographers knew of Spanish mapping to the south and west, French mapping to the north and east, and British mapping on the eastern sea coast. There had to be something in the middle. Iowa and the rest of the vast area later loosely referred to as Louisiana simply had to wait for the white man to make his way that far inland.

Prior to the 18th century, many cartographers found it impossible to leave a space blank. Guilloume Delisle (1675-1726), a leading map-maker of his day, challenged tradition in 1700 when he refused to add mythical beasts and legendary seas to the unexplored interiors of continents. A great student of geography, he produced maps that had very accurate continental outlines and were much simpler in style than those of his contemporaries. Delisle objected to the widely accepted practice of speculative cartography. His guiding principal was as simple as his style. He felt that a geographer should clearly mark the rivers and mountains, because these are the natural, unchanging boundaries which lead to the development of accurate geographical representation.

On June 17, 1673, two years before Delisle's birth, Marquette and Joliet began their contribution to the accurate mapping of the Mississippi River. They had traveled from Mackinaw to Green Bay and the Fox River and then down the Wisconsin until they entered the Mississippi across from the site of the present town of McGregor, thus becoming the first white men to see what we now call Iowa. This

was to become one of the major routes from the settlements in Canada to the lands of the West. Curiously, as a result of this route, many early maps show a mountainous region in Iowa along the river. The Wisconsin side of the Mississippi is flat and marshy where the two rivers join. The Iowa side, on the other hand, rises to bluffs 500 feet above the river. Many years elapsed before further exploration corrected the misinterpretation. Other rivers also were falsely credited with mountains on their banks or near by. One such range appeared on the east bank of the Des Moines. Ordinary hills as well as bluffs may have accounted for these mountains especially if the explorer stumbled upon them after a monotonous trek across the "extensive meadows" also listed on many early maps.

The two earliest geographic features of Iowa to appear on maps were the Des Moines River and the lead mines at present-day Dubuque. The Des Moines River is the largest stream entering the Mississippi from the west, north of the Missouri. The fabled Northwest Passage through the continent filled the thoughts of many European explorers, so any river that looked navigable was cause for rising expectations. French exploration of the Des Moines quickly established the fact that this river could not extend to the sea, yet it wandered grandly through maps under numerous names and with various courses for years following the completion of the exploration. Trade with the Indians and accounts of wandering hunters and trappers provided knowledge of the lead mines as early as 1690, although Europeans did not begin to work the deposits consistently until Julien Dubuque opened his mine in 1785. The mines also experienced occasional name changes but were generally referred to as the "mine de plomb." The economic importance of both the mines and the Des Moines contributed to their early notoriety.

Much of the problem of mapping Iowa arose because the French and Spanish never went beyond exploration to actual settlement of the area. Trappers seldom carried materials to draw maps even if they had had any cartographic skills. All information concerning Iowa on European maps came only from the tales of traders and Indians. It might pass through two, three, or more people before it reached the cartographer. By that time a great deal could be misinterpreted. Many maps, for example, show the Des Moines River flowing from a very large lake. French officials seeking information on the area were probably told that large northern lakes could be reached by following the Des Moines River. Such a description would be correct but very misleading. Actually the river passes near, but does not spring from, Spirit Lake in northern Iowa.

Natural features were not the only things misrepresented on maps. Explorers were always eager to believe and transmit stories about cities of gold or fabulous mines. Often, when looking at old maps, it is difficult to differentiate between purely ficticious locations and those that actually existed and then vanished without a trace. As late as 1833, one map of Iowa shows numerous forts, some abandoned, on the Des Moines River south of the Raccoon Fork. No archeological evidence has been found to substantiate the existence of forts at these locations.

Often providing the only basis for territorial negotiations and boundary settlements, early maps were vitally important to the countries controlling the North

American continent. If an area was discovered, explored, and mapped by an explorer for a certain government, it was important to let the rest of the world know that the government had established a claim. Lack of skilled map makers and accurate equipment led to many disputes over boundaries and possessions. Some maps accurately portray certain features but elongate the interior of the continent to almost twice its actual distance. Modern travelers may joke about how long it takes to get from the Mississippi to the Rockies, but these early explorers must have thought the plains stretched on forever. As late as the sale of Louisiana to the United States in 1803, France did not know the boundaries of this great expanse of territory.

Iowa's new owners began the first thorough mapping. The Americans had shown themselves to be very observant cartographers concerning matters of military importance as well as geographical significance. First, the United States sent military expeditions up the Missouri, the Mississippi, and the Des Moines Rivers to create a pool of information on Indian villages, possible fort sites, natural and man-made passageways, and possible supply points. The expeditions of Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny in 1835 produced the first well-documented exploration of the interior of the state. Kearny led a party of 150 soldiers up the Des Moines to find a site for a fort on the Raccoon Fork. Several of the company continued on to explore additional areas in the north central portion of the state. One member of the expedition, Lieutenant Albert M. Lea, a civil engineer and an accomplished draughtsman, later compiled the information gathered by the group into a map and booklet. This small book aroused great interest among people in the East and helped to increase the tide of settlers ready to come to Iowa.

Forty years previous to Kearny and Lea's discoveries, the United States government established a systematic surveying plan in the Land Ordinance of 1785. The Ordinance provided for the division of land into townships and sections. Government surveyors divided Iowa according to these guidelines and produced survey maps and field notes which contained extensive information on each newly numbered section of land. These survey maps were submitted to Congress by the Surveyor General's Office as part of the annual reports of the General Land Office. They appeared periodically in Congressional publications from 1841 to 1861, each a few years after the actual surveying had been done. David McClelland, born and raised in Washington, D.C., engraved many of the survey maps for the federal government. Using the notes and sketches from the Surveyor General's Office in Dubuque, he created the first official maps of the Territory. He became an expert on Iowa geography even though he probably never visited the state.

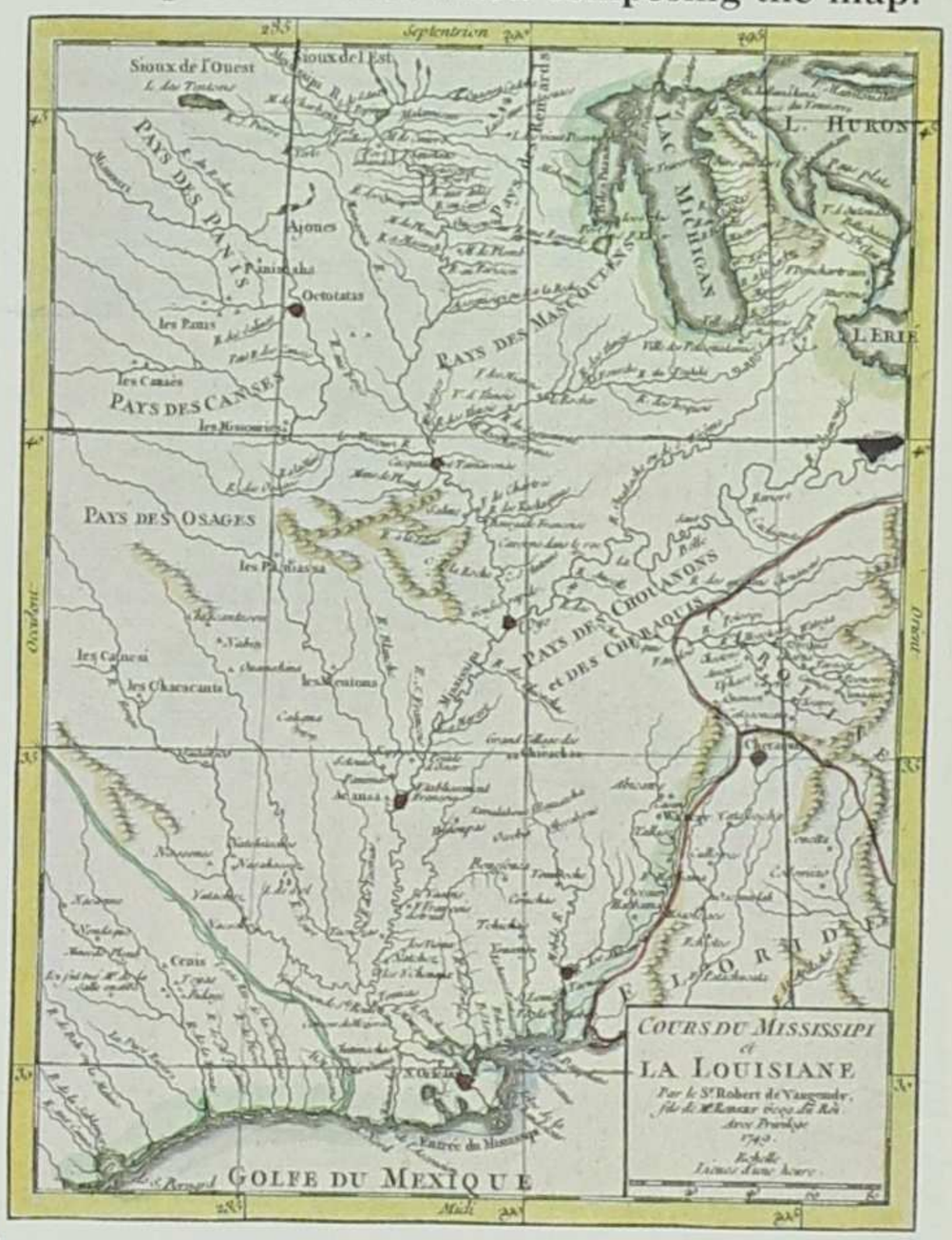
As settlement progressed, mapping became more complete. Emmigrant guides often contained maps to help new arrivals discover possible home sites. Land speculators also issued maps as selling aids. By the time of statehood in 1846 the eastern third of Iowa was well mapped and documented. Settlement of the rest of the state had just begun and maps showed a few settlements in the newly created counties, but even these sketchy indications of civilizations were a great improvement over the mythical beasts and inland seas that once supposedly occupied the area. □

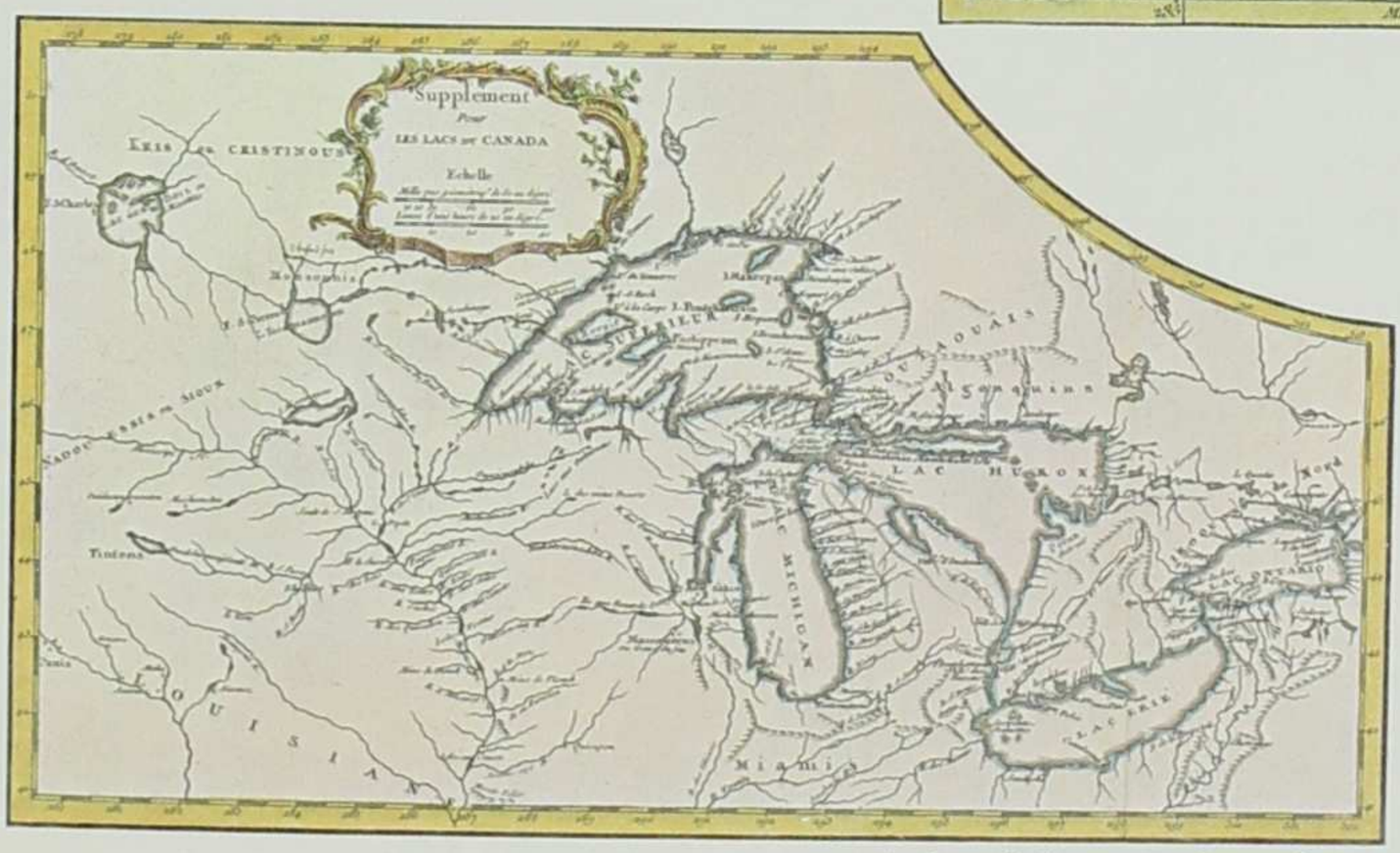
A Sanson and Joillot map, *ca.* 1713. An earlier version of the same map had more subtley-colored "cartouches" and was missing the Mississippi River. The same plates were used to make both versions, with additions and corrections added to this version probably by Joillot. The Mississippi has shifted to the west here, and it winds more than it should, but great advances had been made and the silhouette of Iowa has appeared.

One of the many maps of America appearing in books, as indicated by the plate number in the corner. The plate was made *ca.* 1757. Notice the loss of the lakes but the return of the mountains along the Des Moines.

This lovely map of Western Canada appeared in G. T. Roynal's *Philosophical and Political History* issued in 1780. Mountains again dominate the Des Moines River Valley.

A Mississippi River map from the family of Robert de Vaugondys, known for their use of exact ground information rather than speculative geography. The detail here suggests they probably used explorers' notes when composing the map.





A detail from Robert de Vaugondys's 1755 map of New France.

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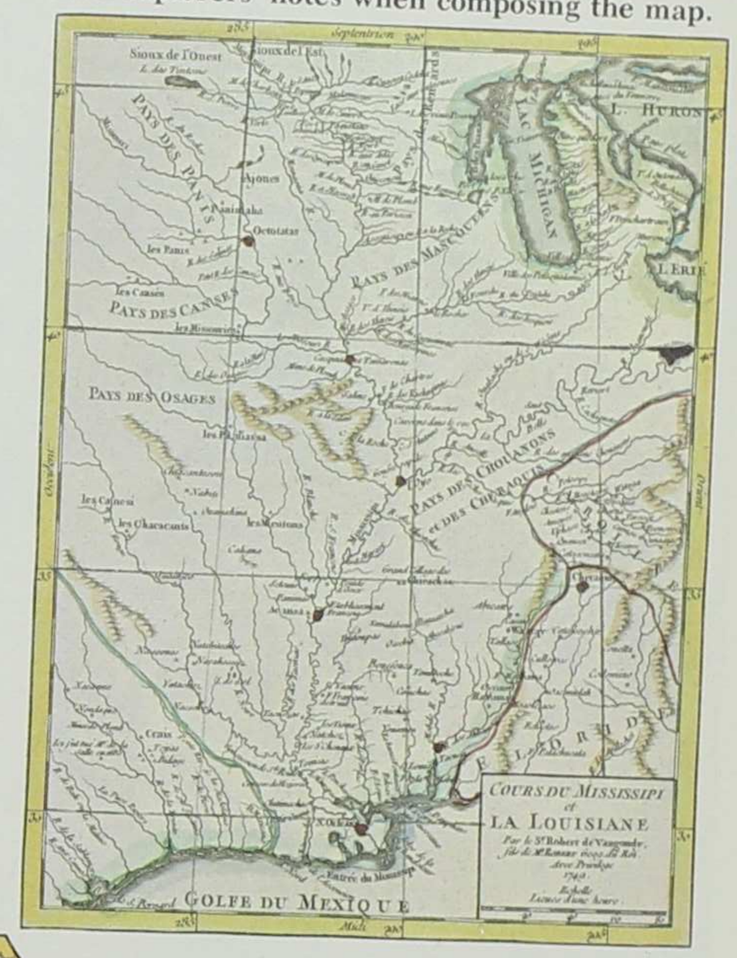

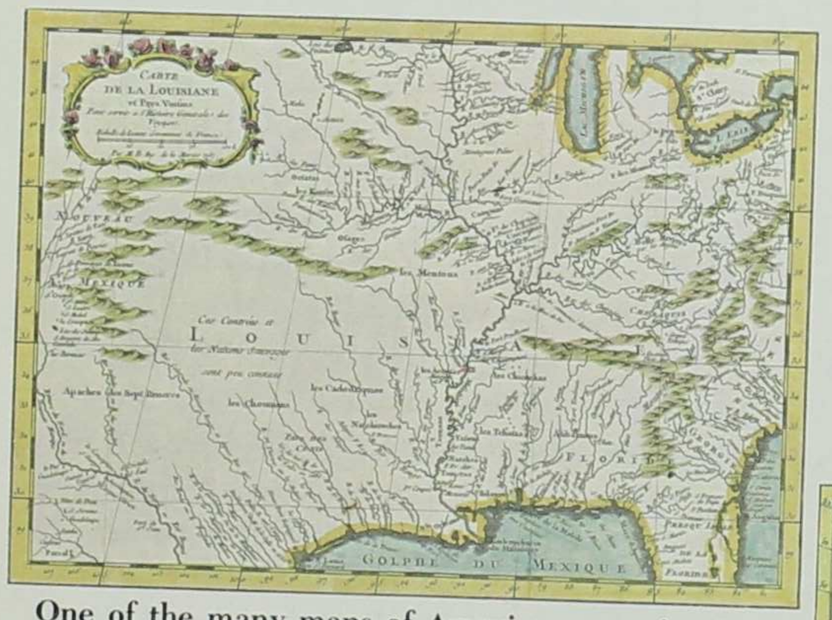

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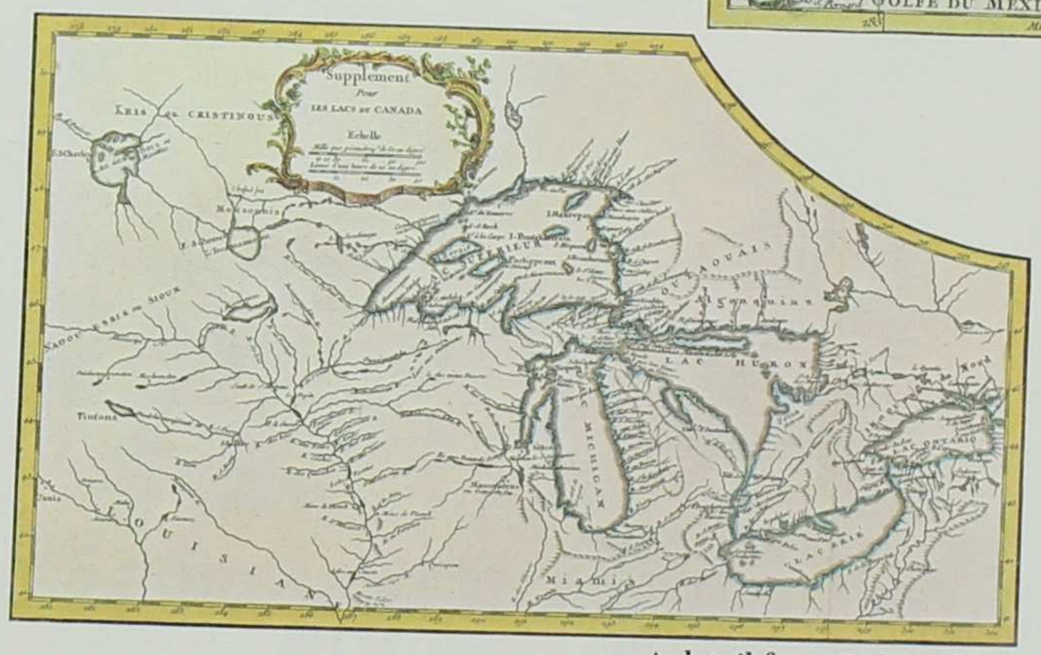
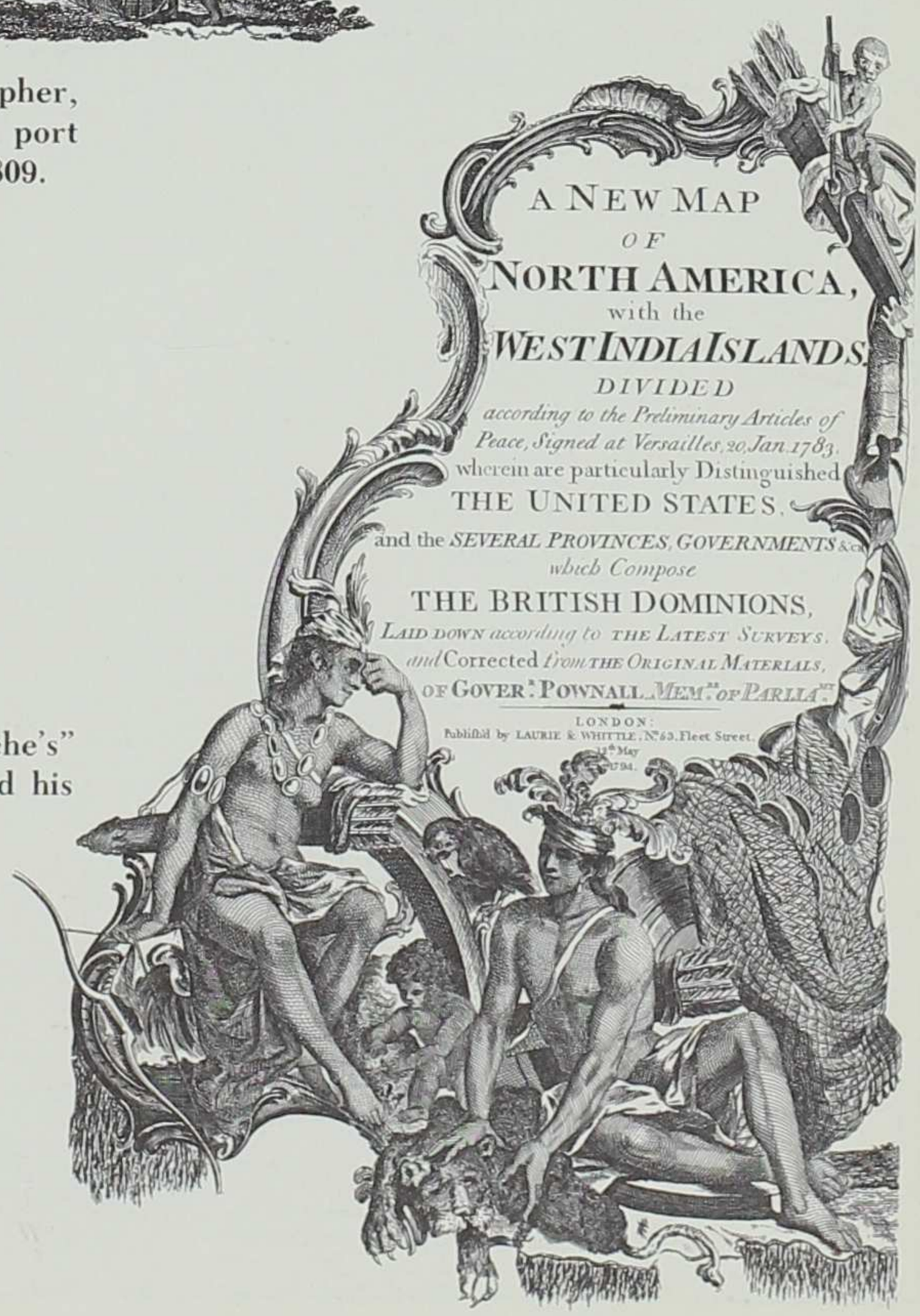


A detail from Robert de Vaugondys's 1755 map of New France.

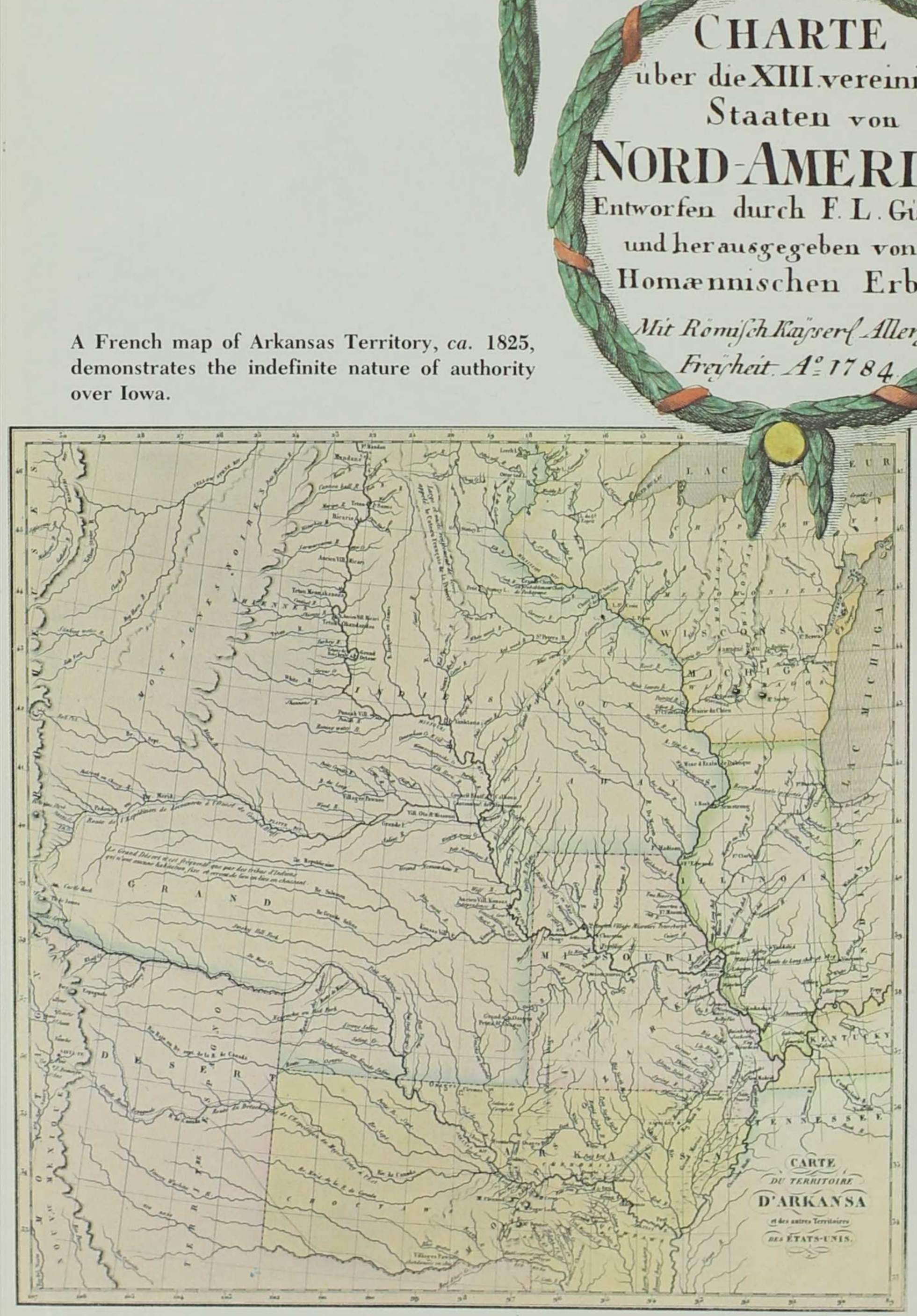
Plate of North America from Bradford's 1838 Atlas.

Faden, a highly respected British cartographer, furnished this engraving of an American port scene for his map of the United States in 1809.



Fact and fantasy contributed to this "cartouche's" depiction of the noble American native and his possessions.

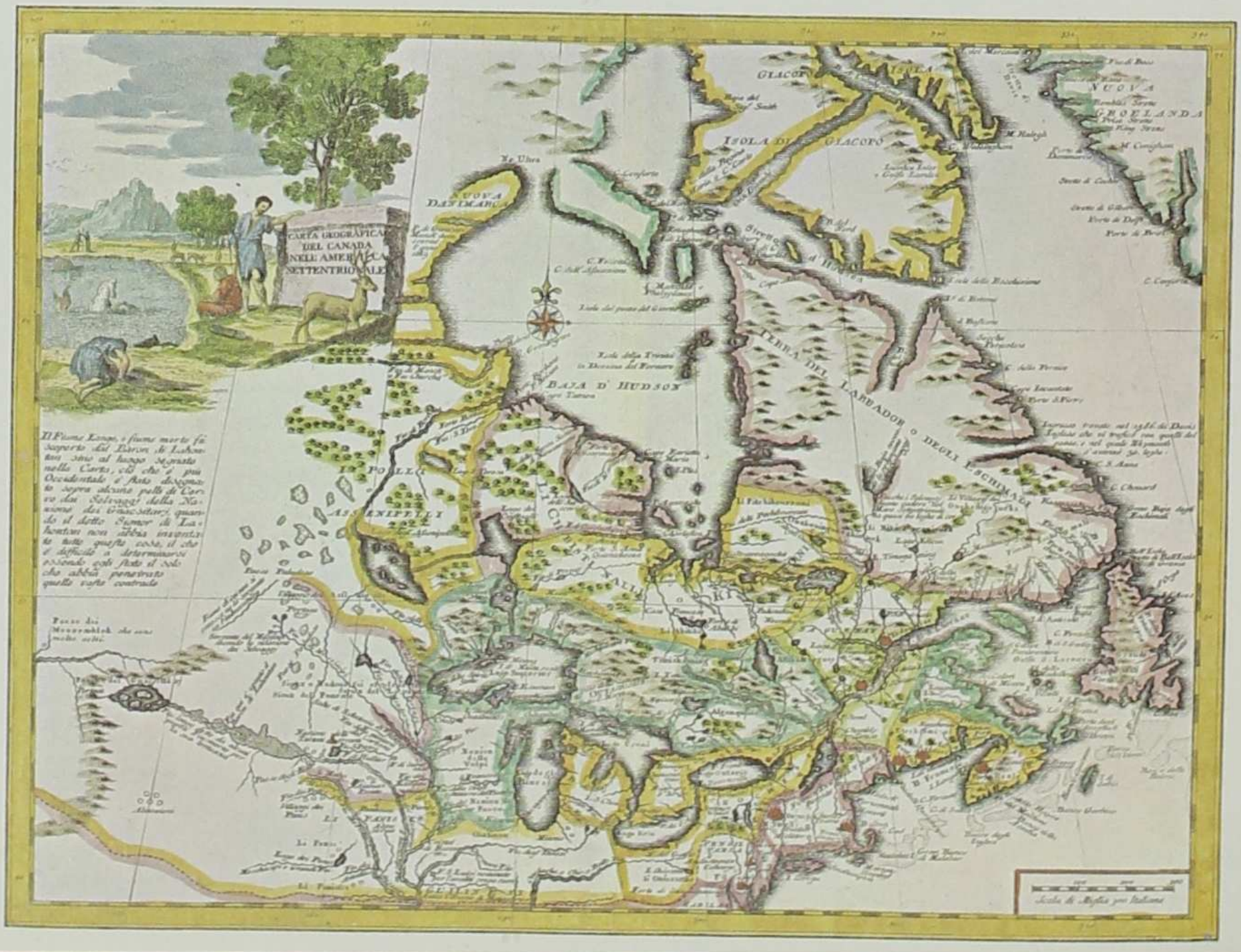
A French map of Arkansas Territory, *ca.* 1825, demonstrates the indefinite nature of authority over Iowa.

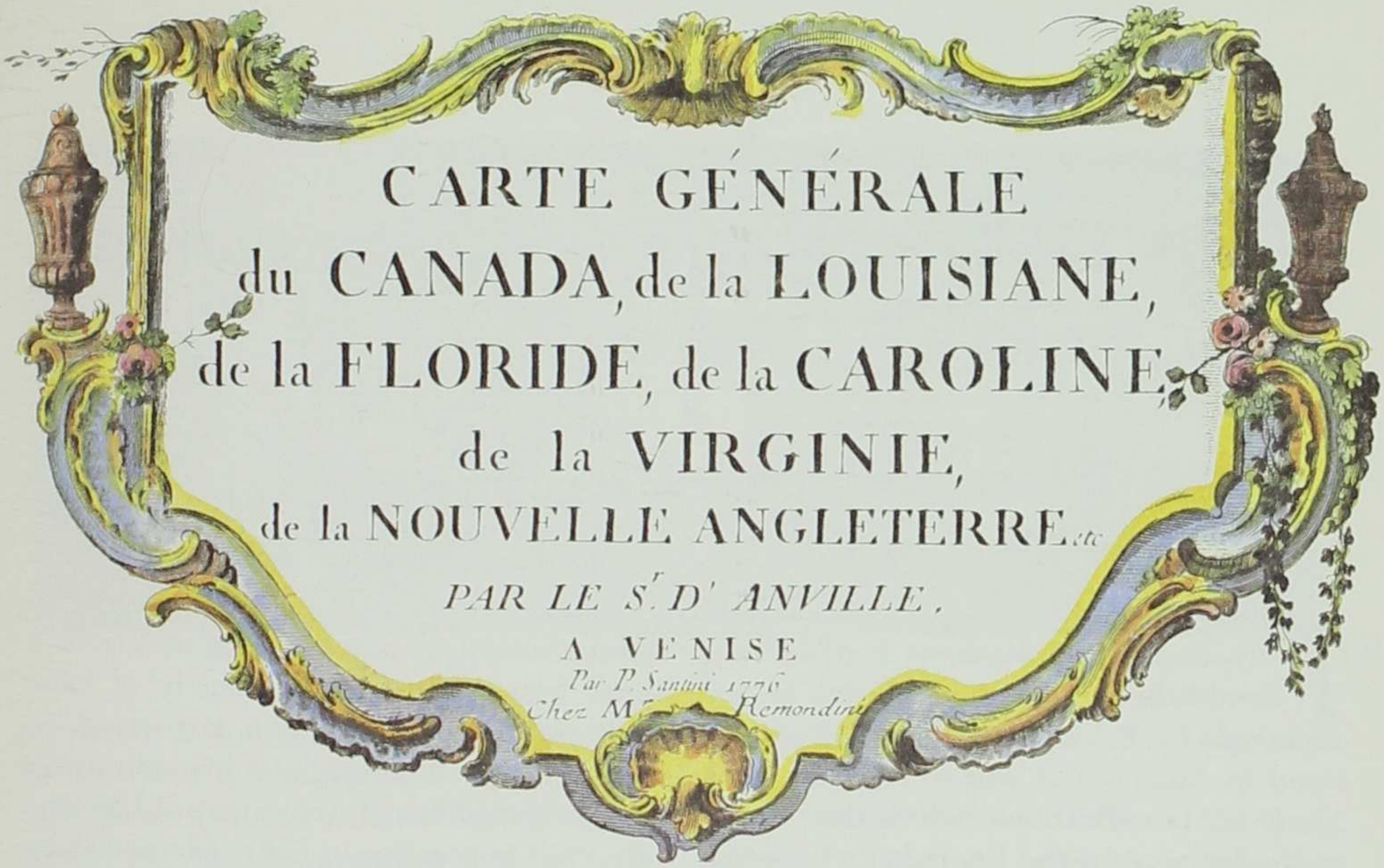


"Cartouches" were ornamental illustrations generally enclosing the map's title and other bibliographic information. Taken from a 1784 map, one of the first to reflect the existence of the United States, perhaps the "cartouche" suggests the mixture of war and peace in the area covered by the map.

Engravings of copper plates, especially those in Atlases, often caused maps to be years out of date when they were printed. Wilkerson, however, quickly produced this new map of North America showing the recently acquired lands of the Louisiana Purchase. Iowa's mountains have shifted again to be replaced by extensive meadows.

Seale's map of North America, issued in 1774, could have been produced as early as 1732. Territorial boundaries do not appear to be indicated, though the colors give the impression they were. The Des Moines (Moingona River) has again been stretched into lakes and the Morte River. Notice the placement and naming of Indian tribes.





A colorful "cartouche" from a 1776 Venetian map.

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The major sources for this article were: Gerald R. Crone, *Maps and their makers* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1968); Ronald V. Tooley, *Maps and map-makers* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1952); David Woodward, ed. *Five Centuries of map printing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975); George C. Groce & David H. Wallace, *The New York Historical Society's dictionary of artists in America, 1565-1860* (New Haven; Yale University Press, 1957); and Leland Sage, *A History of Iowa* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1974). Special thanks go to Loren Horton and Alan Schroder for their suggestions and comments.

Venetian map of 1740, showing a good knowl-
dge of the Great Lakes. A copy of a portion of an
arlier Delisle map, the language has been
hanged from French to Italian, a new "car-
ouche" has been added, and several new cities
ave been mapped. Notice the strange course of
ne *Fur dei Meingona* (Des Moines River).

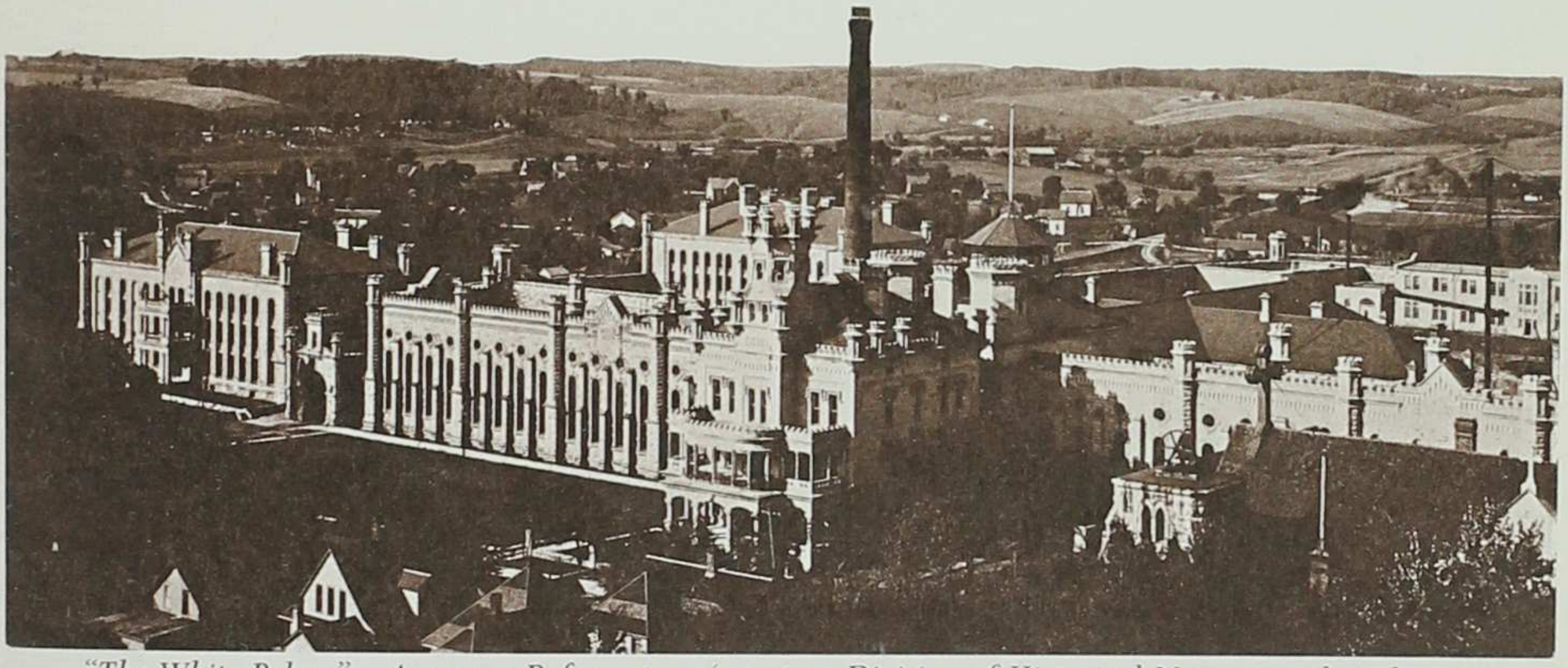
The White Palace of the West

By
Wanita A. Zumbrunnen

"To J. C. Dietz and others: Penitentiary established at Anamosa. Drink at my expense!, C. R. Scott." This telegram arrived in Anamosa at five o'clock on April 11, 1872, the afternoon before the official announcement by the Fourteenth General Assembly of a bill to build the Anamosa Reformatory or "the white palace of the West," a turn-of-the-century name derived from the building's imposing cut-stone interior. The construction of a new correctional facility was first suggested in 1868, when the State Prison Visiting Committee reported that the Fort Madison Prison was no longer large enough to handle Iowa's needs. Two years later, Governor Samuel Merrill recommended to the General Assembly that a new penitentiary be built in the northern part of the state. McGregor, Charles City, Marshalltown, and Anamosa were considered as possible sites.

The person most responsible for the eventual choice of the prison location was Senator John McKean of Anamosa. A native of Pennsylvania, McKean moved to Jones County in a two-horse wagon at age 19 with his brother, James. They pitched a tent in Scotch Grove township, camped in the woods during the winter, and in the spring fenced 40 acres of land and built a small frame house made mostly of local material. Later McKean returned to Pennsylvania to complete his education and then read law at Anamosa until he was admitted to practice in 1861. Elected state representative in 1866 and senator in 1870, McKean was known for his "honesty above bribery" and as "an able and influential legislator."

During the 1870 General Assembly, McKean called attention to the Governor's recommendation by presenting many petitions signed by citizens of Linn, Jones, and other northeast-Iowa communities for the establishment of a penitentiary near the stone quarries at Anamosa. The *Davenport Gazette*, the *Dubuque Times*, and the *Dubuque Herald* also favored an Anamosa location. The *Oskaloosa Herald* reported Anamosa's rapid population growth, from 1,000 to 5,000 in five years, and claimed this was a "healthy" factor in locating the institution. And in its February 3, 1870 edition, the *Anamosa Eureka* listed the advantages that Anamosa offered: many quarries; much stone; no heavy freighting required; abundant timber; water power — the Wapsipinicon River; and a railroad — the Dubuque Southwestern. Another inducement was announced in a speech by McKean to the Senate — Anamosa was



"The White Palace" – Anamosa Reformatory (courtesy Division of Historical Museum and Archives).

prepared to donate 160 acres for use as a farm on which to raise food.

McKean devoted much of his address to comparing the Iowa prison system with the financially self-sustaining correctional institution at Joliet, Illinois. Each prisoner at Fort Madison cost the state $100 per year. The Iowa prison required $20,000 of tax payers' money yearly to cover the difference between expenditures and receipts derived from the prisoners' labor. The reasons McKean gave for the unprofitable labor were the location of the prison, the type of work the prisoners performed, and the hard contracts under which they worked. He cited Sing-Sing Prison in New York and the prison at Columbus, Ohio as examples of institutions located near stone quarries where prison labor was successfully used to cut down construction costs. He then produced a letter from the state geologist attesting to the excellence of the stone near Anamosa and made a strong case for the need to locate the additional facility near a quarry where prison labor could be used. McKean also mentioned the profits made by commercial stone cutting and by the use of Anamosa stone in the construction of other state buildings. For the latter, he gave the proposed new capitol as an example.

In spite of McKean's efforts, the Iowa legislators failed to agree on a bill. Not until the 1872 General Assembly, when a second report of the Visiting Committee described the crowded conditions of Fort Madison and the extreme difficulty of enlarging its facilities because of its unfortunate location, did the legislators take action. The Committee, comprised of Senator Samuel McNutt and Representatives Olwen Mill and John Minino, closed its report with a strong recommendation: "We believe that the best interests of the state, in the matter, require that steps be taken during the present session, for the erection of a new prison at some point in the state where there are extensive quarries of good rock. Let such a site be chosen, and the surplus convicts at Fort Madison can be employed in construction of the new building. Let the penitentiary be located on such a site and the state need never be at the mercy of contractors for the prison labor. The establishment thus situated will be not only less expensive to the state, but may be made entirely self-supporting. We most earnestly recommend this subject to the attention of

the General Assembly."

On April 12, 1872 the Fourteenth General Assembly approved an act "to permanently locate and provide for the erection and control of an additional penitentiary" at Anamosa. Three commissioners were chosen to select the exact location, receive bids for and purchase "the best and most eligible quarry" of stratified stone near the Dubuque Southwestern Railroad and the Wapsipinicon River. Fifty thousand dollars was appropriated to cover the initial costs, but the purchase price of the quarry was not to exceed $15,000. Public notice was to be placed in the *Anamosa Eureka* or *Anamosa Journal.* The act also provided that no bid could be accepted until the state had secured a deed for 70 acres of ground, free of expense, on which to locate the buildings.

A comment in the *Eureka* indicated that in Anamosa the outcome of the bill had been in doubt: "Of course there is no little rejoicing among our citizens that the bill, so nearly 'laid out' in burial outfit yesterday, has finally passed." However, in its later comments on the passage of the bill, the *Eureka* reported that "the whole field had pretty much been abandoned to Anamosa for the intervening two years had made known the superior advantages of this point for a building of such character and the bill passed with comparative ease . . . Our members in both houses seconded by the presence and co-operation of B. F. Shaw, C. R. Scott, J. C. Dietz, G. W. Field, H. C. Metcalf and other leading citizens worked well for the measure and we have the result. Thus far we record its history. Eventually it may become as noted a prison as any on the continent . . . Let us hope it will be better conducted than are most and that it will reflect credit and no disgrace on the state."

To plan and implement construction of the new correctional facility, the General Assembly provided for a board of commissioners to which William Ure of Fairfax, F. L. Downing of Oskaloosa, and Martin Heisey of Fort Madison were appointed. Each member received $5 a day plus expenses. The Board first met at the Savery House in Des Moines on April 23, 1872 and elected Ure president and Downing secretary. Later, on May 7, the Board met at Anamosa where, despite rainy weather, the party was transported across the muddy Buffalo Creek by a couple of smart livery teams to inspect several quarry sites. Then the tired, wet, but congenial group eagerly attacked a banquet provided by Mr. R. N. Fowler at the Fisher House; a banquet not only welcoming the commissioners but also honoring Senators McKean, P. G. Bonewitz, and John Tasker for their efforts in behalf of the penitentiary project.

To learn more about the physical requirements of a penal institution, the Board decided to visit prisons in nine eastern states and Canada. On the tour they thoroughly examined prison grounds, buildings, and other accommodations and asked for information regarding discipline and treatment of prisoners. After returning to Iowa, the Board again met in Anamosa to consider locations for the prison and the quarry. It chose a site it considered to be "well drained" and "healthy" in a basin surrounded by higher land. Choosing a quarry was more difficult — seven quarry owners had offered their property for sale. To aid in the decision, the commissioners consulted David Graham, an authority on the "qualities and capacity of quarries near Anamosa." After careful consideration, he recommended a tract of 61 acres with a Dubuque & Southwest Rail-

Interior court-yard at Anamosa, with a cell house on the left and laundry and machine shops on the right (courtesy Division of Historical Museum and Archives).

road right-of-way through the southern part. The land belonged to Dr. N.G. Sales, and on June 12 the Board voted two-to-one to purchase it. The citizens of Anamosa agreed to donate the land between the tract and the corporate limits of the city if the commissioners would recommend to the 1874 General Assembly a payment of $2,500 for an additional five acres, a condition the Board accepted.

With the site chosen, the next step was to choose a building plan for the prison complex. The Board examined blueprints submitted by L. W. Foster & Company of Des Moines, selecting the one they "deemed most suitable" for future enlargement (by extension or wings) while still preserving the symmetry of the design and having sufficient capacity to confine and employ 500 prisoners. Maintaining the right to alter the plans if necessary, the Board paid $2,500 for the initial drawings, and agreed to pay an additional $1,200 when the ground and elevation plans were finished. Also the Foster Company was to receive $10 per day plus expenses for supervising the construction.

The drawings called for a 636-by-933-foot structure of cut stone. In the center of the front was to be the warden's house, 50-by-60 feet and five stories high, the last story to be a tower rising 111 feet above the base. Behind the warden's accommodations would be the guard house and, in the rear, a guard's rotunda. Opening off the rotunda on both sides would be cell-rooms, each 52-by-190 feet and each containing 248 cells. In the rear of the rotunda was located the dining room, and over that the chapel, schoolroom, library, and hospital (an area connected to the center building by an enclosed corridor). All the

rooms were to be well-lighted and fully-ventilated. Surrounding the grounds would be a 22-feet high wall, 6-feet thick at the base and 4-feet thick at the top.

In August 1872 lumber was purchased from Curtis Brothers & Company and the W. G. Young & Company of Clinton to build a high stockade around yard space and temporary buildings at the prison and the quarry. Under the supervision of Heisey, work on a transitory cell building began on September 9 with hired labor. But work progressed slowly until the middle of October when Ed Holt, "master mechanic and builder of the first class," took over. By December 13, the north wing was enclosed and temporary wooden cells installed. At that point, major construction work was suspended until spring because appropriations were exhausted and the weather made construction work difficult. The expenditures so far included 64 iron cell doors purchased at a cost of $3,000.

In an attempt to deal with the depleted finances, the Board of Commissioners made several recommendations on March 7, 1873. First it resolved to incur no further expense until the meeting of the next General Assembly. Then, to pay for the ongoing cost of employees and guards (the Board was determined to make the prison operable as soon as possible), it recommended the quarrying and selling of stone commercially. On April 7, 1873 work began in the quarries with hired labor.

About a month later, on May 13, 20 men were transferred from Fort Madison to Anamosa. John Barlow, prisoner No. 1, was 5-feet-5¾-inches tall, weighed 130 pounds, had a light complexion, sandy hair, a beard, and dark brown eyes. His other distinguishing features included a thumb missing on his left hand and a tattoo of a woman dancing with a garland over her head on his right arm. He and the other "convicts" were joined by No. 21, the first man sent directly to Anamosa after receiving a sentence in Jones County. (No. 21's name was not revealed in the 1910 history of the county from which the information is taken, because his name would disgrace his living relatives.)

Twelve of the men were put to work at the quarry, while the rest labored in the prison yard, grading grounds and doing other such work. Only one, the single mechanic in the group, knew how to cut stone. Construction plans were slowed considerably because the prison lacked sufficient staff to teach and assist the prisoners. However, two of a group of convicts who arrived from Muscatine County on September 5 could lay stone. The convicts began to construct the walls that would surround them in the future, and on September 30, started work on the first permanent building. Prisoners No. 7, D. J. Wie, and No. 14, Ed Sheridan, laid the first stone. This large two-story building was later used as dining-room, chapel, library and hospital.

Besides the problem of untrained labor, Heisey, who was elected Acting Warden by the Board, had difficulty supporting each prisoner on the $8.33 allowance provided by the state. This amount, based on a scale developed at Fort Madison, did not take into consideration the Anamosa institution's lack of bedding, clothes, and provisions, all of which were available at the old prison. Soon there was a $6,000 debt — a result of building expenses, guard and employees salaries, and the inability to sell enough stone to cover these costs. However, Heisey considered the grading and the stone work done by the prisoners

worth at least $1,000, so the actual indebtedness was less than $5,000.

The prison officials also found it difficult to adequately guard the men working at the quarry. On Monday afternoon, June 2, 1873 three prisoners disarmed a guard and escaped. C. C. Hardin (serving seven years for robbery), Charles Hatfield (serving two years for burglary), and Andrew Costa (serving two and a half years for larceny) had been loading flat cars in two groups of six men each, with one man guarding each group, when they jumped the guard, took his gun, and disappeared into the dense undergrowth in a northeasterly direction. The Sheriff, the Constable, and 15 to 20 citizens quickly started in pursuit. That night a heavy rain hindered the search, and although a $300 reward was offered, nothing was seen or heard of the men until a year later. On July 23, 1874 the prison received word that one of the men, Costa, had been recaptured. A former Fort Madison guard W. Roberts was sitting in his meat market in Moberly, Missouri, reading, when he was interrupted by a man inquiring: "Have you any bologna?" Before he could answer, the man turned, darted out the door, and started off at a brisk walk. Roberts, recognizing the man as a Fort Madison transfer to Anamosa, notified the Marshall. Caught and returned, Costa was sentenced to an additional year.

Two other prison breaks occurred in the first few years of the institution's existence. In August 1873, Morgan Holmes, convict No. 3, escaped, but was soon recaptured by the Sheriff of Buchannan County. (The Sheriff received a reward of $50.) Two years later, three more prisoners escaped. Carelessly shackled convicts James Tracy and George C. Williams overpowered two guards when they returned from work with a quarry gang of 25 men. Taking the guards' weapons, the two prisoners crossed the river and headed south while other guards fired at their retreating backs. In the confusion another prisoner, David McCarl, managed to slip away also and was not recaptured.

Tracy and Williams' capture at Tampico, Illinois almost ten days later, is an interesting story. Shortly after their escape Tuesday evening, they committed various minor "depredations" in the vicinity of Mechanicsville. The following Sunday, they struck one of their old haunts near Clinton, a "house of ill fame." By Sunday night they reached Prophetstown, broke into a store, and fitted themselves out in "two first rate suits of clothes each." Also at some point they had their hair cut all around (prison regulations required the hair sheared close on one side to discourage escape attempts). Monday night, while in Tampico, they robbed a jewelry store, entered several homes, stole silverware and a wallet. The wallet was found the next morning near a corncrib, minus $15. Because of rain, the robbers were easily tracked from house to house and, finally, to the railroad tracks.

"Four citizens, probably those robbed, got a hand-car and started in pursuit. Mile after mile they sped on and still the tell-

Note on Sources

The material for this article was provided by reports and documents located in the Division of Historical Museum and Archives in Des Moines, the State Historical Society in Iowa City, and the Masonic Library in Cedar Rapids. Those at the State Archives include: *U.S. Biographical Dictionary — Iowa* (1878), *Des Moines Bulletin — Legislative Supplement*, *Warden Biennial Reports*, and *General Assembly Reports* (13th through 15th). Primary sources at the Historical Society were the Haynes Manuscript — A History of Iowa Prisons, and the Anamosa *Eureka* (1870-75). Valuable source material in the Masonic Library included the Bulletin of Iowa State Institutions, Penitentiary, Anamosa, Vol. 1, 1873-87, and the "History of the Anamosa Penitentiary" by Judge H. M. Remley. In addition, the *1910 History of Jones County* found in Mt. Mercy College Library was helpful.

The east cell house at Anamosa (courtesy Division of Historical Museum and Archives).

tale footprints preceded them. Finally, twelve miles southeast of Tampico, the pursuers overtook the two men, passed a short distance, then stopped and ordered them to halt. Refusing, Williams drew a revolver on the man who gave the command and snapped the trigger but failed to discharge the weapon. The citizen reciprocated his good intentions with interest, firing on Williams instantly, the ball striking off, but of course knocking him down. The capturers at once sprung upon the rogues, relieved them of weapons and tied them with ropes." The revolver Williams used was the same one he took from the guard when he escaped. Williams had pulled the trigger on an empty barrel; four charges remained. The $15 and the silverware was retrieved, including napkin rings, which Williams had managed to slip under the end of a railroad tie.

The men were taken to a jail in Morrison, Illinois, where an interrogation by an attorney elicited quasi-truthful answers from Tracey.

> Where have you been working lately?
> Near Anamosa, Iowa.
> What was the name of the man you worked for?
> His name was Martin Heisey.
> How long were you in his employ?
> Nearly a year.
> How much a month did you get?
> We never made any definite bargain.
> Have you drawn any pay?
> Only what clothes I needed.
> Did you settle with Mr. Heisey when you left?
> No, Heisey was not there at the time.

However, when he learned that he and Williams were the key suspects in a murder near Tipton, Iowa, Tracy became con-

siderably agitated. His attorney, noting his alarm, asked if he hadn't recently escaped from the "hands of justice." Tracy answered yes and gave all the particulars of the escape.

Although Heisey and a deputy left for Tampico immediately after learning of the capture, the Sheriff of Whiteside County declined to turn over Tracy and Williams without requisition papers, which were in transmission. As a result of his refusal, Tracy and Williams managed to break jail by lifting a heavy flagging and digging under a foundation wall. A little over a month later, in the middle of December, Tracy was recaptured and sent to the Joliet prison for a few years. Then he was transferred to Anamosa to serve the 25-month balance of his three-year term. Nothing further was ever heard of Williams.

Considering the lack of security measures, it is surprising that during the first two years as few as seven prisoners escaped. Besides the opportunity provided by the quarry work, the prison compound itself invited escape attempts. The 16-foot board fence was originally two feet taller but, because of high winds, it had to be lowered.

Escape, parole, and serving time were not the only ways out of prison. On December 11, 1873 the first prisoner died at Anamosa. A memorandum in the prison records says: "This evening at half-past five o'clock George Williams, known as No. 5, was taken suddenly sick with paralysis on the left side. The doctor was sent for about nine o'clock. Following another attack on the right side, Williams became speechless and died at half-past ten o'clock . . . He was buried on an elevation facing the rising sun at the prison farm, where is now the prison cemetary. Deceased convicts whose bodies are not claimed by relatives and those not transferred to medical colleges under the present law are buried in this cemetary side by side in rows and their graves are marked with head and foot stones made by the convicts."

The interest the community of Anamosa took in the prisoners was not limited to escape attempts or death notices. The State did not provide prisoners with secular or religious instruction, but local citizens donated magazines and books and made further efforts to help educate the inmates. On August 6, 1873 the teachers and friends of the prison Sabbath School gave a picnic for the prisoners. "The inmates of the prison were taken out under the shady oaks of the spacious yard and were freed from all restraint, the arms of the guards being put out of sight. A good number of friends, both ladies and gentlemen, were invited and the teachers and those for whom the treat was especially intended, pitched quoits, played croquet, engaged in running, jumping, talking, joking and with the utmost freedom and to their heart's content. About five o'clock, the tables were set under the shade and the men invited to take right hold and make themselves perfectly at home . . . After the supper was concluded cigars were brought forth . . . When the excersises were brought to a close the prisoners warmly shook hands with their friends."

Attendance at the Sunday School was not compulsory, but it was at a sermon delivered by each of the town clergymen in turn so the "striped boys" could listen to the same preaching as the rest of the community. Because most of them were jailed for committing larceny and other lesser crimes, and because none of them seemed to be of the "desperate" sort, it was felt that some of them could become

Anamosa, town and prison, 1946 (courtesy Division of Historical Museum and Archives).

useful "ornaments of society." The discipline within the institution was considered excellent. Only five cases of insubordination had been reported. One young man, after he had served nine months for robbery and had been offered the "citizen's suit," $5, and transportation home, requested permission to remain until spring so he might finish learning the stone-cutter trade. Anamosa granted his request, and he remained among the detained, dressed in prison garb, earning two dollars a day for himself.

Calling the inmates "our prisoners" the *Eureka*, on July 23, 1874, noted the local reaction to David Nible, age 25 who, after serving a little over a year of a two year sentence, was pardoned by Governor Carpenter: "Mr. Nible has been one of the willing and trusted men of the institution and has for months past been doing all the teaming for the prison, passing along our streets daily, in the performance of his duties. He would very likely have been released next February on account of good behavior, but his faithfulness has been so marked that we are glad to learn he has been given his freedom."

At this time the prisoners were housed in the one completed, barely habitable building, designed to become eventually, the engine room. The pine-plank cells sat behind iron doors in four tiers. Each cell contained three bunks, making accommodations for 42 inmates. The south end of the building, used as a kitchen and dining room, provided necessary space for offices and storerooms. The food consisted mostly

of beef, potatoes, bread, beans, mackeral and codfish, varied by vegetables in season from a five-acre garden. On holidays prisoners received extras such as pies, cakes, and cookies. In spite of the limited diet, the harsh working conditions, the long hours and the primitive living conditions, the men were in good general health and had positive attitudes. When the General Assembly failed to make provisions for medical care, the Governor instructed the prison to employ a physician-surgeon.

In March 1874 over $20,000 was appropriated to meet the cost of operation over a two-year period. Although the amount was comparatively small, the supporters of the bill felt a decided victory had been gained in the establishment of the penitentiary as a permanent state institution. Six years had passed since the Fort Madison Prison was declared inadequate. Although much more time, labor, and financial support was necessary to complete the physical plant, by 1874 a new penal facility was successfully functioning at Anamosa. Now, over a hundred years later, prisoners and citizens still share the same town, separated by the locally-quarried stone walls of the "white palace." □

CONTRIBUTORS

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A "cartouche" from Guillaume Delisle's map of Canada and New France, ca. *1718.*