The Palimpsest

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE

THE PALIMPSEST, issued monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa, is devoted to the dissemination of Iowa History. Supplementing the other publications of this Society, it aims to present the materials of Iowa History in a form that is attractive and a style that is popular in the best sense—to the end that the story of our Commonwealth may be more widely read and cherished.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

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 PALIMPSEST

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Iowa Schools in 1846

The Ordinance of 1787 contained one sentence of imperishable significance: "Religion, morality and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." This principle Iowa inherited through the Territories of Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

The Territory of Iowa was settled by people more varied in backgrounds than were the first settlers in Ohio; many of the Iowa settlers were second generation pioneers, once removed, at least, from the schools of the older States. For the benefit of these early settlers, elementary schools of various kinds were established, where pioneer children clad in homespun sat on rough benches of split logs to learn the three R's. Later academies, select schools, and colleges were provided.

Before we survey the schools of the white children a century ago we may, perhaps, give a hur-

ried glance at a school maintained in Iowa by the Federal government for Indian children.

In the treaty with the Winnebago Indians in 1832 the United States had agreed to "erect a suitable building, or buildings with a garden and a field attached, somewhere near Fort Crawford, or Prairie du Chien, and establish and maintain therein, for the term of twenty-seven years, a school for the education, including clothing, board, and lodging, of such Winnebago children as may be voluntarily sent to it: . . . said children to be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, gardening, agriculture, carding, spinning, weaving, and sewing, according to their ages and sexes, and such other branches of useful knowledge as the President of the United States may prescribe". This was, perhaps, the earliest example of the study of agriculture and home economics in the Middle West. The annual cost of this school was not to exceed $3,000.

Joseph M. Street selected a site for the Winnebago school on the Yellow River, and in 1834 a substantial log schoolhouse was erected. Meanwhile, President Andrew Jackson appointed his friend, David Lowry, D. D., a minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, as teacher. In 1840, because of changing conditions, the subagent was instructed to sell the agency and the

school for what they would bring, and a new agency and school were established farther westward, on the Turkey River, at a point four or five miles southeast of Fort Atkinson. By 1845 the number of pupils had increased to 166 — 83 boys and 83 girls — but the average daily attendance was only about sixty.

Concerning this unique school for the Indians, J. B. Newhall, writing optimistically in 1846, said: "The zeal evinced in behalf of these untutored children, and the efforts made in imparting instruction have been attended with the happiest results. Showing conclusively that the 'children of the forest' are equally as susceptible of acquiring an education as the more favored ones of the Anglo-Saxon race. From 60 to 120 scholars are in daily attendance. Their aptness in acquiring a knowledge of geography, and the various branches of learning, is truly astonishing. All the usual branches of education commonly taught in our schools and seminaries are taught here.

"Connected with the school is the department of Domestic Economy, at present under the superintendence of Mrs. A. Lockwood, late of Bloomington. This lady will be favorably remembered, by many citizens of Iowa, as the former attentive hostess of the 'Burlington House', Burlington, Iowa. All the females of the establishment devote

a portion of each day in acquiring a knowledge of needle work of all descriptions. This branch of the institution, under its present worthy matroness, furnishes all the clothing necessary for the school children. Some 20 or 30 girls spend a considerable portion of each day in this highly useful and excellent department."

In 1848 the Winnebagoes moved into Minnesota, and the Winnebago school on the Turkey River was abandoned. Educational activities were henceforth to be largely concerned with white children.

Perhaps Professor Jesse Macy of Grinnell College gave the best description of early schools when he wrote in 1898: "In each neighborhood, as soon as there were enough children of school-age, a meeting of the citizens was called, a place and plan for a school-house determined upon, a day set for building, and at the appointed time they all came out and built. Then they hired a teacher and kept up the school as best they could."

This procedure, it will be noted, was not based upon any law, except the economic law of supply and demand. Yet school laws had been passed, more of them, indeed, than were needed. As early as January, 1839, the Territorial Legislative Assembly had passed a law which provided for the establishment of common schools in each county

"which shall be open and free for every class of white citizens between the ages of four and twenty-one years".

"The county board", it was further provided, "shall from time to time form such districts in their respective counties, whenever a petition may be presented for that purpose by a majority of the voters resident within such contemplated district." Provision was also made for the election of "three trustees, one clerk, one treasurer, one assessor, and one collector" — seven officers in all.

The lawmakers of those early days, as Theodore S. Parvin said, "knew quite well, at the time they framed their laws, that there were no public schools and could not be" in the greater part of Iowa, for some years to come. But "they believed that the passing of good school-laws would have the effect of encouraging immigration. The statutes expressed a longing of the people for a time when there would be seven persons living near enough together on these prairies fitted to hold school offices and manage a public school in their various neighborhoods."

There was little uniformity in methods of support of elementary schools in Iowa in 1846. A group of neighbors might coöperate in providing a log cabin and a teacher. Sometimes an individual set up a school supported by tuition.

The school law of 1839 provided for a tax of one-half of one per cent, with the provision, however, that no person should be taxed in excess of $10 per year. This income usually had to be supplemented by "rates" charged the patrons on the basis of the number of pupils sent to the school. This was used to pay the teacher; schoolhouses were usually built from the property tax alone. In some instances various methods of school support may have existed in the same community, either side by side in different schools, or one supplementing the other in the same school.

The typical schoolhouse of one hundred years ago was built of logs, with a fireplace at one end. "The seats were long benches running the entire length of the room, with a wide plank next to the wall, which served as a desk". There was, of course, a total lack of school apparatus with the exception of a board some two feet wide by four feet long, which was called a "blackboard", although the paint scarcely justified the name.

In the morning when the pupils arrived at school they might find a bright fire burning in the big fireplace. The schoolmaster might be "setting copy" for the pupils from passages of scripture or from well-known maxims; or he might be making pens from goose quills, as was the custom, for the steel pen was not yet in common use in Iowa.

The curriculum was rather limited, but it was rigorously pursued. A writer who remembered those early days said some years later: "Our main battles were with the three R's, and I am fully persuaded that we were able to read as intelligently, to write as legibly, and to spell better than the average high school graduate of today, while our arithmetics were things to be studied, not guessed at, things to be digested, not picked at. Grammar, composition and literature were not deemed essential and were utterly neglected."

Textbooks in pioneer days were neither numerous nor uniform, but they were the standard books of well-known authors. Outstanding among them were the McGuffey reader, Ray's arithmetic, an elementary speller, Smith's geography, and Smith's or Kirkham's grammar if, indeed, a grammar were used. In addition to these, one book company advertised "Blank books from Memorandums to Ledgers; writing and letter paper, quills, steel pens, inks, &c."

In some schools arithmetic seemed to hold the chief place of interest, and frequently the teacher took great pride in propounding original problems. One teacher, it was said, "kept every one wide awake all the time. His long suit was fish, not to eat but to use as bait for arithmetic". If he were not weighing fish, it might be butter. "How

much would a six inch butter ball weigh, if a three inch ball weighed so much?" Geography lessons and even arithmetic problems were sometimes stated in rhyme to stimulate interest.

On Friday afternoon a spelling match was often held "and pieces spoken." As a social diversion spelling schools were held several times during the winter in competition with other schools. Parents and friends often joined in these contests, which, while friendly, often aroused the liveliest enthusiasm.

Teachers were not well qualified and they were poorly paid. As a part of their compensation they "boarded round" among the families whose children they taught. All in all elementary schools in 1846 were primitive — a far, far cry from the well-equipped institutions of today.

But Iowans looked beyond these elementary schools, realizing that a higher education increased a young man's chance to achieve leadership in the community and that educated mothers were an equally important asset. Out of this ambition grew the widely publicized seminaries, academies, select schools, and colleges which dotted Iowa in 1846. Some were well established with substantial buildings and teachers of ability and training, who later came to be men of renown.

In the years between 1838 and 1846 incorpora-

tion acts were adopted for academies and seminaries at Antwerp, Augusta, Bentonsport, Burlington, Davenport, Denmark, Dewitt, Dubuque, Farmington, Fort Madison, Grandview, Iowa City, Keosauqua, Mount Pleasant, Parkhurst, Wapello, and West Point. St. Raphael's Seminary, founded at Dubuque in 1839, had a melange in 1846 of theological students, boys of high school age, a sprinkling of boys of the Sioux Indian tribe, and a few half-breeds. Among the schools designated as academies were Clinton Academy at Dewitt, Denmark Academy, Farmington Academy, Howe's Academy at Mount Pleasant, Jefferson Academy in Des Moines County, the Mechanics' Academy at Iowa City, and the West Point Academy. Of these, Denmark Academy, Howe's Academy, West Point Academy, the Mechanics' Academy, and perhaps a few others were operating in 1846.

There were also a considerable number of schools that were designated either as a "college" or a "university", although not all of the work was done on the college level. Among such institutions in 1846 were Burlington University, Iowa College at Davenport, Iowa City College, Iowa City University, and Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute. Two of these schools in particular are of interest in this centennial year.

The Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute, incorporated in 1844 to take the place of the Mount Pleasant Literary Institute, became Iowa Wesleyan College, the oldest college in Iowa. The first college building erected in Iowa — "Pioneer Hall" — is still preserved on the Iowa Wesleyan campus. Iowa College established at Davenport, in 1846, chiefly through the interest and efforts of members of the Iowa Band, was later moved to Grinnell and became Grinnell College.

Thus if one would take a retrospective view of schools as they were in Iowa in 1846, he would note a substantial school for Indian children, elementary schools here and there for the benefit of children of the pioneers, and a few well-planned academies and colleges for the more advanced students. The schools were primitive in character, but together they constituted a fair beginning in the education of the Territory and the State.

JACOB A. SWISHER

The Era of Private Academies

Throughout the recorded history of men, the training of adolescent youth, especially of boys, has been a major community interest. Iowa offers no exception to this rule. Prior to 1838, when the fringe of settlements west of the Mississippi broke the apron strings that bound them to the land of the Badgers, at least ten academies or seminaries had been authorized in what was later to be the Commonwealth of Iowa. To be sure, only two of this first planting bore fruit; yet before Iowa's first public high school was finally organized in the year 1856, more than a score of private academies and seminaries were in operation.

The academy movement had almost reached its peak by the time Iowa entered the Union. Beginning in Pennsylvania a century before Iowa's statehood, taking deeper root in Massachusetts, thriving mightily in New York, then sweeping westward into the new States as they were carved from the national domain, this movement, one of the most vital and beneficent of the many that characterized the young nation, had culminated in the founding by 1850 of more than six thousand recorded academies or non-public secondary

schools in the United States and an uncounted number of smaller institutions.

Some of the older States, such as Vermont, Massachusetts, and New York, and several of the newer ones, notably Ohio and Indiana, made their academies semi-public by contributing generously in money or lands to their support, but the extent of public encouragement in Iowa was limited to chartering almost any plan for education.

Local districts in Iowa soon took over the elementary school work, but private schools long furnished secondary and college work. Often the line between the two was indefinite. These schools took their students as they found them and, for the most part, permitted them to take any courses they desired and could carry. These academies and colleges were sometimes sponsored by individuals, many were founded by churches, and a few were planned by associations of workers or farmers.

Half a dozen of these independent institutions had begun their service before Iowa entered the Union. At Yellow Spring in Des Moines County, a school appeared as early as 1836, with definite secondary work in an incorporated academy by 1844. Ambitious young men from the East dreamed of a college here, possibly a university, and one, Nathan R. Leonard, came from Yellow

Spring to cast in his lot as professor of mathematics in the infant State University of Iowa.

At Grandview in Muscatine County, a school was reported as early as 1836, small and unincorporated, but finally evolving into what was widely known for a decade or two as the Eastern Iowa Normal School. A little school in Dubuque, chartered in 1838, catered to the youth of that locality for a brief period. Hither came young Thomas Hart Benton, Jr., brilliant, dapper, well educated, twenty-two, and in this mining town of twelve hundred he taught for a year or two. This has been called "the first classical school in Iowa".

Most famous, perhaps, of all the unincorporated institutions on the secondary level was Howe's Academy at Mount Pleasant, organized in 1844 and continuing in vigorous operation until 1917. Neither the founder of this school, Samuel L. Howe, nor his son, Seward C., who followed him as proprietor-principal, was a profound scholar, but both were superior teachers and both were able to impress their assistants and their students that teaching and learning were quite the most important things in the world. It is significant that John Van Valkenburg, first head of teacher training at the State University of Iowa, was prepared for college here under the direction of Samuel L. Howe, himself.

Denmark Academy, one of the church-sponsored institutions, was connected with the celebrated "Iowa Band", that group of devoted young ministers affiliated with the Congregational and Presbyterian churches who came out to Iowa in 1843, with the ambition that each one should found a church and all a college. Grinnell is, of course, the college which grew out of their labors, but that is another story.

Denmark Academy was incorporated in 1843 and two years later instruction began in a little single-story building which served as church, school, and public forum. A two-story stone building was erected in 1848 and a second in 1866. After the Civil War when young men who had left their classes to join the colors were coming back, two hundred and seventy students were registered, coming from no fewer than fifteen States and Territories.

Those who loved the Denmark Academy, and there were many, were spared the mortification of seeing it fade away as so many others before had done. In 1924, the limestone building burned. A movement had been on foot for some time to develop here a consolidated public school and shortly after the fire, a district was formed, a fine new building was erected, and the public and private forces of the community joined in what is

legally known as the Denmark Academy-High School.

There were at least eight academies in Van Buren County, four or five bidding for students at the same time. At the little town of Bentonsport, for example, once famous for its woolen mills, is a small, two-story building which has been in use since 1870 as a part of the public school system. It was erected in 1851 by five prominent citizens for a private academy at the cost of three thousand dollars. A scholarly gentleman, John W. Allen by name, was the first principal here. His school won quite a reputation, attracting students from a wide area. One, William E. Mason, became a United States Senator from Illinois, and another, William A. Clark, became one of the world's greatest producers of copper, the millionaire Clark of Montana.

One of the academies founded by an organization of workers was the Mechanics' Academy, started in 1842 by the Mechanics' Mutual Aid Association of Iowa City. It had a "Male Department" and a "Female Department", with tuition ranging from a dollar a month for elementary subjects to $5.00 per month for music. The institution was later abandoned and in 1866 the Iowa General Assembly donated the land to the University which later built a hospital on the site.

In the middle counties of Iowa which were being settled in the decade preceding the Civil War private schools were also organized, some of which developed substantial foundations, continuing in operation into the early years of this century. One of these was the New Providence Academy in Hardin County. In 1908 it was a friendly little school of eighty or ninety boys and girls working happily under their headmaster, Albert F. Styles, his sister, and an assistant or two. Well it might be a friendly school for it was founded in 1869 by the Society of Friends. It had been hoped that running expenses could be met by tuition, but always, Mr. Styles says, the financial life of the Academy was one constant struggle for existence. Education is, indeed, a good investment in character, but not in money.

Another mid-Iowa academy was the Cedar Valley Seminary. The village of Osage had made a bid for the county seat of Mitchell County and a courthouse and a jail had been erected, but this had failed to entice the government from the rival hamlet. When the Cedar Valley Baptist Association met at Waterloo in September, 1862, Reverend H. I. Parker laid before that body an offer from the town fathers of Osage to loan the jail and courthouse gratis should a seminary of learning be established there. The offer was accepted

and in January, 1863, the Reverend Alva Bush opened Cedar Valley Seminary with one assistant teacher and a student body of thirty-one. After five or six years of free use of the building, Osage won the county seat and had need of her buildings, so in 1867 the board of trustees incorporated the institution, and a dignified two-story building was erected in such a workmanlike manner that it is still in use, a unit in the public school system of Osage to which it was deeded in 1922.

In 1881, after eighteen years as principal, Mr. Bush died at his post. His place was taken by Colonel Alonzo Abernethy, a veteran of the Civil War and a man of affairs, with a superior record in war and in peace. He had already served three terms as State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Iowa, was for many years a member of the Board of Regents of the State University, and had sufficient material means so that he had no need to worry about a livelihood.

Colonel Abernethy held the principalship of Cedar Valley Seminary for twenty-one years, resigning in 1902. In his long administration he was able to build up on the Iowa prairie an academy resembling those in which New England took such justifiable pride. In these years arose a definite demand for more practical studies in response to which a commercial department appeared. Ath-

letics, too, began to take a place of some importance in the better secondary schools, and Cedar Valley anticipated the need by providing an adequate gymnasium years before even some of the excellent Iowa colleges had made such provision for health and recreation.

The real contribution of the Cedar Valley Seminary was in the youth who were nurtured there, youth who in maturity served their State and nation well, among them, to name half a dozen, such men as Hamlin Garland, Frederick F. Faville, David F. Call, Willard F. Eaton, Chauncey P. Colegrove, and Dr. Charles S. Chase.

In the extreme western counties fewer academies were to be found, though even there private and community elementary schools usually preceded public schools by several years. Some quite noted private secondary schools were established, also, even as far west as LeMars and Sioux City.

Most of the Iowa academies sponsored by Protestant churches and lay groups were coeducational, though in the early stages of the movement girls were sometimes segregated in a "female department". Even those who favored the higher education of girls were not always convinced that coeducation offered the proper solution of the problem, and several attempts, a few of them successful, were made to establish separate sec-

ondary schools for girls. One of the most interesting ventures occurred in Dubuque.

A group of men and women, inclined to sponsor such a project, were encouraged by Catherine Beecher, sister of the great Henry and the still greater Harriet Beecher Stowe, who came that way in the year 1853. Within the year the cornerstone of a building was laid and the Dubuque Female Seminary was soon a reality. Miss Beecher paid Dubuque a second visit in 1855, and on behalf of the Woman's Educational Association of New York and New England she pledged $20,000 toward endowment and equipment providing certain conditions were met. Apparently the conditions were not met for the pledge was never paid and in a few years the building passed into other hands.

One of the most successful of the girls' boarding schools in Iowa was St. Agatha's Seminary of Iowa City. This school was founded in the year 1864 by an order of Catholic Sisters of Charity. In 1877 there were nine teachers in residence and as many as 175 students. By the turn of the century the school had become largely local in character and soon after it was discontinued.

As Iowa celebrates her centennial, there are in the State several well established private secondary schools for girls, all but one under the direc-

tion of the Roman Catholic Church. The exception is St. Katherine's School in Davenport, opened in September, 1884, under the direction of Reverend William Stevens Perry, Bishop of Iowa for the Protestant Episcopal Church.

The academies of Iowa, established to fill the gap in education before the organization of public high schools, were strikingly alike. Except in a few cases they were coeducational and the chief, if not the only, means of support was a tuition fee, sometimes a few cents a week for small children and a dollar a week for secondary students. In most cases the number of classes taught by each instructor would be appalling to the modern high school teacher.

Historical records indicate that as many as a hundred non-public schools that would now be classed as secondary were put in operation during the years before high schools became numerous. It seems probable that at least as many more small academies and "select" schools played their part in Iowa's educational adjustment. In addition, it should be borne in mind that the colleges maintained preparatory departments, often called academies, even after the turn of the century.

In the year 1911, the few private academies remaining were given a serious jolt when the State enacted legislation providing for the payment of

tuition at a public high school for every youth who wished to enter high school and was prepared to do the work, but who did not reside in a district maintaining such a school. This legislation practically eliminated the private secondary school as an individual or community enterprise. Forty years ago twenty-four non-public secondary schools — academies, seminaries, normal schools — were accredited by the State University of Iowa. Today only six of these are in operation.

Widely distributed throughout Iowa, however, are more than a hundred relatively new non-public secondary schools which are now accredited by the University and associated institutions of higher learning. These are sectarian schools, usually in connection with elementary schools, maintained by religious organizations, for the instruction of the children in their parishes.

Except for these schools the century of educational evolution has seen public agencies take over all education in the primary grades, most of the secondary school work, and approximately half of the non-professional college work. In education, as in many other fields, private initiative has been supplanted by government agencies, all within the hundred years of the State of Iowa.

FOREST C. ENSIGN

Taxes Underwrite Education

One morning, early in October, 1830, eight children, seven boys and one girl, filed into a small log schoolhouse in the Half-breed Tract at Ah-wi-pe-tuk, meaning "at the head of the rapids". The teacher, a young medical student named Berryman Jennings, received for his work only board and lodging and the privileges of studying medicine in the office of the patron of the school, Dr. Isaac Galland. This was the first school in Iowa.

As the pioneer built a stark log schoolhouse to promote his children's intellectual development, so contemporary Iowans now rate education as an essential governmental obligation. In Iowa the tourist may still reckon mileage in terms of a schoolhouse each two miles. Visualize an Iowa community, and your mental picture usually includes the inevitable rectangular brick school building located at the edge of town.

The steps by which Iowa came to support so many educational activities by public taxation have been taken slowly. One hundred years ago education was largely financed by private initiative and individual sacrifices, although the Territory of Iowa made early provision for free schools

and authorized a tax of not more than one-half of one per cent on the property in the district. In no case was a resident to pay more than ten dollars per annum.

The pioneers, however, found that the tax levy on frontier land holdings brought in very small amounts of money. Land valued at the purchase price of a dollar and a quarter an acre meant, under the law of 1839, only a dollar in school taxes for each quarter section, certainly not much in the way of school support. Since free public schools lacked adequate support, various other plans were used to finance them.

Several families sometimes coöperated to provide a school, such as that opened by Berryman Jennings in 1830. Sometimes a school was opened by private initiative and supported by tuition charges. A familiar device was the "rate" system, inherited from Michigan. Support for such schools came from tuition paid by patrons and the amount assessed varied with the number of children. Before 1853 the Iowa law did not authorize such schools, but neither did it forbid them, and many communities used some plan of this kind.

The Constitution of 1846 required a school district to maintain a "common" school at least three months in each year and provided that any district not complying should be deprived of its share

of the public school fund. This provision apparently failed to furnish the necessary schools, for in 1853 the General Assembly passed an act authorizing the assessment of tuition or "rates" to pay the teacher's salary. Only families sending children to school paid these charges, although all property paid some school taxes.

The free school law, adopted in 1858 after consultation with Horace Mann, omitted the provision authorizing tuition charges, except for children outside the district, and schools were to be financed by local taxation supplemented by grants from the State school fund. Incidentally the directors were required to provide separate schools for colored children unless all patrons of the subdistrict consented to their attending that school. Economy possibly suggested racial tolerance.

In the meantime district electors had been authorized, by a law approved on January 15, 1849, to provide instruction in branches above the elementary grades. The additional compensation paid the teachers of the higher branches was to be apportioned among the patrons and not levied as a tax on property.

In 1851 the school board of Bloomington Township in Muscatine County built a schoolhouse under the terms of this act and the "rate bill" of 1853 made it possible to provide instruction in

higher branches under the able leadership of D. Franklin Wells and Miss M. M. Lyon. Three years later the Muscatine school was offering algebra, geometry, astronomy, physiology, and history, but no separate high school was organized until the Tipton Union School was opened in 1856.

The report of the Mann Commission in 1856 recommended county high schools to be financed from the county treasury, most of which would come from taxes. Such schools were, among other things, to train teachers for the elementary schools. No distinction between the sexes could be made in admitting students. This law was soon repealed. County high schools were again authorized in 1870, but only one, the Guthrie County High School at Panora, was ever organized.

By 1870 district high schools, supported by public taxation, had begun to take over secondary education. The Iowa law now requires a district not having such a high school to bear the cost of the student's tuition in a neighboring school, and the Fifty-first General Assembly enacted a measure providing for payment by the State of the cost of transporting students to neighboring schools. This aid, amounting to some $2,000,000, may alter the tendency of many rural youths to omit a high school education. In 1942, less than sixty per cent of eighth grade graduates from rural schools

attended high school, while ninety per cent of eighth grade graduates from town schools went on to high school.

The same movement from private to public sponsorship and support is evident in the growth of public libraries. The Jefferson County Library opened at Fairfield in 1853 was supported by members who purchased shares or paid dues. Most towns had one or more of these privately supported subscription or association libraries, but in 1870 the General Assembly authorized city councils to establish free public libraries and to levy taxes to support them. By 1900 the State assumed leadership and supervision by creating the Library Commission. By 1944 there were 295 free, public, tax-supported libraries in Iowa and 86 association libraries. The swing from private to public library support was three-fourths complete.

In the field of college education the trend from privately supported to State-financed institutions has not been as complete as in the case of primary and secondary schools. By the act of February 25, 1847, establishing the State University of Iowa, the Commonwealth entered the field of higher education. In 1858 the State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts was established and in 1876 the State Normal School, now the State Teachers College, was opened.

Professional schools, except for the training of teachers, were late in developing in Iowa. Most of the colleges had normal departments and the State University followed this rule in its beginning years. The first medical college in Iowa was sponsored by private initiative. The relationship between the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Davenport, later at Keokuk, and the State University defies elucidation in a brief article, but it was during this period that the legislature loaned $15,000 from the common school fund to the "medical department" at Keokuk. It was not until 1869 that a medical department was opened at Iowa City as a definite part of the University.

Thomas Jefferson advocated a plan to finance the college education of superior students through tax support. The idea that the public should pay for the college education of capable children of poor or middle class families was, however, too revolutionary for early Virginians. War veterans are now given Federal grants to finance their college work regardless of their economic status, but the Attorney General of Iowa, asked to give a ruling on the authority of the State to borrow money to build apartments to house its married students, has so far ruled in the negative.

Bridging the gap between the public high school and the universities and colleges of Iowa

are the public junior colleges which were authorized by a law passed in 1927. These are limited to districts having at least twenty thousand population. At the close of the year 1940-1941 there were twenty-seven junior colleges in operation. About half were closed during the war, but a few have reopened.

The tendency for private agencies to initiate institutions and for public agencies to take over the projects is exemplified also in the history of Iowa institutions for dependent, defective, and delinquent children. In 1852 Samuel Bacon, a blind teacher of the blind, opened a school for the blind in Keokuk. It was moved to Iowa City the following year and in April the General Assembly took it over and appropriated $2,000 for the next three years. Reverend William E. Ijams established a private school for the deaf and dumb at Iowa City in 1854. A year later this institution also was taken over by the State. The present day Training Schools had their first inception in the will of Josiah White, who left 1440 acres of land in Lee County and $20,000 to a school for boys and girls.

Another example of contemporary expansion is the recently inaugurated program to aid handicapped children in their home communities. The speech clinic at the State University of Iowa has furthered research and practice in that field and

an act was passed in 1945 to create a division of special education in the State Department of Public Instruction. Coöperation between a State supervisor and local school officials will bring specialized instruction at home or school for crippled children and those with sight or hearing, tuberculosis or heart difficulties, a speech impediment, or other disabilities which prevent attendance at the usual classes. Where the expense of this program exceeds the cost of educating a normal child in the community, the additional expenditure is borne by the State treasury.

Thus far Iowans have chosen to follow the State's long-time practice of financing public schools through locally collected property taxes. The fact that this is an impressive responsibility on the holders of property is evidenced by the amount of money collected for school support. In one year, $46,494,266.85 was derived from property taxes to support schools. This sum represented 47.7 per cent of all property tax collections. More recent State taxes such as sales, income, and corporation taxes have been created by the State, largely for the State, and the total school expenditure now represents only 28.8 per cent of the total Iowa tax income.

To relieve the burden on the local property holder, various proposals have been advocated.

Parent-teacher associations and organizations composed of farmers, businessmen, laborers, University graduates, and others have advocated State financial aid for the public schools. Chief argument for this State support grows out of the inability of some areas to collect sufficient local funds from tax levies on property to provide school opportunities equal to those available in richer parts of the State. An investigation some years ago showed that one district included property valued at only $500 per school child, while the richest district in the State had some $140,000 in property per student.

Although the State previously maintained a sinking fund to aid localities financially incapable of providing the minimum essentials of a good school, the 1945 General Assembly opened the door to more extensive financial help from the State. The words of this significant appropriation bear examination. "There is hereby appropriated from the general fund of the state of Iowa for each year of the biennium beginning July 1, 1945, and ending June 30, 1947, for the purposes set forth in this act [aid to poorer school districts], the sum of one million dollars ($1,000,000.00) or so much thereof as may be necessary." This act would raise State support to some 2.15 per cent of the total cost of public schools. Before 1945, only 1.4

per cent of school costs in Iowa were contributed from State funds.

From pioneer days Iowans have debated the merits of profound and amusing problems of the day in small or large groups. These discussions might take place around the recitation bench in the local school or the round stove in the general store. Many lyceum groups were formed to debate political, literary, and scientific subjects. Although the radio has offered another variety of discussion, the round table, communities in Iowa continue to provide opportunities for discussion.

Some communities have pioneered in the area of adult education, either as regular classes or as forums to discuss contemporary problems. The public schools of Sac City and Des Moines are examples of schools that have attracted consistent groups of adults to public meetings for the study and discussion of vital interests of the day. The Iowa School Code Commission of 1944 recommended to the Iowa General Assembly that an act to authorize and finance a program for community adult education would be consistent with the goals of a democracy.

Since the time of George Washington a deliberate attempt has been made to keep the control of the schools within the jurisdiction of State and local officials, but Federal expenditures support ag-

ricultural and home economics instruction in some schools and help provide school lunches. Advocates of Federal aid to State school systems maintain that Federal funds should be expended to equalize educational opportunities between areas. Recognizing the principle of State control, some persons advocate Federal financial aid, leaving to the localities the right to select their own school equipment, hire their teachers, and make other adjustments to their local needs. Opponents of Federal aid insist that control of even one purse string by the Federal government means Federal control.

And so the century has seen the process of education in Iowa underwritten more and more by taxation. The one-room school on the prairie or in the little settlement was often to be distinguished from other log cabins only by the large number of children who entered or left it. Now schoolhouses often dominate the community, school bands head gala processions, basketball and football games are news vying with international affairs. The State supports, aids, or supervises education from the pre-school to the adult forum.

ERMA B. PLAEHN

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