

CIRCULATION

The
PALIMPSEST

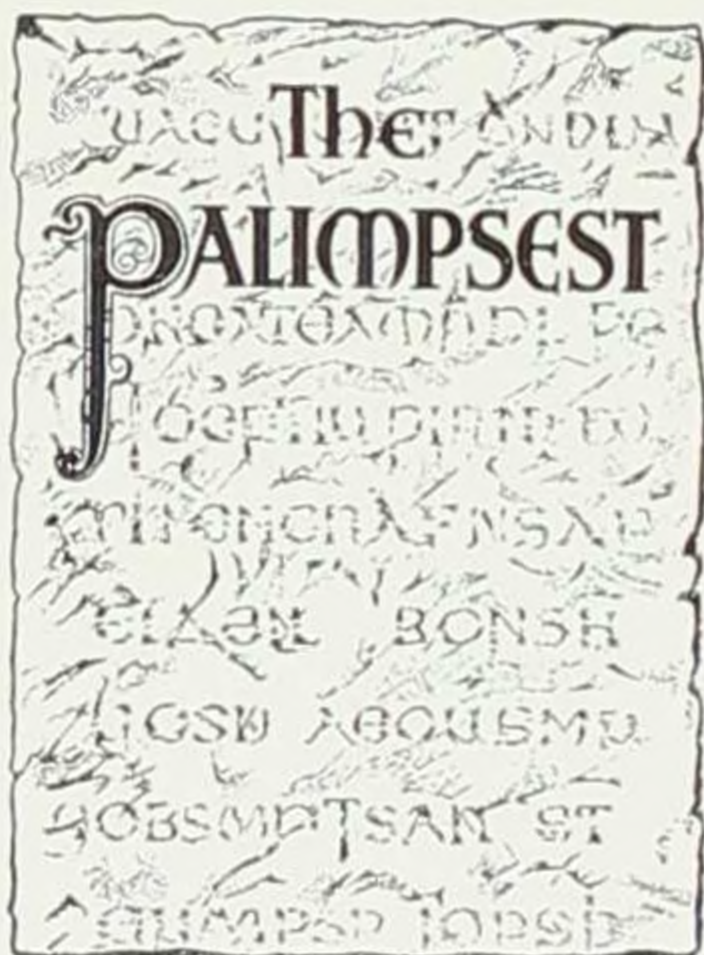


CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN DES MOINES

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APRIL 1952



The Meaning of 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 records 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.

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THE PRESBYTERIANS IN IOWA

FREDERICK I. KUHNS

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Top: Hus Memorial Presbyterian Church in Cedar Rapids.

Center: Scotch Grove United Presbyterian Church at Carlisle.

Bottom: First United Presbyterian Church at Washington.

Back — Outside

Top: 93rd General Assembly Meets in Westminster United Presbyterian Church at Des Moines in 1951.

Bottom: First United Presbyterian Church at Clarinda.

Author

Dr. Frederick I. Kuhns is Research Associate of the State Historical Society of Iowa and is a specialist in religious history.

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THE PALIMPSEST

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European Beginnings

As the sixteenth century opened in Europe, society was in turmoil. The discovery of America in 1492 widened the physical horizons of Europeans; the publication of Luther's Ninety-five Theses in 1517 changed the spiritual horizon of a people once dominated by the Church of Rome. These two events were related: the social and intellectual ferment of the Renaissance of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had brought, on the one hand, discovery and exploration in the physical world, and on the other hand, protest and reform in the spiritual realm.

Church reform — the Protestant Reformation — swept rapidly through Europe, and Christendom commenced to break asunder. Before twenty years had passed, two main branches of Protestantism could be seen — the followers of Martin Luther, and the followers of John Calvin.

Of French birth, Calvin had established himself permanently in Switzerland by 1541, and to Geneva students from all over Europe came to study

under him. His *Institutes of the Christian Religion* — published in 1536 — has never been surpassed as a statement of the Protestant position.

Calvin stressed the sovereignty of God and the preaching of His Word; and he insisted that laymen should be fully instructed in the Scriptures. He wrote lengthy commentaries on the Bible, which are still used. He retained but two of the seven sacraments of the Church of Rome — Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Expositions of Old Testament Law and New Testament Grace, together with prayers and the singing of Psalms — such was the simple Reformed evangel as preached by Calvin for a quarter of a century.

As an architect of church government, Calvin had no rival among the Protestants. Infallible biblical patterns were resurrected as the model for the Reformed churches. Government was by elders or presbyters, as in the early Church. Deacons were appointed for the relief of the poor, and a hospital was established. The church and the city of Geneva came under the scrutiny of the "venerable company" of pastors and teachers, while the "consistory" of pastors and elders further strengthened the moral life.

To Geneva in 1554 came John Knox of Scotland, to study under Calvin. In 1559 Knox returned to Scotland, there to establish the Reformed (Calvinistic) forms on the Scottish "kirk" in spite of the opposition of Catholic Mary, Queen of

Scots. Scottish Presbyterianism stems from John Knox and his church, resting in turn on the experience gained by Knox at Geneva.

Meanwhile, in England, after false starts and stops under Henry VIII, Edward VI, and "Bloody Mary," Protestantism, as expressed in the Church of England, became firmly established under the great Elizabeth. But many felt that the Anglican Church was still too close to the Church of Rome, that it needed "purifying." From these came the Puritans who were among the first to sow the seeds of England's empire in the New World, and to become the forefathers of Congregationalism. In England and especially in Scotland, Presbyterianism flourished and for a time, under Cromwell, dominated Protestantism, in spite of the efforts of English kings.

Presbyterian domination came with the *Westminster Confession of Faith* in 1647, which was drafted by the Westminster Assembly, called in 1643 by Parliament. This Assembly consisted of 150 officials of state and clergy, 121 of whom were Puritans. Their task was to settle questions of faith by agreement with the Word of God, and to recommend ways by which the Church and the state could live at peace. The Presbyterians, in the majority, triumphed. The Scots also adopted the *Westminster Confession*.

With the death of Cromwell and the Restoration of the Stuart kings in 1660, the Anglican

Church threw off Presbyterianism and returned to its Episcopalian forms. The Scottish people had to fight almost continuously to preserve so much as a crumb of their Presbyterianism. In the tradition of John Knox, the Covenanting groups — the "Scots Worthies" — resisted tyranny wherever it showed itself, and two years after the Glorious Revolution of 1688, Presbyterianism was re-established in Scotland.

During these years of religious turmoil in seventeenth-century England and Scotland, members of the Presbyterian Church had been cutting home ties and emigrating to America. First from England and Scotland, and then in a swelling tide from Ulster where the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians were strong, came the preachers and the congregations. As they stepped upon the shores of the New World they brought with them the beliefs and the church of John Knox and John Calvin.

FREDERICK I. KUHNS

Growth in America

Although Presbyterianism apparently gained a foothold on Long Island as early as 1644, there were only a few Presbyterians recorded in the American colonies by 1650. During the next half century their growth was exceedingly slow.

The real father of organized Presbyterianism in America was Rev. Francis Makemie. Ordained in Ireland, Makemie began working with six other ministers in Maryland and Pennsylvania in 1683. In 1706 they organized the first general presbytery, evidently at Philadelphia. American Presbyterianism gained world attention when Makemie was compelled to stand trial for preaching in New York as a dissenter. The courageous Makemie went free when he produced a license valid in any part of the realm. Unfortunately, Governor Edward Cornbury of New York forced Makemie to pay the court costs himself; but Cornbury was recalled to Britain for this severe action.

Meanwhile, congregations multiplied owing to Scotch-Irish immigration to America. Additional presbyteries were formed in the Colonies, and in 1716 the Synod of Philadelphia was organized.

A powerful educational stimulus was given Presbyterianism by Rev. William Tennent, a

Scotch-Irish preacher, who started the "Log College" at Neshaminy Creek, north of Philadelphia, about 1727. Here all of Tennent's sons were trained as were many others who became revival preachers during the period of the Great Awakening. Gilbert Tennent, who became the leading Presbyterian revivalist, split his denomination into two camps in 1741 — the Old Side (opposing the Tennents) and the New Side (favoring the revivals). This schism was not closed until 1758. The College of New Jersey, founded in 1746 and now Princeton University, could not have done its work without this original force of revivalism.

Some of the really great names in colonial history were associated with the College of New Jersey, among them Jonathan Dickinson, Samuel Davies, Jonathan Edwards, and John Witherspoon. The adoption of independence by the Second Continental Congress was urged by Witherspoon, who became one of the eleven Presbyterians, and the only clergyman, to sign the Declaration of Independence.

In the Revolutionary War, Presbyterianism and American Independence were almost equivalent terms. The members of this denomination made heavy sacrifices, and Presbyterian chaplains rendered distinguished service in Washington's armies. No denomination had more of its churches destroyed by war than did the Presbyterians.

In 1788, the same year Washington was elected

President, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America was constituted with four synods and sixteen presbyteries. Its members could be found far to the west and south of Philadelphia. No church had grown more rapidly in the previous half century, Presbyterians being largely recruited from among the thousands of thrifty Scotch-Irish who swarmed into Pennsylvania and then trekked southward. The acknowledged Presbyterian leader was Dr. John Witherspoon, Scottish-born president of the College of New Jersey, and moderator of the first General Assembly in 1789. There was a cordial exchange of felicitations between the first President of the United States and the newly-established General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

In 1802, the Presbyterian Committee on Missions began to carry the denomination still farther West though doing so in cooperation with Connecticut Congregationalists under the Plan of Union of 1801. Later, cooperation continued through the American Home Missionary Society.

In the West the Presbyterians made rapid progress, a leading New School minister estimating in 1837 that 500 churches had been built on the Plan of Union. But the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians soon tired of the Plan, and both revolted against its further operation. The Presbyterian schism of 1837/1838 saw the Old School

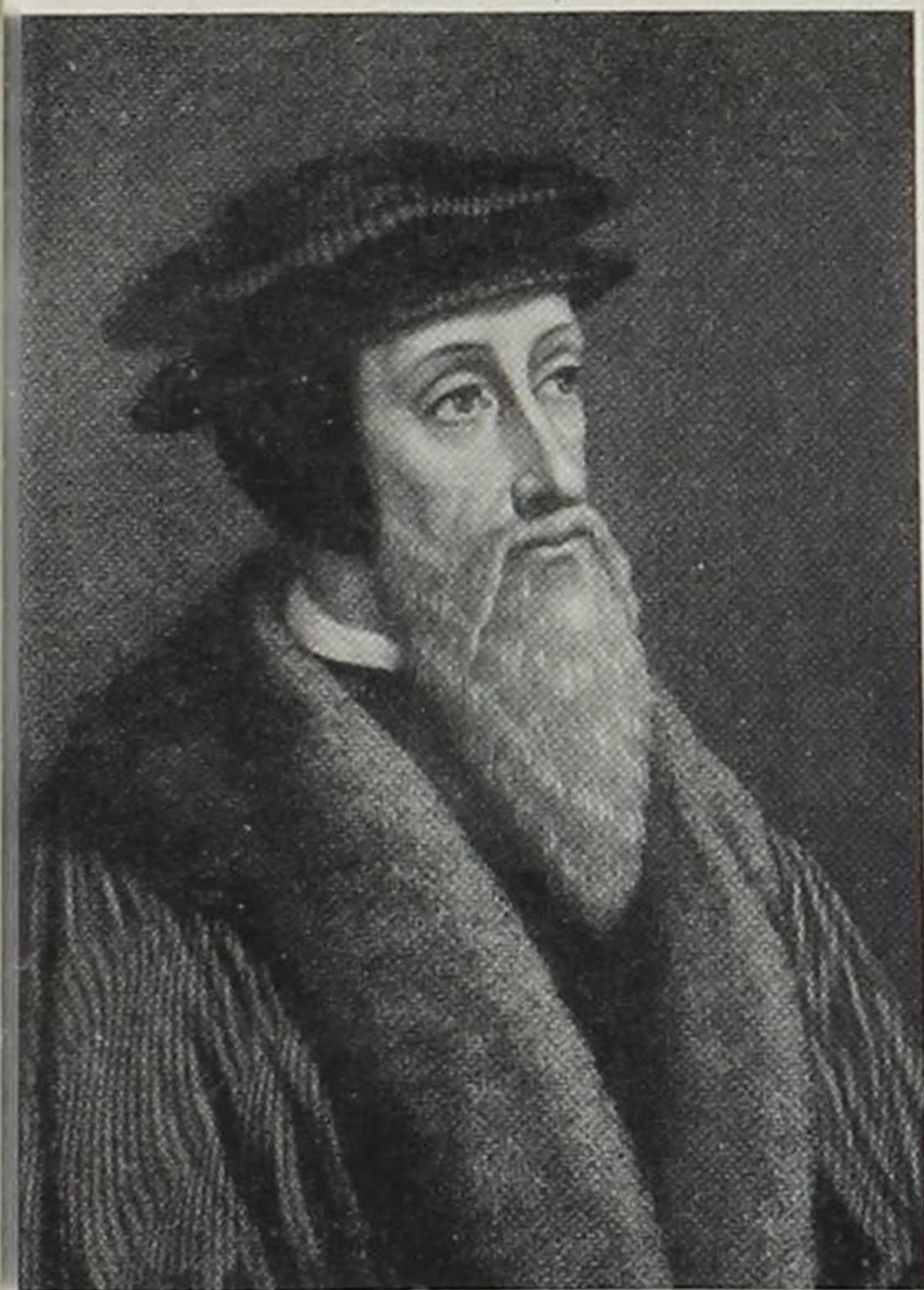
pitted against the New School, and congregations and church bodies of both types occupied the stage for over a generation.

The approaching Civil War brought many changes in the Presbyterian Church. In 1847 numerous leaders had organized the Free Synod of Cincinnati (to which body an Iowa Presbytery was attached later) as a protest against slavery. Ten years later the New School element in the South, alarmed by the increase of abolitionism, left the General Assembly and formed the United Synod. The most serious and lasting separation among Presbyterians took place a month after Fort Sumter surrendered; the entire southern wing withdrew from the Old School General Assembly in 1861. This act was the beginning of the "southern" church, officially the Presbyterian Church in the United States, now the second largest unit of American Presbyterianism.

Through the years some consolidation has taken place among Presbyterians, though much more remains to be achieved. At present, the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., the Presbyterian Church in the U. S., and the United Presbyterian Church of North America all have commissions studying plans for general union. The good will pervading these sessions is a hopeful sign.

FREDERICK I. KUHNS

MAKERS OF PRESBYTERIANISM ABROAD

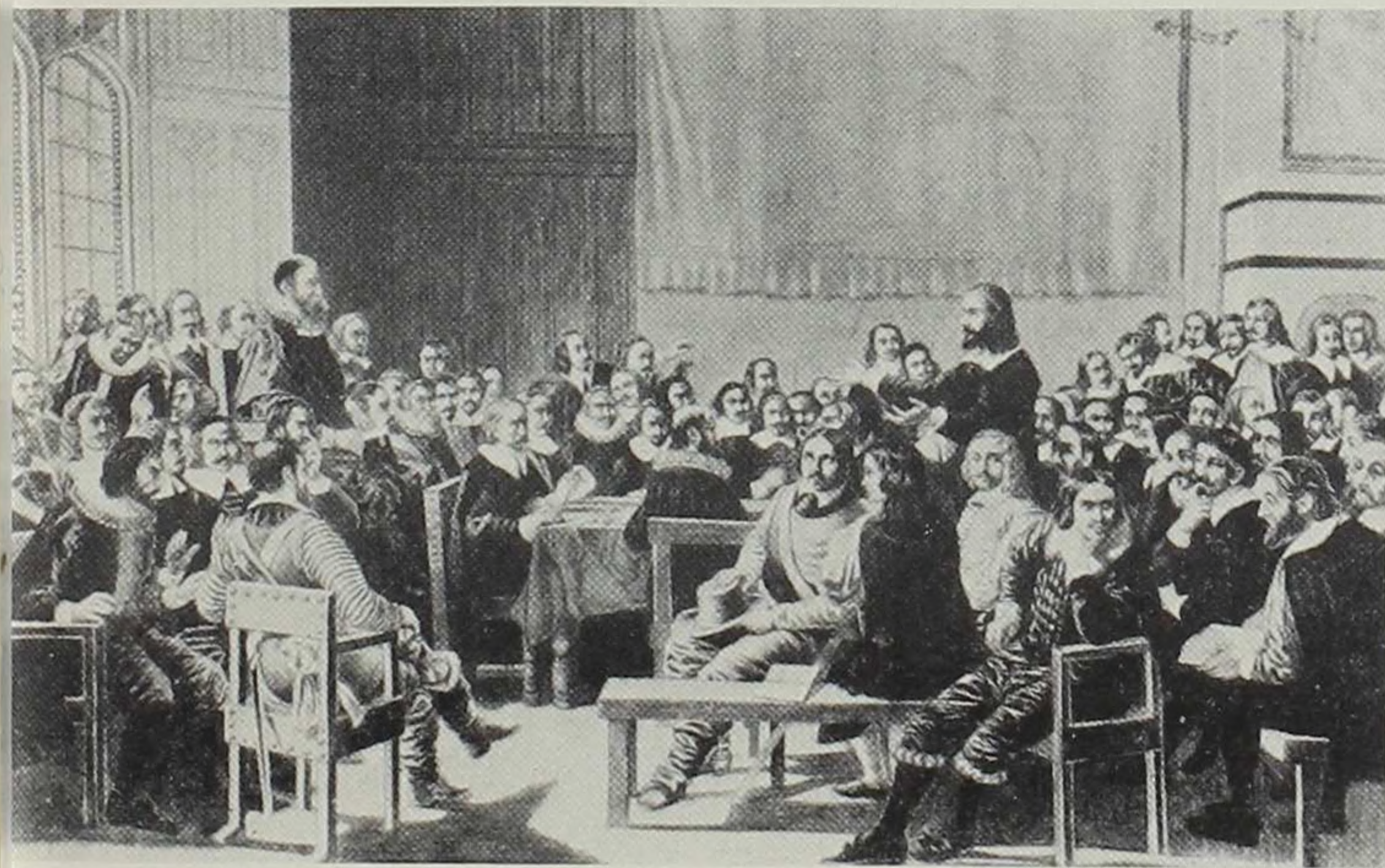


John Calvin
(1509–1564)
Geneva



John Knox
(1515?–1572)
Edinburgh

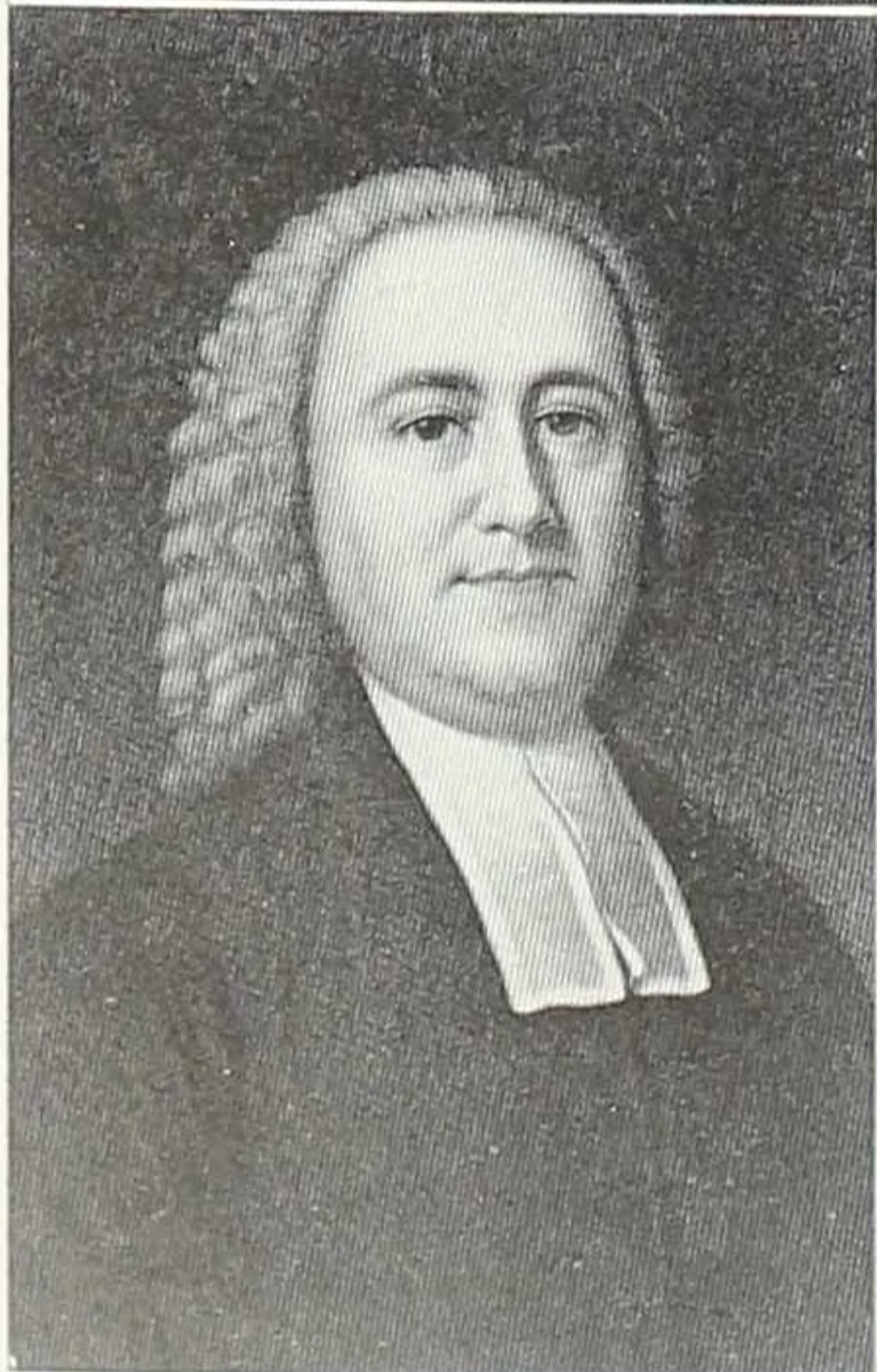
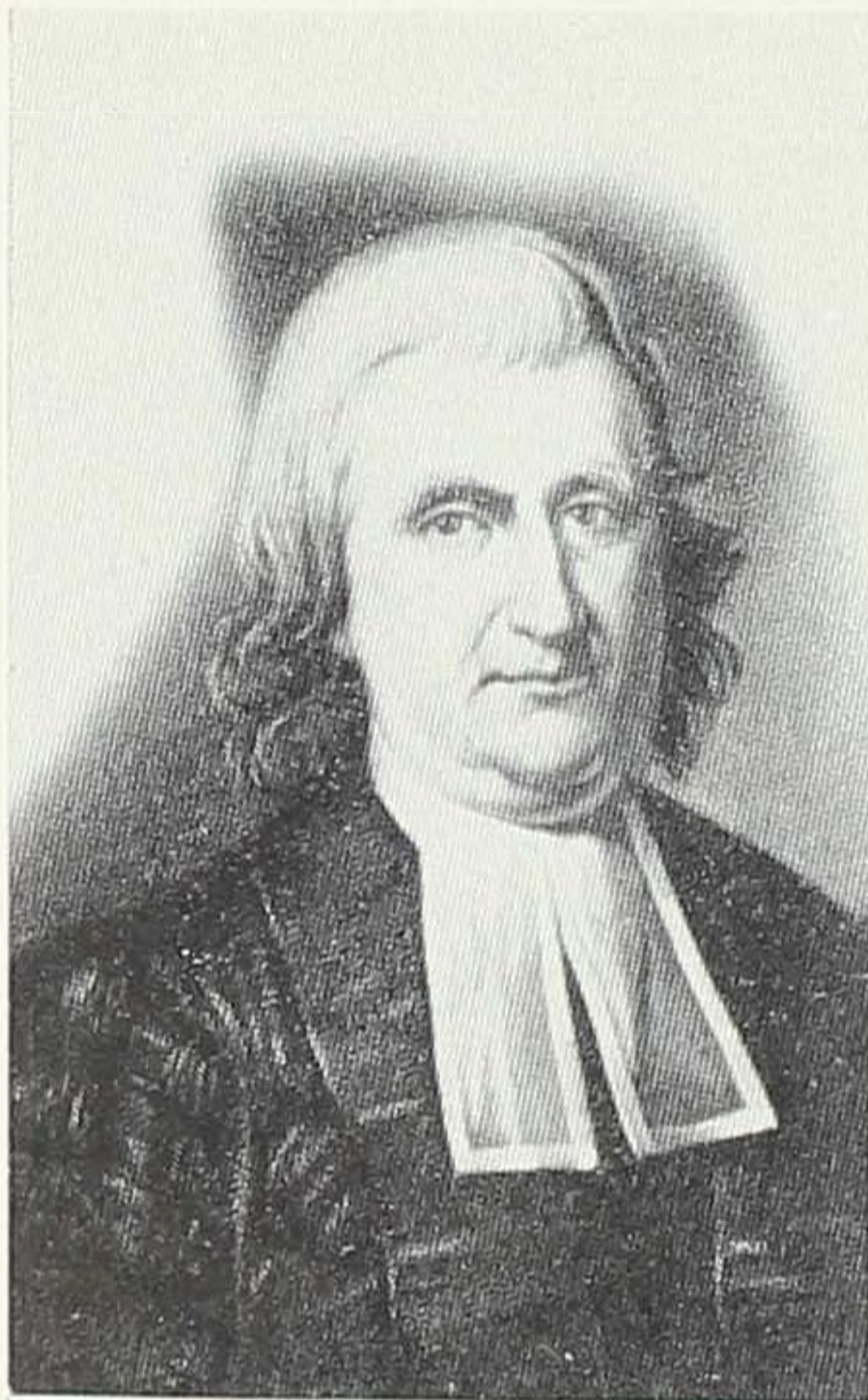
WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES
London, 1643–1652



From the Painting by John Rogers Herbert

(Courtesy, Presbyterian Historical Society)

PRESBYTERIANS IN COLONIAL AMERICA



(Courtesy, Presbyterian Historical Society)

Upper left: John Witherspoon, Signer of Declaration of Independence.

Lower left: Gilbert Tennent, leading colonial revivalist.

Right: Francis Makemie Statue at Holden's Creek, Virginia.

On to Iowa

The first organization of Presbyterianism in Iowaland was achieved by Rev. David Lowry of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1834. Lowry had been sent by the War Department to organize a school for the Winnebago Indians in northern Iowa. To do this the missionary had come up the previous fall from Princeton, Kentucky, where he had been editor of his denomination's leading paper. Both Lowry and his wife had established themselves at Fort Crawford at Prairie du Chien, where he preached to citizens and soldiers alike while building the "Old Mission" on the Yellow River in present-day Allamakee County.

It was early in 1834 that Lowry constituted his church of military personnel and a few Indians. After six years of heroic labors Lowry was transferred to Fort Atkinson on the Turkey River where he became an Indian agent, and the Old Mission church was disorganized. On the whole, Lowry's efforts to teach the Indian boys were not very successful, though some allowance must be made for the fact that continual clashes occurred between the missionary and the white traders. It was also unfortunate that misunderstandings arose

between Lowry and the Catholic priests serving in the vicinity.

On July 25, 1836, another Cumberland congregation was organized on historic Sugar Creek in what is now Lee County, of which the Rev. Cyrus Haines was the pastor. A number of camp meetings was held there during this church's formal existence of more than eighteen years.

Presbyterians today count the formation of the "nine immortal" congregations in frontier days as the best possible memorial to the Old School ministers and laymen who came to Iowa. These churches in the order of their organization are: West Point and Rockingham, 1837; Fort Madison and Burlington, 1838; Davenport and Round Prairie (Kossuth), 1839; Iowa City, Spring Creek, and Mount Pleasant, 1840.

The first Old School Presbyterian organization was that of West Point, where Revs. Launcelot G. Bell and Samuel Wilson met with a small group on June 24, 1837, and constituted a church with ten charter members. In 1937 appropriate exercises were held at West Point to mark the centennial of formal activities in Iowa of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

The Revs. Salmon Cowles, Michael Hummer, and L. G. Bell were the most active ministers in connection with the organization of the earliest Iowa Presbyterian churches. The Iowa Presbytery was formed at Bloomington (Muscatine) on

November 6, 1840, and was attached to the Synod of Illinois.

Meanwhile, Iowa City, the capital city of the Territory of Iowa, had an Old School church in 1840, the organizers being Revs. L. G. Bell and Michael Hummer. The day chosen for its formation was September 12th. For a year Rev. John Stocker had journeyed every other Sabbath from Bloomington to preach in Iowa City. Late in 1841 Mr. Hummer became pastor and began making collections for a church edifice. Until the completion of the church basement, services were held in the new capitol building, the present-day Old Stone Capitol.

The Presbyterian church building in Iowa City had not been completed when disagreements between Mr. Hummer and the trustees made it necessary for the pastor to leave. And who can forget the story that is told of Mr. Hummer's efforts to recover the bell from the church steeple, in payment of the church's indebtedness to him? With the bell on the way down, the ladder was removed while Mr. Hummer was still in the belfry. It is not known for certain where that bell is today, but, as the story goes, it was first lowered into the Iowa River, then raised by two Mormons, and finally taken to Salt Lake City in 1849. Perhaps it is in Utah. However that may be, the Old School Presbyterians finally completed their beautiful structure only to have it destroyed by fire in 1856.

Happily, a new building was commenced at once.

The New School Presbyterians actually began their work in the lead-mining region at Dubuque, where Rev. Aratus Kent, who served at Galena, Illinois, preached occasionally from 1833. On January 1, 1836, Rev. Cyrus Watson commenced a pastorate of six months at Dubuque for the American Home Missionary Society. Although a Presbyterian church was not actually constituted in Dubuque until 1839, the hardy nucleus of the future church succeeded in laying the cornerstone of their "Old Stone Church" edifice on July 1, 1836, with officials of Wisconsin Territory participating in the service. This early New School Presbyterian congregation voted, however, to become a Congregational church in December, 1844.

Work was continued by the New School with a church formed at Fort Madison in 1838 by Rev. James A. Clark, another appointee of the American Home Missionary Society. The Burlington church also was formed in 1838, functioning as Presbyterian from 1838 to 1843 but as a Congregational church thereafter. Formed in 1840 was the New School church at Yellow Spring (Kosuth), while others were organized at Keosauqua, Troy, Iowa City, and Bloomington in 1840 and 1841. The church at Toolsboro was formed in 1842. Among the New School ministers in early days the following were prominent: Gamaliel C. Beaman, Thompson Bird, Samuel S. Howe, and

William W. Woods. The New School Presbytery of Des Moines was organized at Yellow Spring on April 12, 1842, and was attached to the Illinois Synod.

The Old School Presbyterians constituted an Iowa Synod in 1852, and this was followed by a New School Synod in 1853. As presbyteries were "new-modelled" from time to time, so also were the synods; but the Synod of Iowa (U. S. A.) has followed the state lines since 1882.

Other Presbyterian groups soon came to Iowa, the first congregation of Associate Presbyterians (Seceders) arriving from Illinois in 1836 or 1837 and forming a church at Crooked Creek, later Crawfordsville, under the preaching of Rev. George C. Vincent. At near-by Virginia Grove the Associate Reformed Presbyterians formed a church in 1840, while in 1846 the Reformed Presbyterians (Covenanters) organized the Sharon church near Morning Sun. The United Presbyterians were formally constituted as a denomination at Pittsburgh in 1858, with most of the Associate and Associate Reformed congregations going into this merger. The United Presbyterian Synod of Iowa was formed in 1860. At present four presbyteries are attached to this body.

Presbyterianism in Iowa's present capital city of Des Moines began with the organization of Central (New School) Presbyterian Church in a log cabin, on June 4, 1848, some nine years prior to the

removal of the capital to that city. Rev. Thompson Bird, an antislavery man from North Carolina, served not only as the first pastor of the little church of five members but also as the first mayor of Des Moines in 1851. On his death in 1869, Mr. Bird willed his private library to Maryville College at Maryville, Tennessee, of which institution he was especially fond.

The Old School Presbyterians had lost no time getting to Des Moines, actually forming a church there on the same day as their New School rivals! Rev. Samuel Cowles was the founder of this First Presbyterian Church of Des Moines. In 1875 the property of the First Presbyterian was sold and the congregation joined with Central church. The present First Presbyterian Church in Des Moines was not organized until 1877, however, its charter roll being made up of members demitted from Central.

Several of the Presbyterian churches formed along the Mississippi have already been mentioned. Others formed as the frontier line advanced included, in northeastern Iowa, those at Marion, 1842; Cedar Rapids and Andrew, 1847; Waterloo, 1854; Cedar Falls, 1855, and Waukon, 1856. To the southeast, churches were constituted at Washington in 1841; Mount Vernon, 1843; Oskaloosa, 1845; Centerville, 1849, and Ottumwa, 1854. In addition to those in Des Moines, other churches in central Iowa were those formed at In-

dianola in 1854; Fort Dodge, 1856; Winterset, 1857, and Marshalltown, 1858. On the Missouri River frontier Presbyterian congregations were organized at Council Bluffs in 1856 and at Sioux City in 1858. Also to the southwest were the churches at Clarinda, 1855; Chariton, 1856; Atlantic, 1869, and Woodbine, 1871. In the north and northwest portions of Iowa, Presbyterians organized churches at Algona in 1857; Denison and Spirit Lake, 1871; Ida Grove and Rolfe, 1873, and Sac City, 1874.

Iowans justly recall with pride that the Tranquillity Presbyterian church (near Traer), which was formed in 1854 by Scotch families, was warmly supported by James ("Tama Jim") Wilson, chosen in 1897 by President William McKinley to be Secretary of Agriculture. Wilson held this post for sixteen consecutive years under Presidents McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and William H. Taft. Margaret Wilson's Pulitzer Prize winner, *The Able McLaughlins*, portrays the life of this Iowa church.

Other Presbyterian work of far-reaching significance has been done under the Woman's Society for Missions, organized in 1875. In 1884 the Iowa Woman's Synodical Society for Home Missions was formed, and the first organization became the Iowa Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. The two groups were united in 1923. Foreign missionaries — Iowans — have gone to

many places, among them Brazil, China, Japan, Africa, and the Philippines. The United Presbyterians likewise maintain churches, schools, and hospitals in the Sudan, Egypt, and Pakistan. The Tama Indians of Iowa also have been provided with pastors by the United Presbyterian Church.

High moments in Iowa Presbyterian life have been brought by the sessions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., meeting at Des Moines in 1906 and 1922.

The United Presbyterians have held no less than seven of their General Assemblies on Iowa soil: at Washington in 1865, 1872, and 1905; at Cedar Rapids in 1888, and at Des Moines in 1901, 1930, and 1951.

This chapter opened with Presbyterianism obtaining its foothold in Iowaland among the Winnebago Indians in 1834. It may be closed with the mention of another epic action — the Iowa Forward Movement. The human dynamo in this case was a missionary, Rev. Sheldon Jackson. At Sioux City in 1869 Jackson, in company with Revs. Thomas H. Cleland, Jr., and J. C. Elliott, ascended Prospect Hill. Here the three conversed about the "spiritual desolations" of the regions beyond — Dakota, Nebraska, and all the great West then but thinly settled but soon to be brought into closer touch with the East by the Union Pacific Railroad. Fortunately, the Presbyterian reunion of 1870 provided the needed funds,

SOME LEADERS OF IOWA PRESBYTERIANISM — 1834-1952



George Vincent
Washington
Pioneer Pastor



David Lowry
Allamakee County
Winnebago Mission



Sheldon Jackson
Council Bluffs
Mission Supt.



Thomas Merrill
Wittemberg
Pioneer Educator



E. L. Marousek
Jefferson
Synod Clerk



H. C. Schneider
Des Moines
Synod Executive



Vida F. Rumbaugh
Thailand
Missionary



Willis C. Edson
Storm Lake
College Trustee



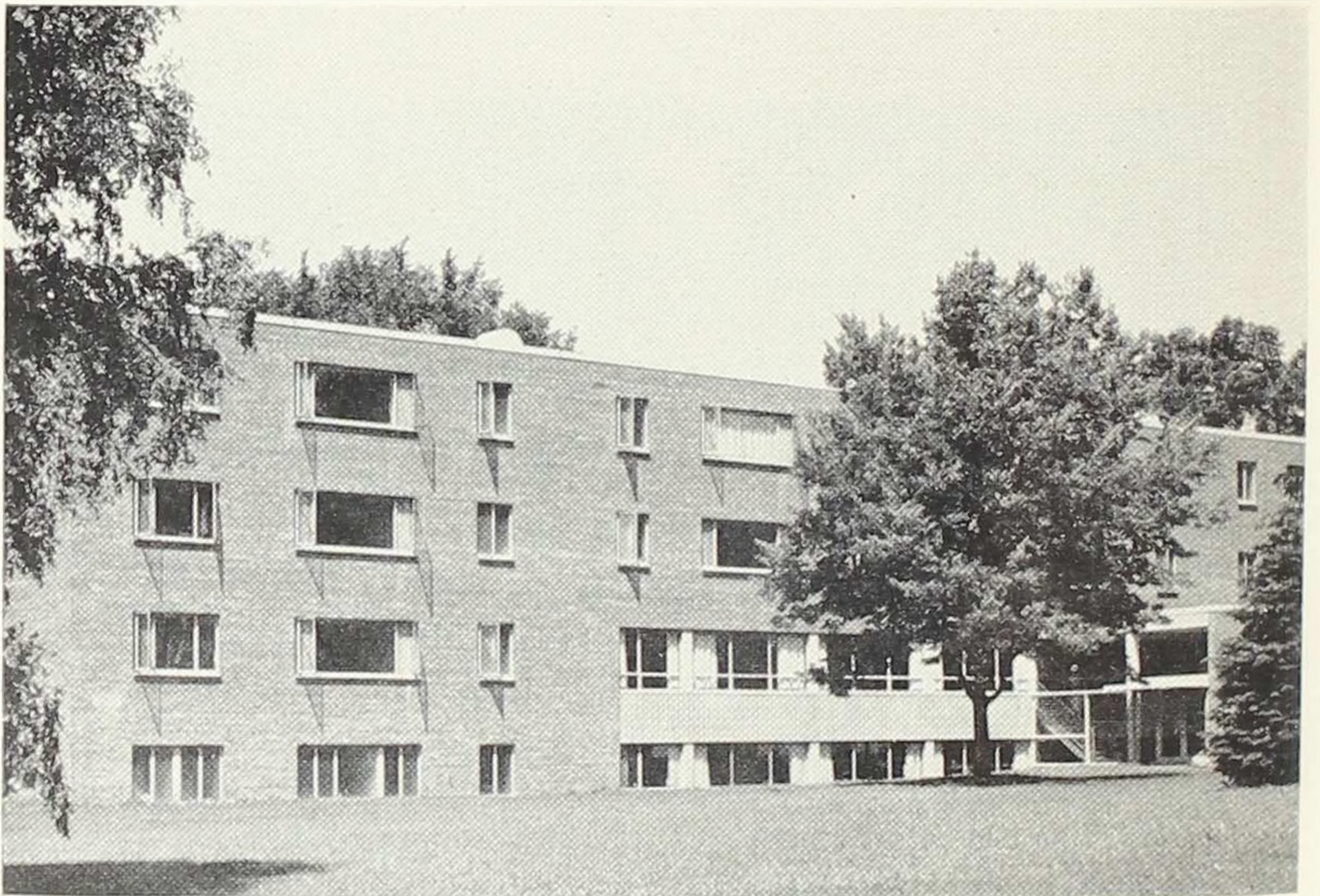
Mabel C. Smith
China
Missionary



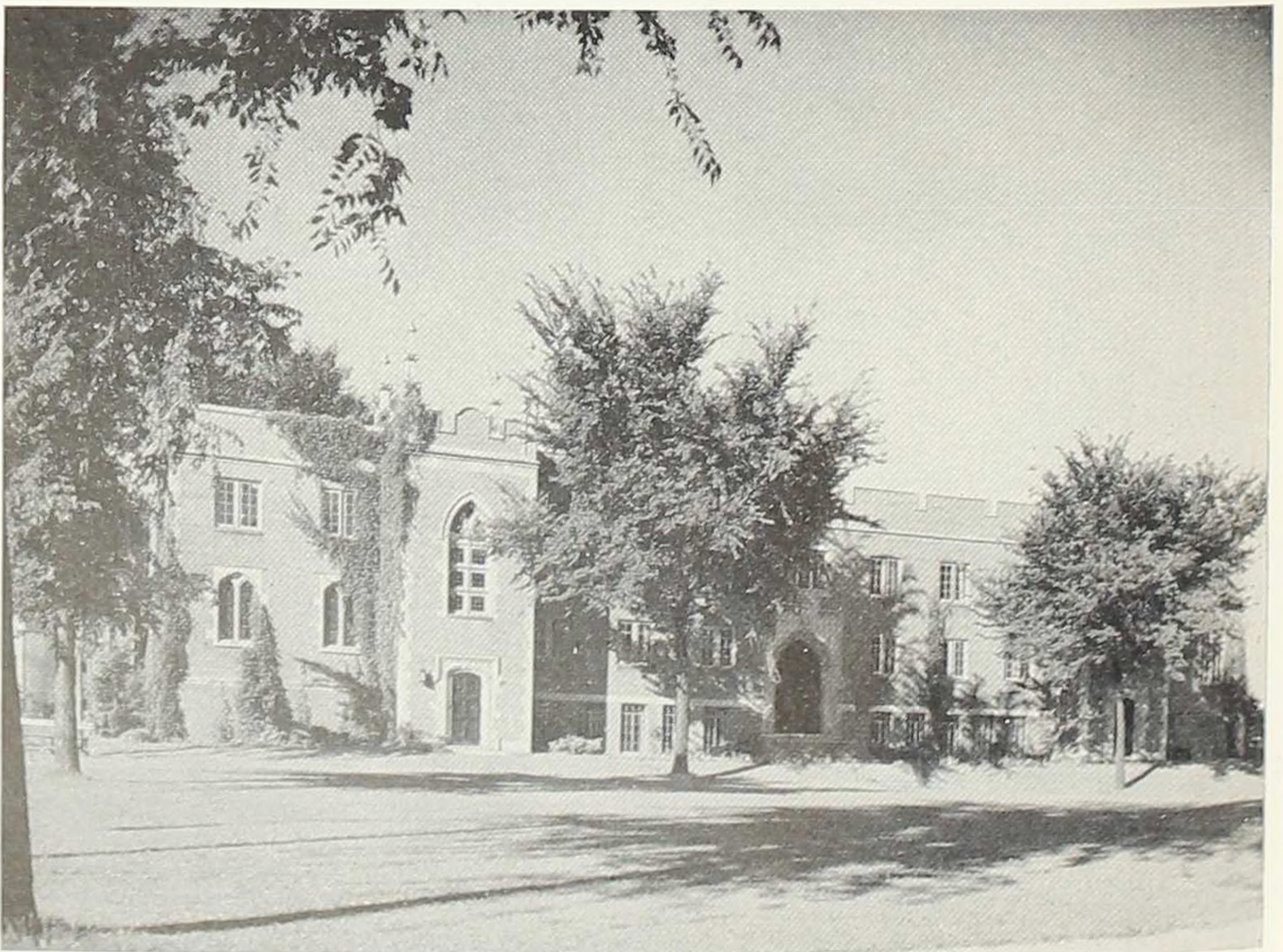
T. J. Campbell
Newton
Moderator

MS

PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGES IN IOWA



Swope Hall — Buena Vista College



Van Vliet Hall — University of Dubuque

PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGES IN IOWA

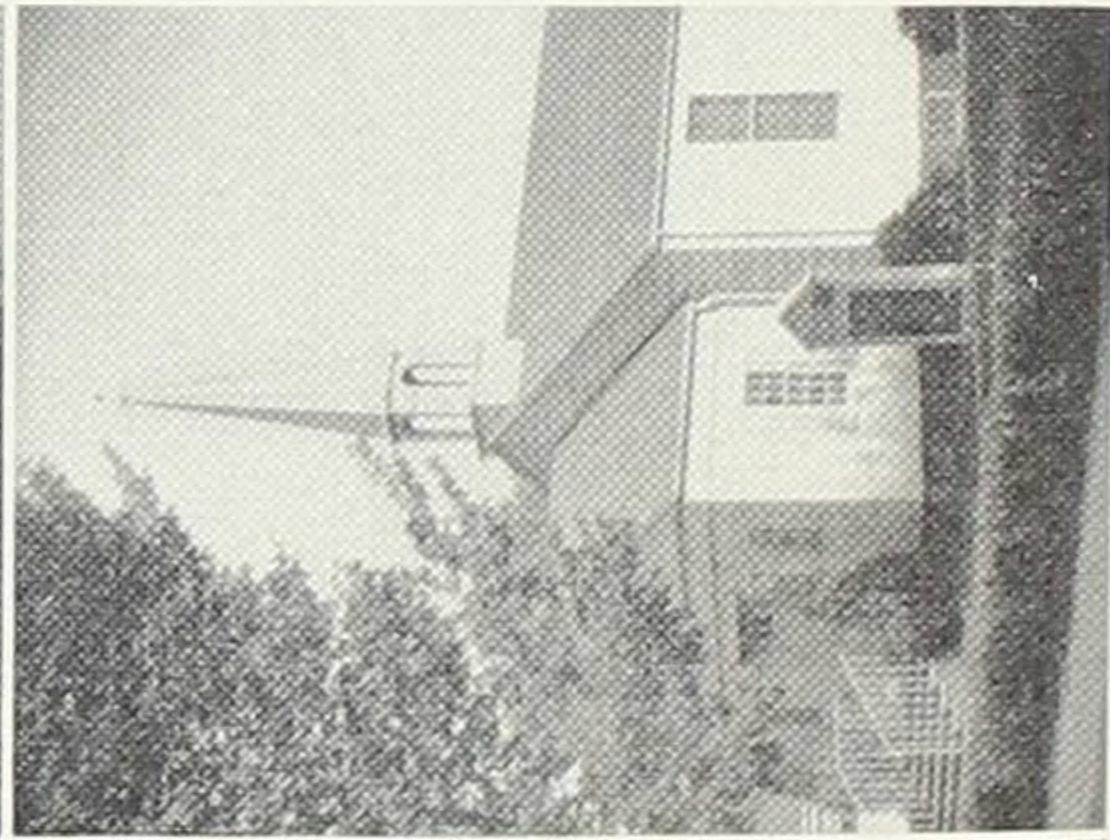
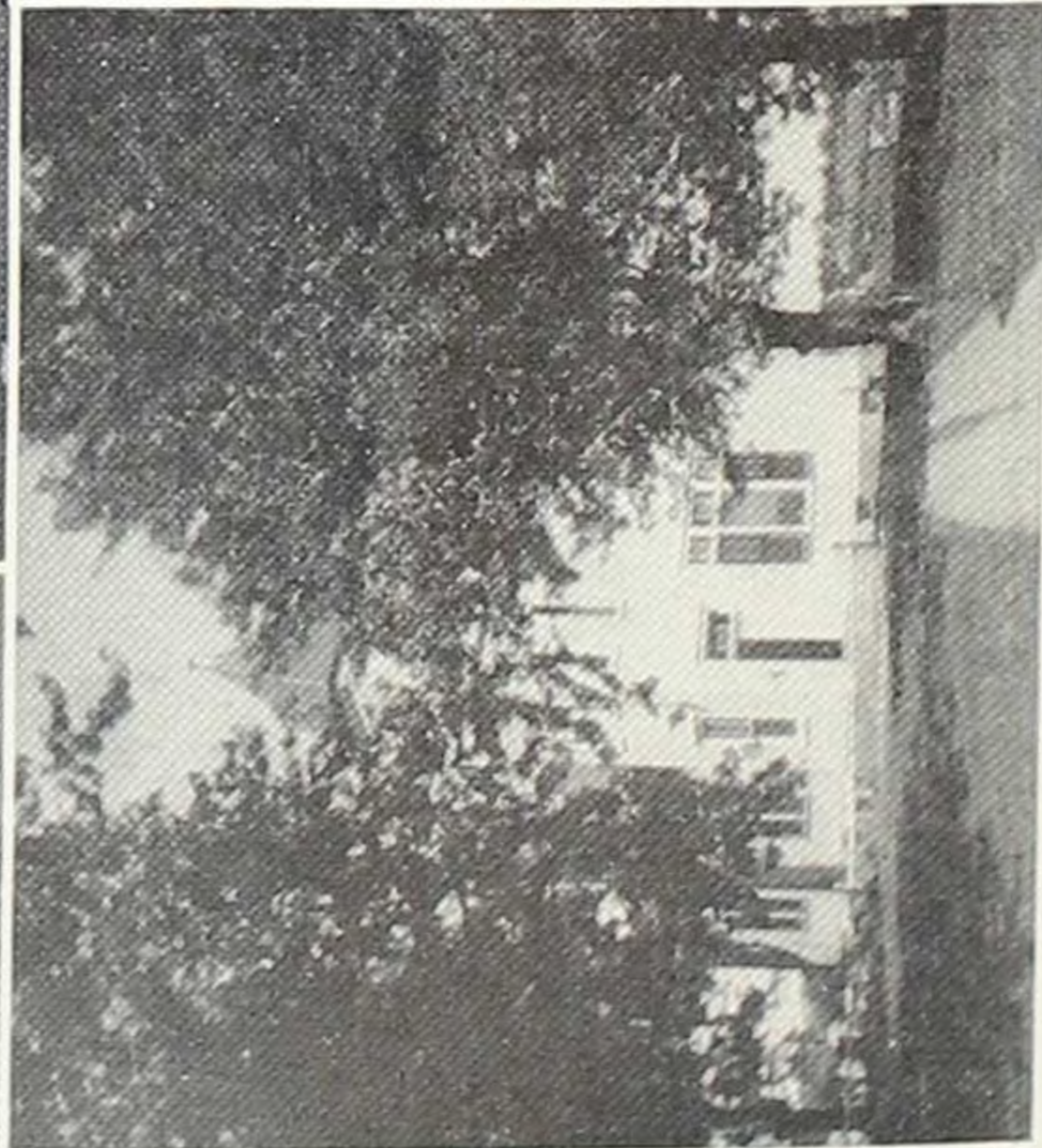
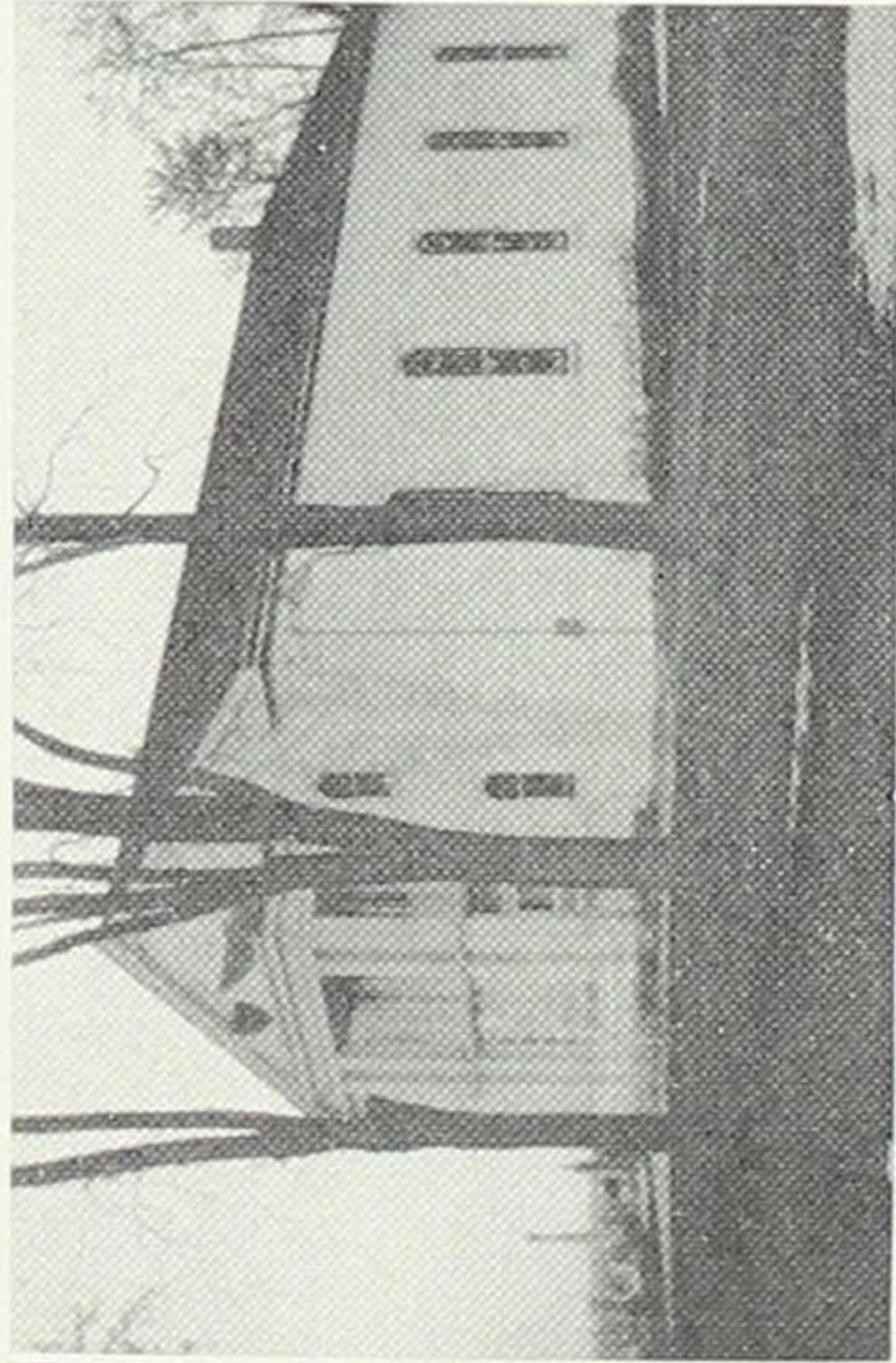


Stewart Library — Coe College



Fairfield Hall — Parsons College

SOME VARIETIES OF IOWA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES



Left: Associate Presbyterian at Washington.

Right: "Sharon" Reformed Presbyterian near Morning Sun.

Left: Bible Presbyterian at Cono Center.

Center: "Shinar" Cumberland Presbyterian at Pleasant Grove.

Right: Orthodox Presbyterian at Waterloo.

and Jackson was made missionary superintendent for the whole West. From Council Bluffs in 1870 alone, Jackson traveled more than 29,000 miles — walking, on horseback, and by boat, stage, and rail — to build churches in areas wholly destitute. Within two decades (1870-1890) the vast region west of the Missouri River occupied today by fourteen great states became alive with hustling Presbyterian congregations. The bold exploits of those tireless men of high faith are commemorated in the Prospect Hill monument — a symbol of the world in Iowa and of Iowa in the world.

FREDERICK I. KUHNS

Varieties in Iowa

Presbyterianism in Iowa, as everywhere else, forms a pattern as variegated as a Scotch plaid. The predominating wing, of course, is the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, while the second largest is the United Presbyterian Church of North America. In addition, there are six other varieties today, as follows:

EIGHT VARIETIES OF PRESBYTERIANISM IN IOWA

| <i>Church</i> | <i>Congre- gations</i> | <i>Ministers</i> | <i>Members</i> |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| United States of America | 313 | 315 | 79,168 |
| United | 57 | 62 | 10,367 |
| Reformed | 4 | 4 | 386 |
| Bible | 2 | 2 | 63 |
| Cumberland | 1 | 1 | 110 |
| Orthodox | 1 | 1 | 64 |
| Colored Cumberland | 1 | 1 | — |
| Associate | 1 | 1 | — |
| | — | — | — |
| GRAND TOTAL | 380 | 377 | 90,158 |

Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

The early Iowa Old School churches were sustained by the Board of Missions, and those of the New School by the American Home Missionary Society in cooperation with the Congregationalists until 1861. Thus the Iowa Presbyterian churches

have been both conservative and liberal in doctrine.

On the lively question of slavery the New School Presbyterians, reflecting a long-term association with the Congregationalists, spoke out more freely against slavery than did their Old School brethren. But it remained for the Free Presbyterians (some of whom were formerly Old School and some New School) to adopt the more extreme views of the abolitionists. There were at least four of these churches in Iowa: at Wittenberg, Yellow Spring, Quasqueton, and Cedar Creek though the precise location of the last-named has not been ascertained. The Iowa Presbytery was formed under the Free Synod of Cincinnati. After the Civil War, Free Presbyterians generally disbanded, joined with New School Presbyterians, or reorganized as Congregational churches. The present Wittenberg Congregational Church, which was organized in 1865, was founded originally in 1854 as a Free Presbyterian congregation by Rev. Thomas Merrill from southern Ohio. The pastor also organized the Wittenberg Manual Labor College at the site of this colony, six miles north of Newton.

The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. achieved the following organization for Iowa: Synod of Iowa (Old School), 1852-1869; Synod of Iowa, South (Old School), 1857-1869; Synod of Iowa (New School), 1853-1869. With the re-

union of Old School and New School Presbyterians in 1870, the Iowa synods were reduced to two and reconstructed as Iowa North and Iowa South (1870-1881). This arrangement lasted until 1882, when the present state-wide Synod of Iowa was organized, with eight presbyteries. Today there are ten.

The Presbyterian German Synod of the West was erected at Dubuque in 1914 and still functions. Other presbyteries were constituted by the Czechs and the Welsh. The Cumberland Presbyterians formed a Synod in 1857. When reunion with the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., was achieved in 1906, most of the 32 Cumberland congregations were assimilated. A further union took place in 1920 between the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists and the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., and assimilation soon operated among the remaining Iowa Welsh congregations. Discussion of the goal of Presbyterian union continues down to the present.

United Presbyterians

The second largest unit of Iowa Presbyterianism today is the United Presbyterian Church of North America. The Scottish antecedents of this body — the Reformed Presbyterians (Covenanters) and the Associate Presbyterians (Seceders) — were transplanted to America in the 1750's. In 1782, a majority organized as the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, while minorities con-

tinued under the two original names. In 1858 the United Presbyterian Church was born of the merger of the Associate and Associate Reformed bodies though some ministers and congregations witness separately to the present.

The United Presbyterian Synod of Iowa was formed in 1860. There are 57 United Presbyterian congregations in Iowa today. The largest church in any branch of the Iowa Presbyterian family and the second largest in the entire United Presbyterian fold in America is the Westminster church in Des Moines, with 2,511 communicant members reported in 1951.

Cumberland Presbyterians

Until 1906, Iowa's third largest Presbyterian group was the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Not only had the Cumberland people organized the first two Presbyterian congregations within the limits of the present-day state of Iowa, but they also supplied a dramatic close to the 118th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., which met at Des Moines in 1906, by voting to reunite with this parent body. The question handled was, should the Cumberland people return to a church from which they had been eliminated a hundred years previously in Kentucky? But the reunion proved unstable, and there has been a continuing Cumberland Presbyterian Church since 1906. The denominational headquarters today are at Memphis, Tennessee, while McKenzie,

Tennessee, is the site of Bethel College and a theological seminary. The church's national strength in 1951 was 1,026 congregations with 80,140 members. When Bethel College was remodelled in 1922, new women's dormitories were provided through the bequest of John T. Laughlin of New London, Iowa, amounting to \$100,000.

There is but one Cumberland congregation in Iowa today — Shinar, near Pleasant Grove in Des Moines County, with 102 members. Organized on August 10, 1839, with ten members, Shinar has had a continuous existence since that date.

Colored Cumberland Presbyterians

As the Cumberland Presbyterians picked up in strength after 1810, numerous converts were made among the people of color in the South. After the Civil War, the Negroes favored a separate church body, and in 1869 were legally set apart.

The first General Assembly of the Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church was held in 1874. There are colored people of this faith in almost every state of the Union, though Iowa has but one congregation — that in Marshalltown. In June, 1951, the 77th General Assembly of this denomination convened at Marshalltown, the second session to be held in Iowa in a quarter of a century.

Reformed Presbyterians

In seventeenth-century Scotland the Reformed religion was staunchly defended by the Reformed Presbyterians or "Covenanters" against royal tyr-

anny. Throughout the period before the American Revolution, Scottish Covenanters and Seceders (also Presbyterians) came over to the colonies in large numbers. Efforts to form a single ecclesiastical body known as the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod were partly successful in 1782, though some ministers and congregations persisted on the outside under the original names. One of these bodies, the Reformed Presbyterian, today has four congregations in Iowa: at Clarinda, with 84 members; Hopkinton, 54; Morning Sun, 97; and Sharon, a rural church near Morning Sun, with 151 communicants. Together these congregations make up the Iowa Presbytery, which is attached to the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.

Associate Presbyterians

There is but one Associate Presbyterian congregation left in Iowa today — the church at Washington, which is really the net remainder of one of the oldest congregations of any denomination in the state. Although the formal organization of the Washington church dates only from 1858, when its members decided not to aid in forming the United Presbyterian Church of North America, actually its roots go back to 1837, when Associate Presbyterian Seceders began to arrive in present-day Washington County from Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. The first pastor was Rev. George C. Vincent, under whose guidance the church at

Washington was formed in 1841. In eight or nine years of work among Washington County settlers Vincent added hundreds to the rolls of his churches before returning to the East.

Orthodox Presbyterians

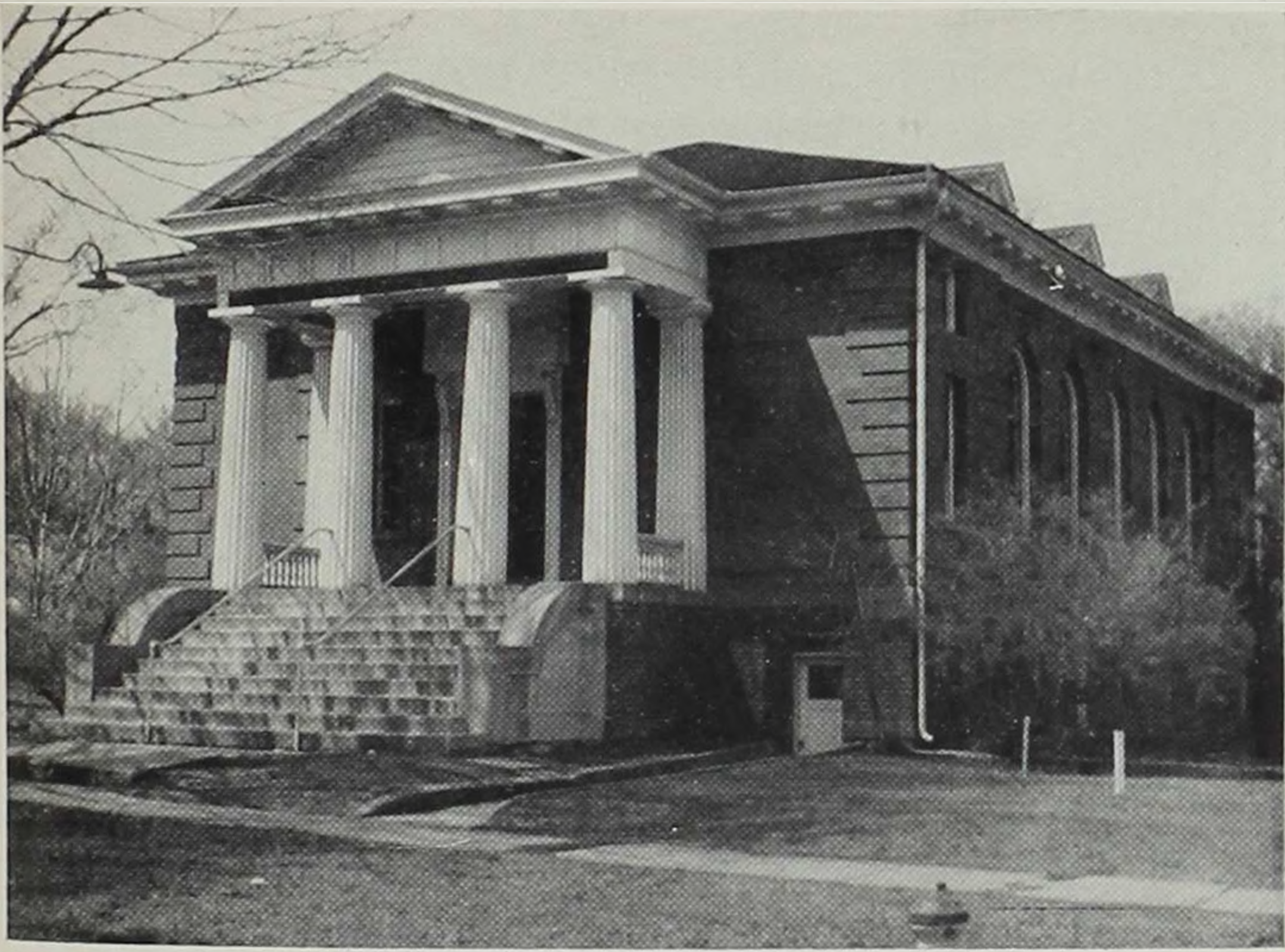
Controversy between Fundamentalists and Modernists resulted in the organization of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in 1936 by those who had dissented from the alleged modernism in the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. Some, suspended from the parent body, formed the so-called Presbyterian Church of America, but were enjoined from use of this name. Since 1939 the name "Orthodox" has been used. One congregation — at Waterloo — is maintained in Iowa.

Bible Presbyterians

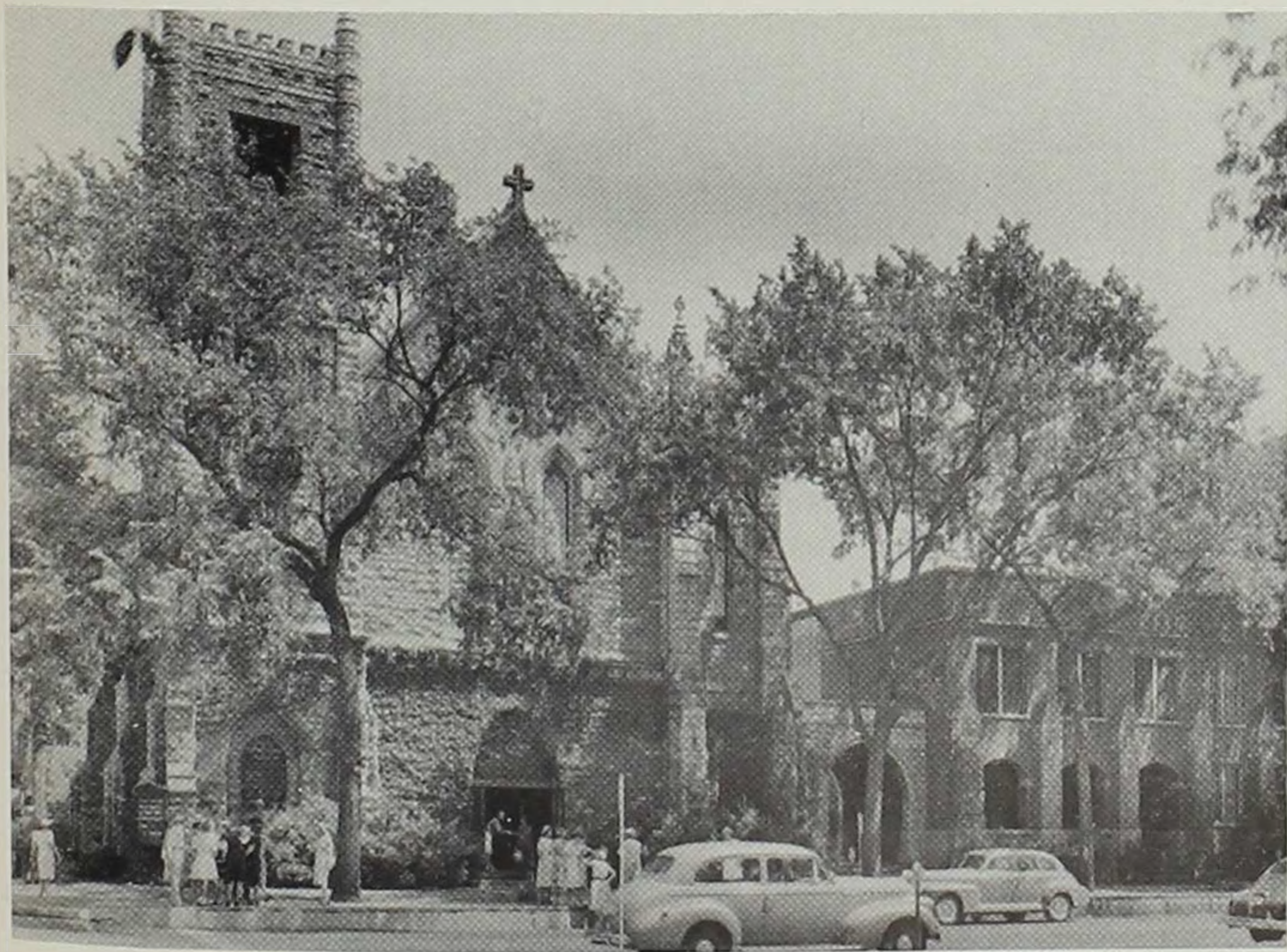
Another group named the Bible Presbyterian Church split from the Orthodox Presbyterians in 1938. Nationally, the Bible organization has 148 ministers with congregations in 17 states. According to the Committee on National Missions of the Bible Presbyterian Synod, there are two Bible Presbyterian congregations in Iowa: one at Cono Center, near Walker in Linn County, with 38 members; and the other, formed in 1951, at Woden in Hancock County, with 25 members.

FREDERICK I. KUHNS

SOME IOWA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

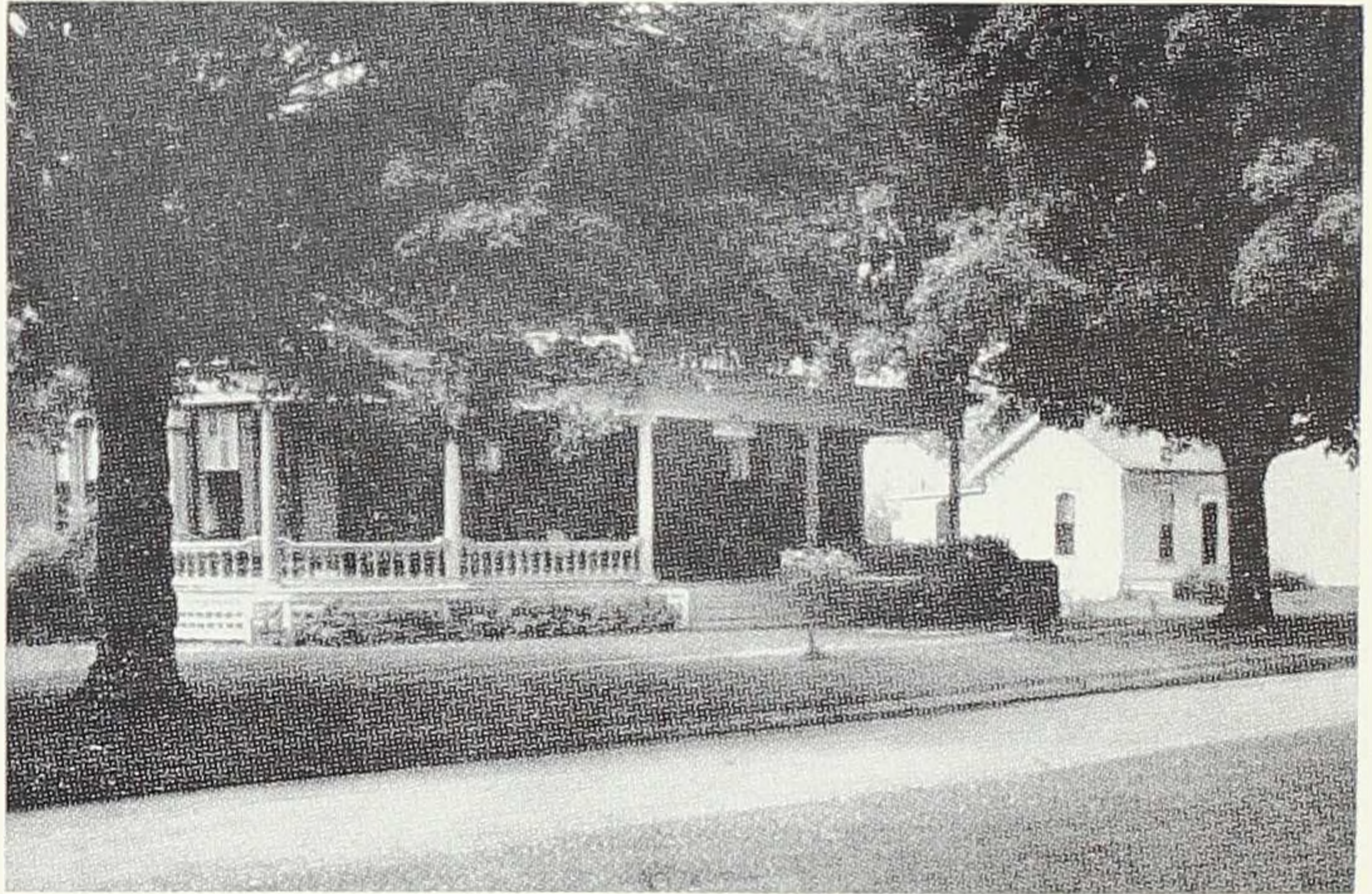


United Presbyterian Church — Grinnell



First Presbyterian Church — Cedar Rapids

DENOMINATIONAL RETIREMENT HOMES IN IOWA



Presbyterian Home — Ackley



United Presbyterian Home — Washington

"We Must Educate!"

Since Calvin, Presbyterians have regarded themselves as constituting a "teaching church." Wherever they have migrated, schools and colleges have been established. On the western frontier these institutions were especially needed among the new settlers. Dr. Lyman Beecher, a great Presbyterian revivalist, pled for their instruction: "We must educate! or we must perish by our own prosperity!"

Iowa Presbyterians have not been remiss as to this fundamental duty to the people. Four vigorous keepers of the Presbyterian heritage are associated with the Synod of Iowa today: Coe College at Cedar Rapids, the University of Dubuque at Dubuque, Parsons College at Fairfield, and Buena Vista College at Storm Lake. The James Millikin University at Decatur, Illinois, is also associated with the Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana synods as a heritage from the days of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Seminaries and Academies

The earliest efforts among Presbyterians to promote education for Iowans came with the chartering of "seminaries of learning" by the Wisconsin Territorial and Iowa Territorial Legislative As-

semblies, respectively, in 1837 and 1838. Des Moines College at West Point was on this early list. Jefferson Academy, chartered in 1844, became successively Yellow Spring Collegiate Institute and Yellow Spring College. Kossuth Academy, incorporated in 1873, functioned until 1902. Rev. Launcelot G. Bell's "Female Seminary" at Fairfield from 1848 to 1860, and Mount Pleasant Female Seminary from 1863 to the 1880's, rose, served the pioneer generation, and passed on their heritage to public institutions. Alexander College, established at Dubuque in 1852 by the Old School Synod of Iowa, also ceased operation. Corning Academy came later, flourishing between 1885 and 1908 and graduating 170 students. Lenox College at Hopkinton set a good record for accomplishment from its founding in 1856 to its demise in 1947. The United Presbyterians could also show an academy and a college at Washington midway through the last century.

University of Dubuque

The University of Dubuque is celebrating the centennial of its organization this year, 1952. It was begun in 1852 as a training ground for ministers by Rev. Adrian Van Vliet, a Hollander, the founder of German Presbyterianism in the West. The University has passed through stages in turn as a seminary and college to its present university status which includes a theological seminary. It was taken under the care of the Presbyterian Gen-

eral Assembly in 1870, when it became known as the German Theological School of the Northwest. The present site was acquired in 1905.

In the years that followed Dubuque grew rapidly under such able leaders as William O. Ruston, Cornelius M. Steffens, and Dale D. Welch. In 1907 a collegiate department was added. In 1911 the institution had three separate divisions — an academy, a college, and a seminary.

In 1952, the University is working on its program of "Grand Design" — the building of those qualities of courage, vision, humor, humility, and, above all, faith — under the presidency of Dr. Rollo La Porte, who came to the University in 1948. Its present facilities and those currently hoped for and soon to be erected have been pledged to "the preservation and strengthening of the freedoms that we now have," and the achievement of the University's high goals is based upon the "twin ideals of academic excellence and spiritual power."

Coe College

At Cedar Rapids in 1851 Rev. Williston Jones, a New School Presbyterian minister, together with his wife, founded in their cabin a near duplicate of the old "log college" type, for both men and women, which came to be known as Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute. By 1866 a female seminary was also in operation at Cedar Rapids, and this was followed by Parsons Seminary between 1866 and

1875, "Old Main" being completed in 1868. Daniel Coe of Durham, New York, who had started Jones off with a gift in 1851, now aided in securing eighty acres of campus which derived in part from the estate of Lewis B. Parsons, Sr.

In 1881 a fresh start was made. Parsons Seminary had suspended operations in 1870, and it was not until 1875 that Coe Collegiate Institute was opened. This school was reorganized and renamed Coe College in 1881 with Stephen Phelps as its first president — 1881–1887. In the years that followed Coe College was led by such able men as James Marshall, John A. Marquis, and Harry M. Gage. Coe's fine campus, excellent faculty and courses of study honor its courageous founders. Howell H. Brooks is acting president.

Parsons College

Between the old Yellow Spring College and the longed-for development of Parsons College there existed "an unconscious and potent connection." In due time, General Lewis B. Parsons, Jr., of Civil War fame, aided a number of Presbyterian ministers in its establishment from the legacy of his father, Lewis B. Parsons, Sr. The site chosen was Fairfield, where "thirty gentlemen" met on February 24, 1875, to take steps to incorporate as trustees. The training of young men and women "for life's activities, both of the church and society at large," has remained the principal aim of Parsons College through its more than three-quarters of a

century of service, begun under the presidency of Rev. Alexander G. Wilson, and continued under such able leaders as Thomas D. Ewing, Willis E. Parsons, and Clarence W. Greene. A pleasant campus, excellent facilities, and a faculty of true attainment give Parsons promise of splendid returns under the able presidency of Dr. Tom E. Shearer today.

Buena Vista College

Buena Vista College at Storm Lake developed under the joint sponsorship of the Fort Dodge and Sioux City presbyteries. Between these church bodies and the citizens of Storm Lake agreements were reached in 1891 providing for the removal to Storm Lake of an institute previously functioning at Fort Dodge and actually tracing back to an academy set up at Calliope in 1883. But Buena Vista dates its collegiate existence from the presidency of Rev. L. Y. Hayes in 1891, since which time, in addition, the college has been under the care of the Iowa Synod. Like its sister Presbyterian colleges, Buena Vista seeks to inculcate the Christian way of life. Dr. Henry Olson has been president of the college since 1931.

Westminster Foundation

Through the agency of the Westminster Foundation, Presbyterianism in 1952 sustains the same significant relationships to great academic institutions as advocated and maintained by Calvin, Knox, Dickinson, and Witherspoon (not forget-

ting their worthy successors) in Europe, America, and other lands. In their work at the State University of Iowa in Iowa City, at Iowa State College in Ames, and at Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls, the full-time directors and workers on the Foundation closely cooperate with the local Presbyterian churches. Thus a religious emphasis is provided for the students in each of Iowa's three state-sponsored institutions of higher education.

FREDERICK I. KUHNS

Some Traits and Emphases

The rich flowering of American Presbyterianism has been influenced by the frontier, by revivalism, by the premium set on higher education, by the presence of racial lines, and by the relative prosperity of Presbyterians generally.

Because Presbyterians are lovers of liberty and strong believers in democracy, they have seen their denominational roof extended periodically to accommodate many shades of belief. Presbyterianism itself has released the critical process in religion — from Calvin to the present. All Presbyterians hold the Bible to be “the only infallible rule of faith and practice” though some may take this principle to mean more than do others. At bottom, all are loyal to Jesus Christ as Lord, and to the one, holy, universal Church as the only divinely appointed means for the redemption of the world and the eternal salvation of mankind from sin.

Iowa Presbyterians of all eight varieties have held (some still hold) camp meetings, had their metrical Psalms “lined out” in worship, abstained from travel and secular employments on the Christian Sabbath, and professed their firm belief in the complete separation of church and state. Some take no part in politics, others admit none but Pres-

byterians of their own camp to the communion table. Some sing only "Psalms of David," others scatter uninspired secular poetry through their hymnals which otherwise are inspired. Some permit no musical instruments in worship. Many Presbyterians are teetotalers, a few others may incline their ears if the physician prescribes a little wine for the stomach's sake.

No generalization is adequate, but it may be safely said that while the "Westminster Standards" are highly esteemed by all Presbyterians, some have altered them, some even supplementing those standards with creeds of their own composition, as the United Presbyterians have done.

All Iowa Presbyterians are strongly missionary-minded. For example, the Iowa Synod of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., in 1951 has registered the highest percentage increase in benevolence offerings of all the synods in America.

Finally, all Iowa Presbyterians confess that the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, hath yet more to reveal to His own, if He is but received in faith.

FREDERICK I. KUHNS



OCT 10 '58

NOV 25 '58

APR 15 '60

OCT 16 '57

