

Palimpsest

VOLUME 54

NUMBER 3

MAY / JUNE 1973



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PRICE—Free to members. Single issue—\$1.00

MEMBERSHIP—By application. Annual dues—\$5.00

LIFE MEMBERSHIP—\$150

HUSBAND AND WIFE JOINT LIFE MEMBERSHIP—\$200

ADDRESS INQUIRIES TO: State Historical Society,
402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240

USISSN 0031-0360

PALIMPSEST is published bi-monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City. It is printed in Dubuque and distributed free to Society members, depositories, and exchanges. This is the May/June 1973 issue and is Number 3 of Volume 54. Second class postage paid at Iowa City, Iowa and at additional mailing offices.

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L. Edward Purcell, Editor

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Cover: Jolliet and Marquette encounter members of the Illinois tribe, June 25, 1673. The meeting is here depicted in a diorama from the Historical Society's Toolesboro visitor center. (Photo by John Schultz).



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.

European Contact with Iowa: Jolliet and Marquette by Leland Sage

On June 17, 1673—or June 15, according to some authorities—Louis Jolliet, a woodsman, trapper, explorer, and map-maker, along with Father Jacques Marquette, a Jesuit priest-missionary, and five other companions moved out of the Wisconsin River onto the broad Mississippi. For the first time in recorded history the land of the future state of Iowa came under the gaze of men of European descent. This expedition marked the extension of the influence of New France nearly a thousand miles from Quebec and nearly four thousand from Paris.

The few details of the journey which have come down to us have been told many times. Important questions, however, still remain: what moved these men to explore the great river and why were they sent to this region?

Many historians have been content to narrate the voyage, describing the colorful and romantic aspects of the journey. Few have paid attention to the question of motivation. It has often been assumed that simple curiosity about a fabled river or a desire to increase the fur trade lay

behind the expedition, but the explanation is probably more complex. This was not a trip undertaken as a personal venture by Jolliet; even though financed as a private, profit-making enterprise, it was a government project. To understand the basic reasons for the trip we must understand French national policy and how it acted in the New World.

When Louis XIV, the "Sun King," came to active control of France in 1663, he spent considerable time and energy directing the affairs of New France. As a part of his national policy, Louis, and his able minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, attempted to unify continental France and

This brief examination of the larger aspects of the Jolliet-Marquette expedition could easily be diverted into a bibliographical essay rather than a narrative of the expedition. A good place to begin (but not to end) one's reading is Francis Parkman's classic, *La Salle and the Discovery of the West*, Chapter 5, a work available in many editions and mined shamelessly by many writers of secondary accounts. Instead of Parkman, I have used the recent writings of several Canadian historians which appear in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Volume I (Toronto: 1960), especially the introductory essay by Marcel Trudeau, "New France, 1524-1915." Even more helpful are the valuable works by W. J. Eccles, *Canada under Louis XIV, 1663-1701* (New York: 1964); *Frontenac the Courtier Governor* (Toronto: 1959); *The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760* (New York: 1969), and by Gustave Lanctot, *A History of Canada* (3 vols., Cambridge, Mass.: 1963-1965), especially Volume I. Laenas G. Weld, "Joliet and Marquette in Iowa," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, I (January 1903), 3-16, first demonstrated the error in Marquette's reckonings and placed the land fall at the mouth of the Iowa River instead of the Des Moines. Anyone especially interested in Father Marquette's career and his contributions to the expedition should consult the recent works by Jean Delanglez, S.J., Joseph P. Donnelly, S.J., and Raphael Hamilton, S.J., and the essay by J. Monet in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. Father Marquette's "Journal" is reproduced in the *Jesuit Relations* (many editions). Brilliant interpretive essays are those by Sigmund Diamond, "An Experiment in 'Feudalism': French Canada in the Seventeenth Century," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 18 (January 1961), 3-34, and William R. Taylor, "A Journey into the Human Mind: Motivation in Francis Parkman's *La Salle*," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 19 (April 1962), 220-237.

the overseas empire. One of the chief instruments of the crown was the policy known today as mercantilism. This theory of economics (of which Colbert was a leading proponent) held that all economic power should be concentrated in the hands of the mother country and especially in the monarch. Louis sought to be a king with absolute political power. To achieve this he wanted to control the economy of France and its empire.

The mercantilist policies put into effect by Colbert aimed, first of all, at breaking down internal barriers to trade within France itself, and then making the empire

part of a unified French system. Colbert wanted to build in New France a strong colony which could operate without reliance on trade with rival nations or their colonies. In other words, New France was not to be dependent upon trade with the British or the Dutch, but an integral part of a French system. The French in North America were to develop their colony in accord with the needs and wishes of the mother country. All this was part of the attempt to strengthen the political and economic position of France as a nation and was similar to what the British attempted to do with the Navigation Acts.



Joliet and Marquette on the Mississippi (Public Archives of Canada).



Louis XIV (Public Archives of Canada).

The ultimate goal for Colbert was a compact, profitable, French colony in North America which would function as a part of a cohesive empire, working as a single national unit.

In order to make New France fit this pattern, Colbert and the ambitious Intendant, Jean Talon, wanted colonists to develop a broad range of economic activities such as agriculture, mining, fishing, and lumbering. Unfortunately, the fur trade dominated economic life in New France. Farming and foresting did not develop as they did in the British colonies to the south, but easy profits were to be had through the trade in pelts. Because of the narrow base of the colony's economy, New France could not fulfill Colbert's hopes. Such a society could not fit itself into a world-wide political and economic organization.

Despite Colbert's wish that New France remain small and easy to control, the colony continued to grow in size. The bonds of the tightly knit colony he had

envisioned along the St. Lawrence were broken by far-ranging fur traders and by explorers and missionaries who braved the unknown, bringing back stories of their findings and claims they had made in the name of France. Jean Nicollet had gone as far as the present site of Green Bay in 1634. By 1641, the Jesuits had planted a mission and given a name to Sault Sainte Marie, while Father Claude Allouez had established a mission on Chequamegon Bay in Lake Superior, where he also acted as a copper scout for officials in Quebec. Grosseilliers and Radisson, the most daring of all, had gone all the way to what is now Minnesota. In 1671, Daumont St. Lusson and Nicolas Perrot had met with representatives of fourteen tribes and claimed their land for Louis XIV. Every explorer brought back information on what he had seen and heard. Most exciting of all were the reports of a great river somewhere to the west, by the name of "Michisippi" or some variation thereof. Father Claude Dablon, the Superior of the Jesuits, had heard so much and in such detail that in 1670 he was able to compile a fairly good description of the Mississippi without ever having seen it.

Other factors were enticing the French out of their confines. The English had managed to plant themselves on both sides of the French settlements, a situation which the French could never allow to stand unchallenged. On the north, English outposts were on Hudson Bay; on the south, they had displaced the Dutch in the Hudson River Valley from Manhattan to Albany. As if these flanking operations were not enough, there was constant danger from the powerful Iroquois confederation of the upper New York region. The

French had two alternatives: they could try to defeat the English and their Iroquois allies and drive them away entirely, or they could fight a holding action and at the same time expand their own territory to the west and south of the Great Lakes. If the latter strategy could be successfully employed, the English could be pinned against the Atlantic seaboard and co-existence might be possible.

The end was in sight for Colbert's plan of a small colony, centered on Quebec and Montreal. Despite his overall goals, the minister had always allowed for options. Expansion of territory was acceptable if there was danger of the land falling into the hands of enemies (like England), which would hurt French trade. There was also the constant hope of finding a southern route to New France, thus escaping the limitations of the St. Lawrence entryway, ice-bound as it was for half the year. These exceptions to Colbert's general rule eventually led to a new policy. As a leading historian of the subject states: "Ironically, it was Colbert himself who allowed the floodgates to French western expansion to be opened." If this reasoning is correct, the Jolliet expedition to the country beyond the Lakes was not merely a quest for a mysterious river nor an effort to increase the fur trade, nor were the explorations of his contemporary, La Salle, so intended. Jolliet and his co-explorers in the King's service were advance agents of imperialism, a logical and perhaps inevitable extension of mercantilism. The explorers were helping their country to multiply its resources, promoting better relations with the Indians, and, if the plans for an expanded and strengthened empire worked out, contributing to

the policy of containment of the hated English along the Eastern seaboard. As important as the Jolliet-Marquette expedition was in searching out the great river and expanding the fur trade, it was even more significant as a part of imperial French policy.

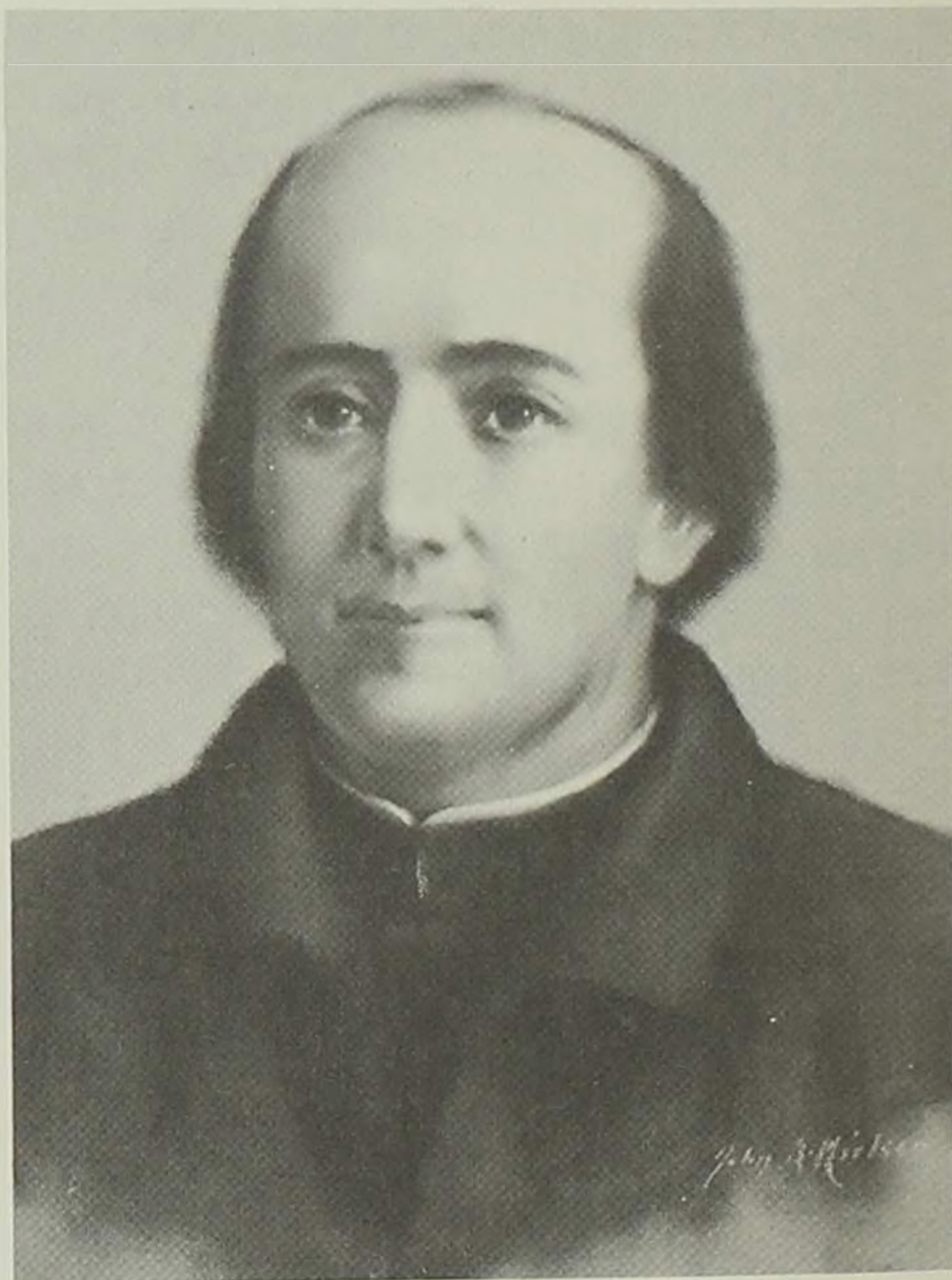
This view is strengthened by the role which the Intendant of New France, Jean Talon, played in planning the expedition, a role that has often been overlooked. Many writers have given the impression that Jolliet was a volunteer, self-directed explorer; many have given Father Jacques Marquette equal or superior billing as an actor in the drama of the expedition. Actually, Talon selected Jolliet as one who had won local fame as a woodsman and mapmaker. Forced to finance his own trip, Jolliet formed a profit-sharing company and out of the list of partners selected five men to be his companions and boatmen on the voyage. A seventh person



Jean-Baptiste Colbert
(Public Archives of Canada).

was to be a priest-missionary, a customary provision on most French and Spanish exploration ventures. Father Jacques Marquette, then stationed at St. Ignace, was the man selected by his immediate superior, Father Claude Dablon, head of the Jesuit order in Quebec. A man of undoubted zeal and great devotion to his calling, and a master of several Indian languages, Marquette eagerly accepted the call to serve with Jolliet.

On May 17, 1673, Jolliet and his six companions pushed off from St. Ignace, Father Marquette alternating as a passenger on the two barks. Going around the northern shore of Lake Michigan, then south into Green Bay, on to the mouth of the Fox River, the route can be followed on the accompanying map (p. 8). Up to this point it was the very same route followed by Jean Nicollet in 1634. Venturing into the Fox River took courage, although Nicollet had dared to do it on his memorable journey. Threading their way onward, they came to a point where the river became very shallow. Friendly Indians of the Mascouten (Muscatine) tribe gave information to Jolliet, some of it inaccurate, and others of the Miami tribe guided the party over a portage of a short distance (through present day Portage, Wisconsin), 2700 paces by Father Marquette's reckoning, 1.28 miles by modern measurement, and then out onto the waters of the Meskouing (Wisconsin) River. The date of departure was recorded as June 14, 1673. When they came to the Great River, with its enormous bluffs



Fr. Jacques Marquette (Marquette U. Archives).

covered with magnificent foliage, it was "with a joy I cannot express," in the words attributed to Father Marquette. The now accepted date is June 17, 1673, though some have figured it as June 15.

The "land across the river," as it seemed to the French explorers, could now appear on maps, by implication a part of the French Empire. But Jolliet's instructions called for exploration of the destination of the river. Apparently making the trip south by slow stages, considering that they had the current with them, Louis Jolliet and Father Marquette went ashore on June 25, a date proclaimed as the official date of the first European presence

on Iowa soil. Once presumed to be at the mouth of the Des Moines River by Marquette's reckoning, modern opinion holds that the landing was at the mouth of the Iowa River, near a spot known today as Toolesboro. Attracted, so the story goes, by the discovery of footprints in the mud, the leaders were eager to see the owners of these markings. After walking several miles inland, the two men came upon Indians, of the family known as Peorias, of the Illinois or Illini tribe, who treated them with great kindness.

After prolonged council meetings with their generous hosts, the two men returned to the river and led their party farther south. After narrow escapes from hostile Indians, and many a close call from disaster on the treacherous river, they finally reached a point where a large tributary, known to us as the Arkansas, emptied into the Great River. By this time they were convinced that they had solved the mystery of their river, that it led only to the Gulf of Mexico, not to the South Sea and to Cathay; furthermore, they heard that the mouth of the river was in the hands of their hated enemies, the Spanish. Rather than risk death at the hands of either the Spanish or Indians more hostile than any so far met, Jolliet reluctantly gave up the plan to go to the mouth of the river and set about the return journey. He boldly changed the route and followed the Illinois River to the Des Plaines, then portaged to the Chicago River and on into the water of Lake Michigan; then north to Sturgeon Bay and by portage to the

friendly waters of Green Bay. Near the present town of De Pere, Father Marquette left the party to go to the St. Xavier Mission while Jolliet and others went on to Sault Sainte Marie. Jolliet studied and amplified his notes during the winter and made a copy for safekeeping at the Jesuit Mission there.

The following spring (1674) Jolliet set out for Quebec. In the dangerous waters of the Ottawa River, almost at the end of his journey, his canoe capsized. Jolliet alone of his crew was saved; the metal chest containing his notes and maps went overboard along with all other mementoes of this trip. Thus it was that the most authentic evidence of this historic expedition, fraught with meaning for the future, was lost. By a stroke of misfortune, even the copy or copies which Jolliet had left in deposit at Sault Sainte Marie were



Louis Jolliet

destroyed in a fire. As a consequence of these two mishaps, Jolliet's description of the trip rests upon the notes and maps reconstructed from memory and from oral testimony which he could put into records at Quebec on affidavit.

As for Father Marquette, because of the physical exhaustion after the ordeal of the journey and illness resulting from an abused digestive system, and because of the priority he gave to a return mission to the Illinois country, his records were not immediately turned over to his superiors. Many historians, though not all, think that the account of the Mississippi expedition attributed to him was not wholly his own but an ensuing reconstruction of his notes by his superior, Father Dablon. For this reason and others, a bitter dispute has raged and still smolders, principally among Jesuit historians, as to Marquette's place in history.

Despite the annoying uncertainties due to the loss of key records, despite uncertainties of dates, distances, and locations, the meaning of the Jolliet-Marquette expedition seems clear. The journey was beyond question one of romance and drama. It was a voyage into the unknown which pitted seven men against nature and uncertainty. In addition, the explorers were important instruments of imperial policy worked out in the court of Louis XIV, four thousand miles away from Iowa. □



The route of the expedition (map by H. L. Nelson).

Utopia in the Midwest: the Old Order Amish and the Hutterites

by

Dorothy Schwieder

Riding a horse-drawn plow, breaking the rich, black soil of Iowa, an Old Order Amishman prepares the ground for his spring crop. He is a member of a community of likeminded people, intent on upholding their centuries-old dream of religious perfection. Several hundred miles away to the north and west, another farmer wheels his modern tractor with the latest equipment through the flat fields of South Dakota. This man, a member of the Russian Hutterite religious community, is alike in many ways to the Iowa Amishman. The Hutterites of South Dakota and the Amish of Iowa have shared a conviction that their chosen way of life could be reproduced and perpetuated on the soil of the Midwest.

Looking, as did many Americans, for land and freedom, the Amish Mennonites from Pennsylvania and Ohio were among the first settlers moving into southeastern Iowa in the 1840s, while Russian Hutterites migrated to the Dakota plains in the 1870s.

Both Amish and Hutterites succeeded in their venture and today represent two of the most successful utopian societies in

existence. Even though they appear in some ways to be strikingly different—Hutterites live communally and utilize the most modern farm machinery while Amish believe in private property and generally farm with outdated equipment—both groups share vitally important agricultural convictions and practices. Their common beliefs in the superiority of agrarian life, isolation from outside influences, self-sufficiency in economic needs, large families, mutual assistance, minimum education, and restriction of expenditures have enabled both groups to achieve economic and social stability.

The Amish material is based primarily on private interviews with members of the Old Order Amish society in Kalona, Hazleton, and Milton, Iowa. The material was supplemented by two pioneering studies of the Amish: Walter Kollmorgan's *The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Agriculture, 1942) and Calvin George Bachman's "The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County," *Pennsylvania German Society: Proceedings and Addresses*, ed. by the Society (Norristown: Norristown Herald, Inc., 1942). Invaluable to any Amish study is John Hostetler's penetrating work, *Amish Society* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970). Melvin Gingerich's *Mennonites in Iowa* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1939) includes several chapters on the Old Order Amish in Iowa. *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*, 1956, Vol. I-IV, contains a wide selection of material on both the Amish and Hutterites under such headings as education, history, and religious beliefs. John Hostetler's *Annotated Bibliography on the Old Order Amish* includes a complete list of published works on the Old Order group up to 1950. The major sources for the Hutterite material include the earliest analytical treatment by Lee Emerson Deets entitled *The Hutterites: A Study in Social Cohesion* (Gettysburg: Times and News Publishing Co., 1939). Also cited frequently are Hutterite material include the earliest analytical treatment by Stanford University Press, 1967); *The Hutterites in North America* by John Hostetler and Gertrude Huntington (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967); and by Victor Peters *All Things Common, The Hutterian Way of Life* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1965). The most recent work is Marvin P. Riley's *South Dakota's Hutterite Colonies: 1874-1969* (Brookings: Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 565, 1970), written to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary in South Dakota.



Spring plowing near Kalona, Iowa (Photo by John Zielinski).

The Amish

Amish Mennonites and Hutterites share a common origin of early-day adversities. Born of the religious upheavals stemming from the Protestant Reformation, both groups became immersed in the Anabaptist movement. Composed of many small, radical, protestant sects in early sixteenth century Europe, the Anabaptists believed in separation of church and state, and refused to take oaths. Today, the Amish and the Hutterites, along with other Mennonites, are the three surviving Anabaptist groups in North America. Because of their religious convictions they suffered severe persecution throughout their European history and both established patterns of migration to new lands whenever persecution and demands for change became overwhelming.

The parent group of the Amish—the Mennonites—originated in the early 1500s in Switzerland and were first called Swiss Brethren. Following an early Anabaptist reformer, Menno Simons, the Mennonites took his name and adopted his teaching as the fundamentals of their faith. The Mennonites failed to maintain unity, and after considerable internal dissension, they divided into several distinct branches, one of which is the Amish.

A major controversy arose among Mennonites in 1693 over the practice of shunning, a method of punishing members for the violation of church rules by totally avoiding them until they repented. Believing that his fellow churchmen had become too lax regarding shunning, Jakob Ammons, a Swiss Mennonite minister, advocated a most extreme position that shun-

ning should be upheld as rigidly as possible, even to the extent of wives and husbands refusing to live with their banned spouses. The controversy split most European Mennonites into two factions, and the group that remained with Ammons came to be known as Amish.

The Amish have always been an agrarian people, but were frequently made to farm the poorer land in Europe because they did not belong to established churches. They were forced, therefore, to use innovative farming techniques such as fertilization and crop rotation. While farming in the German Palatinate they learned to rotate crops in a four-year cycle. The European Amish were quick to experiment with new farming methods and quick also to share their knowledge with others of their faith.

Even with superior farming methods and rapid agricultural adaptability it is doubtful if the Amish could have continued in Europe. They lived in compact, tightly structured communities, and to

maintain their living pattern, they needed additional areas of new land. During the late 1600s and early 1700s, land became increasingly difficult to obtain in Europe. This, along with sporadic religious persecution, convinced the Amish to look to a totally new area for future settlement.

The first Amish came to America in the early 1700s in response to William Penn's invitation to settle his colony; within a few years they had moved to Lancaster County. Settlement in the region proved a wise decision because of excellent farming conditions; fertile soil, gentle rolling terrain, adequate rainfall, moderate temperatures, and a long growing season all aided the Amish. Applying to fertile Pennsylvania soil their European agricultural techniques, the Amish quickly became known as superior farmers.

The earliest Iowa Amish were from Ohio and settled for a brief time in Lee County. Within a few years they moved to Johnson County and settled in Washington Township. Like their Pennsylvania



Amish children leaving Sunday services (John Zielinski).



The entire family serves as a work force among the Amish (John Zielinski).

forefathers, Iowa Amish selected an excellent location. Southeast Iowa offered adequate rainfall, fertile soil, sufficient timber, and a growing season of approximately 170 days. The agricultural practices which had served them so well in Europe and in the eastern United States were applied to southeastern Iowa, bringing them the same economic prosperity they had previously experienced.

Around 1850, a significant division took place in Amish society when a segment of the group began to resist further innovation and change in their way of life. The resulting split produced two groups—the Old Order and the New Order. The Old Order were distinguished by their resistance to social change, non-conforming manner, religious worship in their homes, and use of the horse and buggy. Their wearing apparel also set them apart since women wore long dark dresses and white prayer bonnets and men grew beards and wore large-brimmed hats, collarless shirts, and front-drop trousers. At the time of the division, approximately one-third of the group remained with the Old Order. The Amish split affected Iowa communities as it did all other Amish settlements in America.

To understand Amish society and its commitment to the soil, requires knowledge of its religious conviction as well as its history. The Amish central values are religious beliefs and practices which permeate their daily lives. Amish occupations, hours of work, means and destination of travel, choice of friends and mates, and economic habits are all structured by religious beliefs and considerations. The Amish view themselves as divine in the sense that they are “a chosen people



Harvest with horse power in southeast Iowa (John Zielinski).

of God.” To the Amish the only acceptable occupation is farming. One reason, of course, is that they have never known any other environment, but more important is their religious belief that as farmers they live closer to God and can better serve Him in their rural way of life. They consider themselves excellent farmers and feel there is a “special kind of divine blessing” responsible for their success.

Their rural setting enables them to better maintain other religious convictions as well. They believe that God desires them to be “not conformed to this world” (Romans 12:2), “not unequally yoked with unbelievers” (II Corinthians 6:14), and to be a “peculiar people” (Titus 2:12); they must therefore live apart from non-Amish people as much as possible. As true Christians they must shut out evil conditions by turning away from worldly things. This leads specifically to the view that cities are centers of evil and must be avoided. In addition, marriages with outsiders are forbidden.

Their religious convictions also affect their farming methods. If an Amishman farms in a way that causes the soil to lose its fertility, it is considered as sinful as adultery or theft. The matter is brought before the church membership, for they believe that robbing the soil of its fertility is a sin against both God and man.

These convictions combined with a rural way of life have enabled Amish people to successfully resist change in their social and religious behavior. From this background "a mentality has developed that prefers the old rather than the new." Living in compact settlements where similar customs and a strong sense of community and mutual aid exist, they have very successfully maintained a "slow-changing society, still reminiscent of peasant life several centuries ago." (Hostetler, *Amish Society*, p. 11).

The Hutterites

The Hutterites became established in 1528, several years prior to the formation of Mennonite congregations. Before migrating to the new world, Hutterites lived for 350 years in Europe where they founded major settlements in Moravia, Slovakia, Transylvania, and Russia. Early in their history they adopted the principle of communal property believing that if they held "all things common" they practiced the one true religion and hence experienced a superior life. Alternating between prosperity and persecution and at times finding their membership reduced to a mere handful, the Hutterites nevertheless managed to survive and continued their religious communal practices throughout their European existence.

Originating in Moravia, the earliest

Hutterites were soon forced to leave the country because of religious persecution. After the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, they returned to their Moravian homes and remained there throughout the sixteenth century. Surrounding manorial lords soon recognized the Hutterites' craft skills and invited them to settle on their estates. Once on the estates, Hutterites established settlements called *Bruderhofs* which enabled them to better follow their religious-communal convictions. Living conditions were arranged to facilitate the Hutterites' desire for isolation and communism. Each *Bruderhof* was a community in itself and usually consisted of several large, three-story buildings and several smaller houses arranged around a village square. The ground floor contained rooms for community living, such as dining hall, kitchen, and nursery, while the upper floors contained private living quarters for each family. The Hutterites in each *Bruderhof* strove for self-sufficiency, and, with their own fields, woods, ponds, and workshops, they often achieved their goal. Each settlement had a manager, a member appointed to handle the business matters of the *Bruderhof*, which consisted of buying and selling goods, and making work assignments. Within their community most occupations were represented: masons, blacksmiths, sicklesmiths, dyers, shoemakers, furriers, wheelwrights, saddlers, cutlers, watchmakers, tailors, weavers, glass and rope makers, brewers, and other occupations. Under these conditions the Hutterites prospered and attracted many new members. They often refer to this period as the Golden Age.

With the coming of the eighteenth century, prosperity faded as dominant reli-

Left, a social gathering of Amish women. Upper right, a well-kept Amish farm. Lower right, Amishmen in conversation (Photos by John Zielinski).



Upper left, Hutterite men at a communal and segregated meal. Lower left, Hutterite carpenter in his shop equipped with power tools. Lower right, leisure time (Photos courtesy of Marvin Riley, S. Dakota State U., Experiment Station).



gious groups began once more to persecute the small sect. Moravian officials eventually expelled all Hutterites and for the next 150 years they suffered extreme persecution as they wandered eastward, settling for a time in Transylvania and later Slovakia. Pressures from political and religious authorities and the Turkish-Russian war reduced their numbers. Finally the Hutterites moved to the Russian Ukraine where they were promised freedom to practice their way of life. Movement into this area required some adjustments, however, in the Hutterites' economic activities. The region lacked resources and markets for their craft products but contained a great abundance of available land. The result was heavier emphasis on agricultural production, a practice which has continued to the present. Even with de-emphasis on craft work the Brethren remained highly self-sufficient through home production.

In 1870, after 100 years of considerable prosperity in Russia, the Czar began persecutions anew. The group migrated once again, this time to the New World and the plains of southeastern Dakota.

Throughout their European existence the Hutterites' religious and social beliefs changed very little; following their migration, life in America continued much the same as they had experienced it in Russia. Believing that God sanctioned their way of life and desired them to live communally, they also believed that they must practice nonresistance, isolate themselves from the world, live in a simple manner, and refuse to take any oaths except to God. These beliefs—called Central Beliefs—were set down in the sixteenth century and still guide the Hutterites today.

In 1874, sparsely settled Dakota Territory offered the Hutterites land as well as an unstructured social environment where they might isolate themselves from worldly influences and continue their Old World ways. This was a period of extreme hardship, however, as Dakota proved a hostile environment to settlers throughout the 1860s and early 1870s. Moving into an area traditionally characterized by marginal rainfall, lack of timber, blizzards, hail, and prairie fires, the settlers also experienced a period of extended drought. Because of geographical and climatical conditions in Dakota, settlers discovered that farming required more capital than in prairie states like Iowa. Farmers faced initial costs of purchasing food, farm equipment, fencing materials, livestock, housing materials, and well digging. To compound farmers' problems, it was often difficult to secure credit, and farm prices remained low. The drought and natural adversities of the region greatly reduced crop yields and many of the earliest farmers admitted defeat and headed back east.

While other early Dakotans were giving up in despair, the Hutterites quickly adjusted their economic institutions to the plains environment. The Hutterites were not typical pioneers because unlike the average pioneer setting up an individual household, the Brethren came as a "large scale diversified enterprise." (Bennett, *Hutterian Bretheren*, p. 165). In the areas of land, labor, and capital, the Hutterites had a decided advantage over their neighbors. The exact amount of money brought by them from Russia is not known, but it was obviously substantial since they purchased land rather than utilizing the

Homestead Act. With large amounts of capital the Hutterites purchased extensive acreages and quickly diversified their farming operations. Within the first year of their operations they were experiencing economies of large scale farming and hence greater economic stability. Moreover, Hutterites continued their European practice of "selective adoption" whereby they adopted technological changes in farm machinery and methods without any corresponding change in their religious attitudes or behavior patterns. In this way the Hutterites transplanted their European society—a fully developed social, economic, and religious system—to the hostile Dakota plains with minimal adjustment problems.

Thus, beginning originally as Anabaptists and quickly adopting the "community of goods" principle, the Brethren have successfully retained their traditional society for 350 years in Europe and almost 100 years in the United States. Throughout their European experience—in Moravia, Transylvania, Slovakia, and Russia—when confronted with demands for change, they have chosen instead to forego land and possessions and sought new frontiers where they might continue their old ways. In spite of 300 years of persecution and continued relocation, the Hutterites established set religious beliefs and community behavior that resulted in strong cohesive ties and clear-cut goals for their future. Immigrating to the United States, their religious-communitarian society not only survived the hostile Dakota environment

in the 1870s but the Hutterites initiated a policy of expansion that they have continued to the present.

Amish and Hutterites Today

The history of the Amish and Hutterites in the New World is a story of success. As it did for so many others, America offered these two utopian societies available land and freedom. Bringing with them from Europe tightly structured, well-developed, economic and religious systems, both groups have succeeded in maintaining stability in the United States. In comparing their societies today, similar economic patterns appear that were first evident in their Old World existence: they share agrarian based, agrarian dominated lives which are tradition oriented, and very slow to change.

The great, all encompassing feature of Amish and Hutterite societies is their belief in the superiority of agrarian living. Their religion demands that they work as farmers, and it is this foundation that makes possible most of their other common economic practices. A rural environment allows them separation from the outside world and makes possible a high degree of economic self-sufficiency. In a rural setting with a minimum of economic expenditures and limited formal education, their large families produce an abundant labor supply and are assets rather than liabilities. Their simple manner of living allows them to tightly restrict all expenditures. The Hutterites' communal

pattern and the Amish policy of mutual assistance provide a pooling of community resources that results in greater strength and solidarity. Without the agricultural setting it is doubtful that either group could survive.

Hutterite and Amish families strive to be as self-sufficient as possible and both groups exhibit near self-sufficiency in food and clothing needs. Large gardens and orchards (wherever climate permits) are considered essential. During the summer months, wives and children spend many hours planting, hoeing, and harvesting the produce. Food is then canned and provides the family with a year's supply of vegetables and some fruit. In many Amish homes, canning is a family affair and all members help out. The families' meat supply is also provided at home with seasonal slaughtering of livestock, and chickens are a part of all farmsteads. The Hutterites' food production methods are much the same only carried out on

a larger scale. Self-sufficiency is equally evident with clothing needs as Amish and Hutterite wives and daughters make most, if not all, of their families' garments. With their unchanging styles, an article of clothing is never discarded but handed down from one family member to the next and used until it is totally worn out. These activities have several important results: first, they significantly reduce expenditures, particularly in view of the large number of children. Second, these activities maintain families as productive units. The family not only functions as a unit with a sense of togetherness, but the family unit takes on increased importance. Amish and Hutterite families have not suffered disintegration through loss of function as have so many other American families.

One source of self-sufficiency is the large family which assures an ample labor supply. Children among the Hutterites are quickly taken into the community's life



Laundry soap is homemade in Hutterite colonies (left), but the washing is done in the most modern machines (Marvin Riley).

and assume responsibilities at an early age. Although less structured, the Amish also encourage their children to begin work early, a custom which allows the Amish to reject labor-saving devices because their many children provide adequate hand labor.

The children's role as well as other features of Amish and Hutterite life makes possible the two groups' policy of restricted expenditures. In Hutterite life the "ideal of austerity" governs acquisitions. They believe that ownership of personal possessions is sinful, and they buy only absolute necessities such as farm implements or items they cannot produce. Television sets and radios are regarded as worldly and therefore forbidden. This results in increased savings for the entire colony which can be used later to finance additional colonies. Hutterites make a distinction, however, between personal possessions and adoption of economic and technical devices which they believe have a useful function in colony life. Believing that their very existence depends on their use of large, modern farm machinery, most Hutterite colonies have more up-to-date equipment and processing methods than their non-Hutterite neighbors. The Hutterites thus believe that their adoption of such new technology as larger combines and tractors, conserves rather than destroys their way of life. An exception, however, concerns Hutterite women. A strong effort is made to prevent their work habits from changing, so adoption of new equipment for gardening, painting, and domestic work is restricted.

The Amish also practice consumption austerity; expenditures are sharply limited as money is spent only for necessities.

Their religious beliefs prohibit spending on jewelry, nonbiblical storybooks, commercial entertainment, cosmetics, and haircuts. They are more selective in their spending habits than the Hutterites as they reject not only worldly devices like television sets and radios, but also electricity, telephones, and automobiles.

The Amish are particularly frugal about the purchase of farm machinery and weigh expenditures very carefully. Unless there is an absolute need for a new or different implement, it is not purchased. In the Kalona area, the average amount invested in machinery per farm has been estimated at approximately \$1,500. Most machinery is about forty or fifty years old, but will continue to be used as long as it can be repaired. Amishmen are highly adept at fashioning replacement parts, since in many instances new parts are no longer available. Many Amish farmers use horses for field work so equipment needs are simplified and the life of equipment definitely prolonged.

In observing similarities between Amish and Hutterites, it appears that one area of incompatibility is the basic economic organization of the communities—Hutterites' communism and Amish private property holdings. Upon closer observation, however, differences are minimized. While Hutterites hold everything common, Amish people practice a high degree of mutual assistance that results in what could be termed a semi-communal society. It is one of the most significant advantages the Amish enjoy in maintaining their economic stability.

The Amish practice of mutual aid extends to all areas of their lives, but perhaps is most significant in regard to their



Hutterite colonists farm the Great Plains with the latest and most efficient diesel tractors (Marvin Riley).

financial needs. Young Amishmen desiring to purchase their own farms can depend on assistance from their families as well as other Amishmen. Sometimes the son or son-in-law receives the farm as an outright gift; in other cases they purchase it but at a much lower price than if sold to a non-Amishman. When money is loaned to a family member the interest rate is about half the rate charged by a commercial firm. Money loaned to non-family members is slightly higher.

Mutual aid is beneficial to Amish people in other financial areas as well. Amishmen do not believe in commercial insurance, but have an agreement among church members that covers loss of farm buildings due to fire or windstorm. The farmer suffering the loss will pay one-fourth the cost himself and the remaining three-fourths is divided among other church members. Settlement is usually

reached within sixty days. When an Amishman borrows from an outside source, church members draw up an agreement in which they guarantee the repayment of the loan. This is then signed by the farmer requesting the loan and the bishop of the church district. If Amish families are unable to pay medical bills or other expenses these are paid by the entire church district. The matter is handled by the bishop who collects the bills, assesses each family in the district according to its ability to pay, and then reimburses the creditor.

The results of the Amishmen's mutual aid policy is a tightly knit, unified community where each family, although operating as a separate unit, has the backing of all community members and potential use of all community resources. It is a practice which approximates to a significant degree the communal organization



An Amishman taking hay to the barn (John Zielinski).



Hutterite youths at a similar task (Marvin Riley).
of the Hutterites.

In the area of education Amish and Hutterites share methods and goals through which they seek to maintain their unchanging ways. Since education of the young is a major way of maintaining their way of life, it must be controlled and limited. Both groups believe that education beyond the eighth grade is unnecessary and possibly dangerous. Hutterites maintain that further education will dis-

courage or weaken the fear of God in their children. They place heavy stress upon the education of their children as a means of instilling in them obedience to God and indoctrinating them in their communal religious ways. The Hutterites maintain their own colony schools but, in compliance with state law, hire a certified individual to teach what they refer to as "English School." They view the state-required educational system as contrary to their goals and counteract the influence wherever possible. Before the regular school session, children attend one-half hour of "German School" where they learn the German language, catechism, history, and beliefs of their people. At the end of the day, following "English School," the children remain for an additional half-hour of "German School." This system has been described as a

"blanket of counter-indoctrination" which surrounds the English school session. (Deets, *The Hutterites*, p. 46).

The Amish maintain that their children do not need any education beyond eighth grade to be competent farmers, nor do their children need subjects like the new mathematics. They contend that they teach the four Rs—reading, writing, arithmetic, and respect—and that is sufficient. They maintain rural parochial schools, but in many instances their teachers are not certified. Some Amish attend public rural schools, but only where the other children are Beachy Amish or Conservative Mennonites. They have strenuously resisted attempts to send their children to public schools. Like the Hutterites, Amish believe that limited formal education is a tool to further their own social-religious behavior as well as to achieve the rudiments of basic education, and where they maintain their own schools, religious training is incorporated into the curriculum.

Summary

In a rapidly changing world, the Amish and Hutterites exercise time-proven traditions and beliefs which enable them to retain a great many of their Old World ways. With the exception of Hutterites' constant adoption of new farm technology, the two societies live much the same as they did centuries ago. Both are part of the American utopian movement because of their shared convictions that they are a chosen people and are living a superior life, but while most utopian groups have hoped to change society, Amish and Hutterites have desired only

to maintain the status quo. Their great need has been land and isolation and, at the time of their respective migrations, both were plentiful in America.

The location of their settlements had far-reaching effects on their North American agrarian practices. The Hutterites, settling on the Great Plains, found it necessary to continue their innovative agricultural ways, while the Amish, because of their locations, were allowed to retreat from their European patterns. The Hutterites' settlement in Dakota placed them on the eastern border of the Great Plains. This locality with its characteristics of limited rainfall and special weather phenomena demanded that Hutterites farm extensively rather than intensively as most agriculturists had done in the prairie and woodland regions. Large acreages, increased capital, and an abundant labor supply meant the Hutterites could succeed in the Plains even in times of great stress. Equally important, their advantages led to quicker diversification to offset frequent intervals of drought and locust. As larger and more efficient machines were marketed, the Hutterites in keeping with their European experience quickly adopted them. Their special advantages, derived from communal living, plus modernized, efficient farming, aided them in effectively competing with non-Hutterite neighbors. Thus the agricultural practices that Hutterites brought from Europe were perpetuated by the American locality in which they settled. Moreover, because of their particular environment, the Brethren had and continue to have no other option but to maintain these policies.

The Amish fared differently. They

brought from Europe careful farming methods and a predisposition for rapid adoption of new methods, but their settlements in the New World allowed them to partially discard these characteristics. Land in southeastern Pennsylvania was very different from Amish land in Europe, and no special techniques or new crops were necessary to make it produce abundantly. Their four-year crop rotation program, heavy use of manure for ferti-



Making bread at a Hutterite colony.

lizing, and meticulous farming habits all produced successful farming. With this experience the Amish gradually ceased to be experimenters or quick adaptors, relying instead on their time-proven, traditional methods. With their movements into Ohio, Delaware, Maryland, and other eastern states—all similar in agricultural features—the same methods continued to bring success. Settlement in Iowa proved no exception; fertile soil, adequate rainfall, and available land allowed the Amish

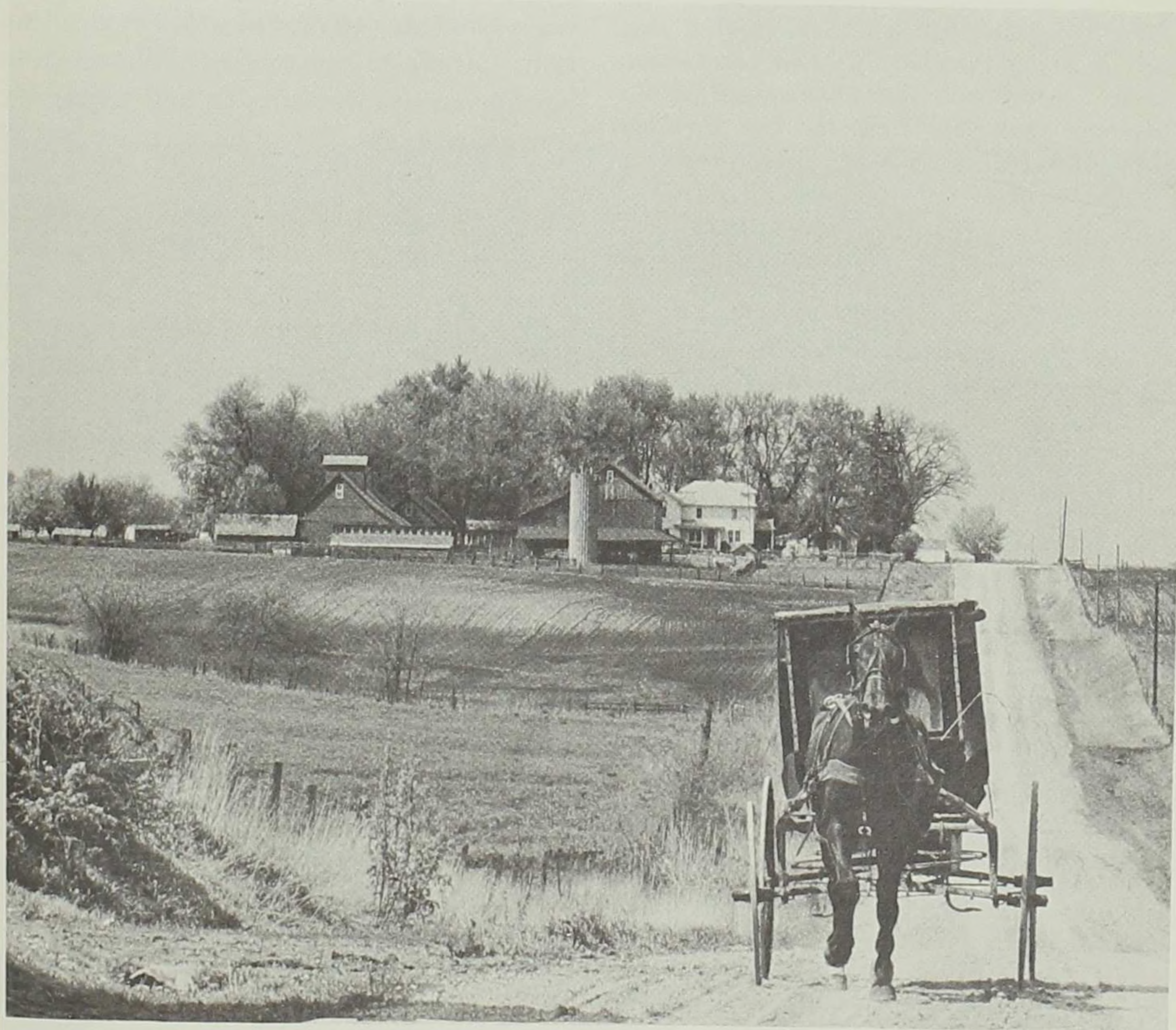
to continue their agrarian patterns. Today in Iowa, Amish continue the same methods used 200 years ago in Pennsylvania. Some use tractors for field work, but most prefer horses, and new methods, such as contour farming, are regarded suspiciously. Only in these predictable agricultural regions could Amish ignore change, retain small acreages, and rely almost exclusively on the same procedures for more than 200 years.

Perhaps, if early settlements had been reversed, their life-styles and agrarian practices would have developed significant differences. There is little reason to doubt the Hutterites' success almost anywhere, particularly in the eastern half of the United States, if land was available. Initially, perhaps, the Amish could have adapted to the Plains environment, but if they should migrate today with their great resistance to all change, their success in that area is highly doubtful. At present, both groups appear well situated in their respective localities. If, however, old patterns are repeated and further migrations become necessary, the Hutterites would appear to have a decided advantage because of their American experience which demanded retention of adaptability and hence flexibility.

Today, both groups are expanding in members and developing new communities. Between 1960 and 1969, Hutterites established nine new colonies in South Dakota alone, while also establishing additional colonies in Montana and Canada. Today they have over 200 colonies which contain approximately 200,000 people with a South Dakota population of nearly 3,000. The Amish are also increasing, both in members and settlements. Three com-

munities now live in Iowa, the most recent established near Milton in 1968. Within the past several years they have also established about five new communities in Missouri. In each locality, even though a few families leave the Old Order each year (usually to join a Con-

servative Mennonite congregation), the high birthrate produces a continual increase of members. South Dakota Hutterites and Iowa Amish today represent two of the most unchanging but rapidly expanding utopian societies in North America. □



(John Zielinski)

Dorothy Deemer Houghton:

A Memoir

by

J. R. Williams

Mrs. Houghton was a woman from a small town Iowa background who had considerable impact on national and international affairs. Originally from Red Oak, she was President of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs from 1935 to 1937 and of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (an organization with eleven million members) from 1950 to 1952. In 1953, she was appointed by President Eisenhower to act as Director of the Office of Refugees, Migration and Voluntary Assistance, a job involving hospitalization, integration, or migration forty million refugees. As a result of this service she was decorated by four nations and received the United Nation's Nansen Medal.

She served on the Iowa Board of Regents from 1939 until 1951 and was named Iowa Mother of the Year in 1948. A year later she was voted Iowa's most distinguished citizen. A graduate of Wellesley College, she held honorary degrees from four universities and became the first woman President of the Electoral College in 1957.

Mrs. Houghton died in Red Oak in March 1972, at the age of eighty-two. The following memoir is written by her grandson, who is a teacher and an historian.

The Editor

We ten grandchildren remember different things about our grandmother Hon. She always brought some sort of presents

back with her from wherever she had been. They were things like T-shirts four sizes too large or boxed alligators which hadn't survived the trip in Hon's tightly-packed suitcase. As we left Red Oak and went away to college, she wrote us letters which were addressed barely in the vicinity of where we were. We somehow got them. We knew they were from Hon because they were totally indecipherable, except for an occasional printed exhortation to write to our mothers. We remember her always quizzing us and telling us how the worst Republican was better than the best Democrat, and how her hair color mysteriously changed from time to time so that it was no surprise that newspapers varyingly referred to her auburn, silver, blonde, or red hair.

Other things we were told about or read about later. We heard that, in early days, she occasionally had been transported to speaking engagements by an accommodating Iowa Highway Patrol. We discovered with some interest that she related to an Omaha reporter how six of us had the run of the big house on Sundays at a time when only two of us could walk. We saw pictures of her at basketball games where she alone managed to smile properly for the camera as the action whirled by her. I was particularly surprised to find that Hon had informed the *Washington Post*, with regard to the lunches my grandfather used to fix me, that what seemed to me like peanut butter and jelly sandwiches were in fact "chipped beef, cheese and ground-up

celery on toasted whole wheat, or shaved carrots mixed with nuts and dates."

We rarely heard her give speeches, which was unfortunate because she was very good. She once said that for her public speaking is like "liquor to a drinking man." Clark Mollenhoff of the *Des Moines Register's* Washington Bureau stated that "the jokes she sprinkles through her talks are of the 'cute' kind, and there is sometimes just a sug-

gestion of naughtiness." What some of the naughtinesses were Mr. Mollenhoff did not say. A woman writing from an Alabama paper was more lyrical. She noted that Hon had "a distinctive style of her own" and how the audience sat "spell-bound for one hour and fifteen minutes" and how everyone "hung" on her every word. "She is a most charming personality," the reporter added, "and when she said how happy she was to be



Mrs. Houghton with President Eisenhower during the 1956 presidential campaign. Mrs. Houghton was national co-chairman of the Citizens for Eisenhower.

in Alabama, her voice sang the word!"

We also had to hear second-hand from our mothers and our fathers about the things that happened to her while speech-making or meeting-going or reception-giving. She gave, for instance, a brilliant Washington party for Governor Beardsley, complete with Iowa Senators Hickenlooper and Gillette, many of the Iowa Congressmen and federal government officials, and numerous other prominent Washingtonians—the party's success was not hampered by the fact that inclement weather kept the guest of honor hundreds of miles away. Also, we heard how rowdies tore part of her dress away, that part which sported an "I Like Ike" button, at a Chicago meeting in the spring of 1952. Moreover, we were matter-of-factly informed of a Middle East refugee mission where Hon was shown around one camp by an obscure army officer who came to be rather well known, Lt. Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser.

Such activity earned her the sobriquet "Dorothy the Dynamo" (Dorothy was Hon's other name) from her colleagues on the State Board of Regents and also brought her diverse honors. Stanton, Iowa named its women's club after her. The Dorothy Houghton orchid entered botanical encyclopedias. She became an honorary citizen of states and an honorary member of an Indian tribe. The General Federation of Women's Clubs set up a Dorothy Houghton fellowship to allow a woman from another nation to continue her studies in the United States. To some, however, her name was not quite a pleasant household word. On one occasion she was introduced as Mrs. Hiram C. Hootin of Red Oaks, Ioway, while

another introduction, this one a promotional headline, dubbed her "The Rootin' Tootin' Mrs. Hooten." One Texas minister resented her scope, her ambition, and her energy enough to write my grandfather: "The Bible says woman's place is in the home. Why don't you assert your rights?"

Hon actually did agree that home is the woman's place, but she was quick to add that it was "not her circumference." Sometimes her words would have been more than palatable to the Texas minister. She asserted on one occasion that, above everything else, she loved "charm" in a woman. When she wrote that it was "inevitable" that a woman will shop "wherever she may find herself and whatever the real purpose of her mission" she must have pleased the most ardent male chauvinist.

When Mildred Pelzer, Fine Arts Chairman of the Iowa Federation during Hon's 1935-1937 presidency, declared that "women are like flowers . . . some like violets, some morning glories, all beautiful! . . . singly, or assembled, your inspiration for life beautiful is unsurpassable!" she was echoing Hon's attitude. It was important for women to be "charming" and ancient ideas that women could be side-tracked by shopping from more important considerations were not rejected. Like the flowers, women were to provide the inspiration for "life beautiful."

She did not deny that there was or should be a psychological difference between men and women, a view that is being increasingly challenged today. She affirmed that difference, but by no means suggested that it would keep women in the back seat. In a 1935 speech she proclaimed that women "must bring the

world to its senses, to an appreciation of the old fashioned human values such as faith, trust, thrift, and love." As the Cold War set in, she urged women of various nations to meet and know each other, for no country could go to war against "another country whose women know, love, and understand each other." A Corning, Iowa, paper perhaps best summed up her views when it applauded her picture of "serious minded women" seeking to be "better prepared to meet life's complex conditions, not laughed at or ignored as in the early days of club organization, but respected, consulted, even leaned upon in the solving of economic, moral, and political problems."

Some of her arguments were not totally convincing. Hon claimed that "ninety-two labor saving devices" allowed women more time to think about and act upon the affairs, events, and problems of our times. She noted the tremendous economic power of women, a conclusion based upon a statistic that women spend eighty-five cents out of every dollar used for consumer goods purchase. In a speech in Philadelphia she even went so far as to say that "men do not build houses or castles or beautiful churches or diesel trains, or even make soap, for themselves. They do it for, or because of, women."

She dramatized issues. She tried to make women believe that there was nothing they could not do, and that there were numerous areas where their responsibility and power were greater than that of men. With the Iowa Federation in the 30s, she worked for paved roads and municipal clean up drives; for forceful county safety councils, wild life federations, and county councils for better



An earlier portrait, inscribed to her grandchildren.

education; she promoted and raised funds for cancer control; she stimulated theatrical presentations by and through the Federation; she led the Federation into conferences investigating the "cause and cure of war." She urged that women take the lead in fighting inflation, that they serve on defense boards, and that they powerfully shape the cultural and educational nature of American life.

Her life emphatically demonstrated that women could serve just as well as men in areas that had previously been denied to them. Hers was a life of firsts. Throughout her life she served as the only woman on committees or spoke on subjects which had been previously taboo. She was the first Red Oak woman to attend such a school as Wellesley and the first Iowan to serve as President of the sprawling empire of the General

Federation of Women's Clubs. Appointed by Governor Nate Kendall as a member of the state conservation commission in 1916, she was the first woman to serve on an Iowa state board. She became the first woman President of the Electoral College in 1957, and one of two women to receive the United Nations' Nansen Medal.

Though not totally liberated, Hon was a pioneer and a women's advocate. Her strongest position, her views that seem most contemporary, came in a 1951 *McCall's* article. Here she wrote that "to discuss 'equal rights' in connection with American women at this stage of our history is sickening." She suggested that a much more important source of discussion ought to be how to get women inside the framework from which decisions are made. She blistered those who come to women, asking for their support, *after* important decisions have been made. She criticized decision makers, concerned with "know-how" matters like tractors and electricity, who overlooked women and their "know-why" talents. She called for the "draft of womanpower" and she assailed anyone who tried to "protect" women from the truth.

Although Hon once occasioned the wrath of the D.A.R. for urging women's clubs to display the United Nations flag beside the American flag, her belief in America and Americanism was as firm as her belief in women. In the 30s, 40s, and 50s a frequent theme was her call for a "raging epidemic of Americanism."

Hon was no witch-hunter; she strongly believed in a way of life firmly grounded in the conservative American tradition, a tradition so dominant in the rural Iowa setting from which she came.

She defended rugged individualism and voluntaryism and criticized those who would "let the government do it." She saw preparedness as the greatest hope for peace, and she opposed those who would restrict our options on the use of military might. She assumed that people throughout the world cherished freedom above all else, an attitude that made her oppose systems which would restrict freedom for whatever purposes or for whomever's benefit. Although the term "law and order" was not yet fashionable, her urging of the death penalty for drug peddlers would seem to typify such a proponent. She liked political victory best, though, and that made her a political pragmatist, enough so that the *Des Moines Register* more than once put her in the liberal camp. Furthermore, her memoirs reflect her dismay that she was never able to work with John Lindsay and her hopeful prediction that he would some day be a Republican President.

Her thoughts about women and most of her political ideas were rather remote from the grandchildren. We did hear from time to time that she might run for political office, particularly the Senate, but she never did.

We knew that she loved the midwest, Iowa, and especially Red Oak. She told clubwomen that the 1952 national con-

vention was held in Minneapolis largely so that "Eastern and Southern women can see our midwestern culture." She sang Iowa's praise, watched its teams play, told of its rich lands, boasted of its nation-leading literacy rate. She saw much of the world in Iowa terms. The Marshall Plan, for example, was "simply an extension of Iowa farm philosophy . . . you always help your neighbor when he's down." And, in her memoirs, "I have tried to see the world as a community of men, each one like an Iowa neighbor."

Red Oak was where her women's club work, her work with libraries, traffic safety, and crippled children all began. It always remained her focal point. On leaving Washington in 1955 she told her staff: "My lovely home is waiting, my church, my good husband, my family and my friends. I love that little town and I shall love to work for it and the welfare of our people like I did for so many years."

Red Oak and Iowa friends returned that love. Red Oak, for instance, had a homecoming banquet in June 1950, after the Boston convention had named her President of the General Federation. The banquet was sponsored by a plethora of women's clubs, the Chamber of Commerce, the American Legion, Rotary, and more than a few other groups. Visitors and congratulations came in from throughout the state. The town gave her a silver tea service, presented a dramatic production of "Red Oak's Most Distinguished Citizen's" life, and sang a few fond songs like "Queen Dorothy" which included

such lines as "The town of Red Oak's on the map, and Dorothy put it there" and "Our Dorothy's Queen upon her throne, and everything's all right."

Twenty-two years later, when it was time to bury Hon and to remember some of the things about her, a day when nine of the ten grandchildren got together again as in the old times when we had the "run" of the big house, one Iowa friend, writing on behalf of the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, paid tribute by saying that although she "hob-nobbed at times with royalty, she never lost common touch with the average citizen" and that she would now take her place as "one of the all-time outstanding citizens of Iowa as well as one of its outstanding women." Another friend, Robert Ray, Dean of Iowa University's Division of Extension and University Services, spoke at her funeral, and although he probably did not know a side of Hon that we grandchildren affectionately remembered, he did know of her concern and her accomplishments for America and for the women of this country.

Mr. Ray also knew, as we did, what Red Oak was to and for Hon. He ended his words with: "So it is that we come today to the Red Oak, Iowa, that she lauded in every speech, and sooner or later mentioned in every conversation—the community on the Nishnabotna where her children were born and where the Monday Club sparked a long chain of events that took her to the far corners of the world."



Mrs. Houghton in her study at Red Oak.

How did she love Red Oak? Said Mr. Ray: "She loved Red Oak with the zeal of the Greeks who pledged their lives to the defense of the city, their devotion to its laws and who pledged, further, to pass the city on to their children as a better place for their having been there." And, finally: "In a sense she has come home. In a larger sense we know that she never really left Red Oak, Iowa—she simply

brought the best of Iowa and Red Oak to the world."

All these words had meaning for the grandchildren then, of course, but it was at another level, and in another way, that she had affected us. What was important to the world really seemed less relevant to us than the fine, funny stories about her we remembered and we shared together. □

Book Review:

Bess Ferguson with Velma Wallace Rayness and Edna Patzig Gouwens, *Charles Atherton Cumming, Iowa's Pioneer Artist-Educator* (Des Moines: Iowa Art Guild, 1972) 54 pp. \$6.00.

Charles Atherton Cumming was a father-figure in Iowa art. In the period of his pioneering efforts (the 80s to the 20s) he founded the art departments of Cornell College and The University of Iowa, the Des Moines Academy of Art, and the Iowa Art Guild. He also painted scores of portraits of important Iowans to hang in centers of learning and government. This book is an Official Portrait. The authors, Bess Ferguson with Velma Wallace Rayness and Edna Patzig Gouwens, have written a memorial "in praise" of Mr. Cumming. They explain on page ix that they use "mister" deliberately, out of respect.

What emerges from these pages is a glimpse of art in Iowa in the days when culture meant Chautauqua circuits, and the social columns described art meetings as "dainty and tasteful." Here was Cumming, the artist-goateed, socially in demand, a lover of the beautiful and the good things in life (including tweeds and exotic foods)—genuinely trying to bring to Iowa what Europe had given him. His counsel was sought, too, by state house officials and school board superintendents.

In his school of "elegant artistic adventure," he was teaching good, sound, academic stuff, involving, as all visual art does, the art of *seeing*. He had plaster casts and geometric solids; his standards were sure and his values demonstrable. With diligence, knowledge and training, one could somehow pin down art. ("Each day you spend here in this school," he told a student, "will be worth ten dollars to you.") Inspiration—and he had an eye out for this, too—should come the hard way, with no slick tricks. In his view, you painted "the truth, the whole truth." You studied and drew with understanding what you saw in God's world. You learned to lay on paint with such skill that you could forget technique. And, almost mystically, the qualities that

were art emerged from the painting and were communicated to the beholder. Art should have an uplifting, "lovable quality" (his words). The art Cumming valued was "white man's art," which had grown from the Graeco-Roman heritage and was ever evolving along realistic lines. When cubism appeared on the scene, his world rocked, and he reacted with the vehemence of a religious fanatic. His "vehement attacks" and "conservatism" helped bring about the rift between Cumming and his first wife, "his Nell," and embittered much of his later life. The authors' remark that there was "something heroic and pathetic in those last years" seems an understatement.

There are fifteen reproductions of Cumming's paintings in the book (eight of them in color) which give some idea of his style and skill—but inadequately, since the photographs are small and mostly undated, and the styles are many. Some landscapes are as impressionistic as you would expect from one who had seen France from the vantage point of the Academie Julien: informal outdoor scenes seen in terms of light. Other landscapes are as solid and consciously composed as Millet's. Among the portraits, some are "official portraits" of dignity and a minimum of warts; some are classic, eternal; some are dynamic. (The energetic Major Byers, who told war stories as he posed, is painted with slashing, fluid strokes that catch the quip on his lips.)

The authors have organized Cumming's life into areas: educator, teacher, artist, community influence. The style is that of a collection of remembered anecdotes, strung together in rather bland English. Great care is taken not to hurt feelings, to leave out no one who would expect to see his name in print. The liveliest parts are the words of the protagonist himself, gleaned from publications. Perhaps because of this style of writing, some parts seem undigested.

At any rate, the authors probably have done what they set out to do: collect the scattered facts about this man and pin them down before they escape. The result is a portrait of Mr. Cumming, who painted in a studio full of carved furniture and oriental rugs, dressed in a velvet smoking jacket.

Barbara R. Priester

CONTRIBUTORS:

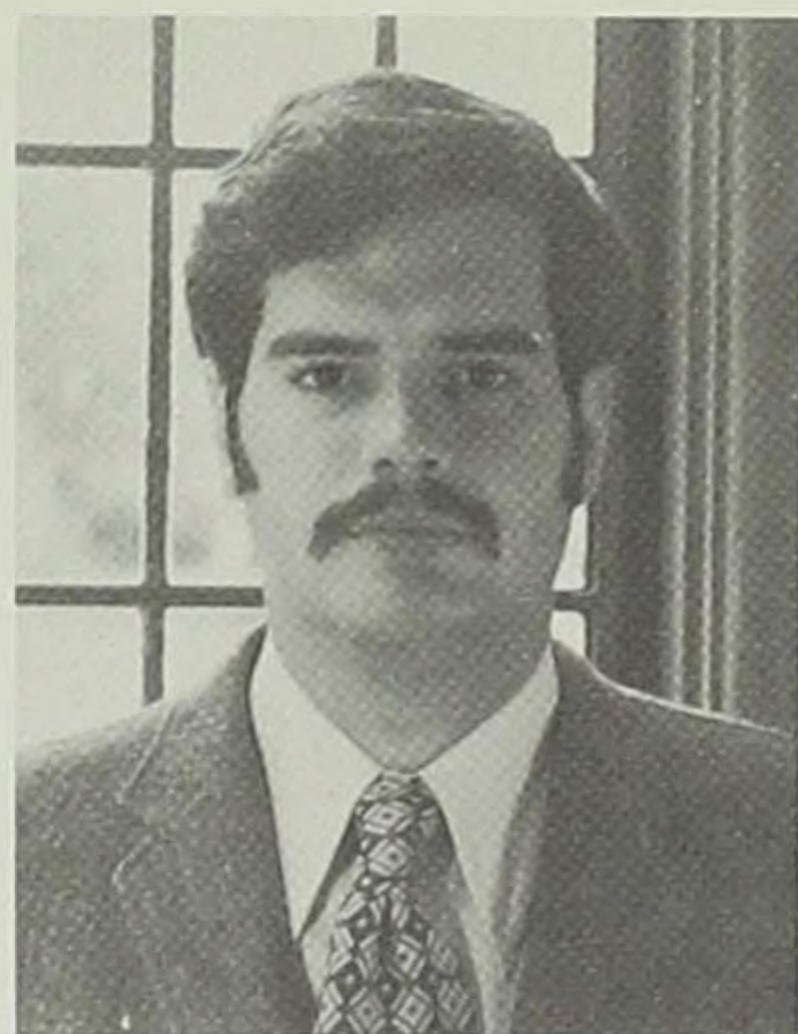
LELAND SAGE is Professor of History, Emeritus at the University of Northern Iowa where he taught from 1932 to 1967. A native of Arkansas, he graduated from Vanderbilt and the University of Illinois. He has taught at Depauw University and summer sessions at Nebraska and Indiana University. He is the author of *William Boyd Allison; A Study in Practical Politics* (published by the Historical Society in 1956), and several articles, and reviews. He is a Life Member of the Society and on the Board of Directors of the Cedar Falls Historical Society. This article on Joliet and Marquette is a revised portion of a longer work and is used by permission from the forthcoming book *History of Iowa* by Leland Sage, to be published in early 1974 by the Iowa State University Press.



DOROTHY SCHWIEDER, a native of South Dakota, teaches part-time at Iowa State University where she conducts courses in U.S. history and the history of Iowa. She graduated from Dakota Wesleyan University in 1955 and received a master's degree from Iowa State in 1968. She is a consultant on Iowa history in the public schools and has a weekly radio program on station WOI, Ames. She was appointed to the Board of Curators of the Historical Society in 1972. She has published several articles on Iowa and Midwestern history in various journals and magazines. This article is adapted from *Patterns and Perspectives in Iowa History*, a book which she edited and which is due for publication by the Iowa State University Press this month.

Neither the State Historical Society of Iowa nor the editors assume any responsibility for statements of fact or opinion made by contributors.

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BARBARA R. PRIESTER of Davenport, Iowa is a graduate of Smith College. She is a painter, potter, wife, and mother.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS OF THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

You are herewith informed that the annual meeting of the State Historical Society of Iowa is scheduled for June 14, 1973, at 1:00 P.M. at the Centennial Building, 402 Iowa Avenue in Iowa City.

You are further advised that nine Curators will be elected from the membership of the Society by a majority of the members present.

Such other business shall also be considered as shall come before the members assembled.

The State Historical Society encourages submission of articles on the history of Iowa and the surrounding region which 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 acceptance for publication. A brief biographical sketch should be submitted. All manuscripts must be double-spaced on at least medium weight paper. Ordinarily, the text of an article should not exceed twenty-five to thirty pages. As far as possible, citations should be worked into the body of the text. In this and other matters of form THE MLA STYLE SHEET 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. Inquiries and correspondence should be sent to: Editor, State Historical Society of Iowa, 402 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, Iowa 52240.



"The State Historical Society shall be maintained . . . , for carrying out the work of collecting and preserving materials relating to the history of Iowa and illustrative of the progress and development of the state; for maintaining a library and collections, and conducting historical studies and researches; for issuing publications, and for providing public lectures of historical character, and otherwise disseminating a knowledge of the history of Iowa among the people of the state." *Code of Iowa*, § 304.1.