The PALIMPSEST

Volume 68, Number 3 IOWA'S POPULAR HISTORY MAGAZINE Fall 1987

Inside —

The Scandinavian Woman and Home.

Qvinnan och Hemmet.

A Monthly Journal for the Swedish Women in America.

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA.

Vol. XVII. NOVEMBER 1904. No. 11.

THANKSGIVING.

A Swedish title (*Qvinnan och Hemmet*) and an American custom (the Thanksgiving turkey) met on the November 1904 cover of a unique magazine published in Cedar Rapids for Swedish immigrant women in American. A close look at the magazine, its editor, and her mission begins on page 136.

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.

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The
PALIMPSEST
IOWA'S POPULAR HISTORY MAGAZINE
Ginalie Swaim, Editor

VOLUME 68, NUMBER 3 FALL 1987

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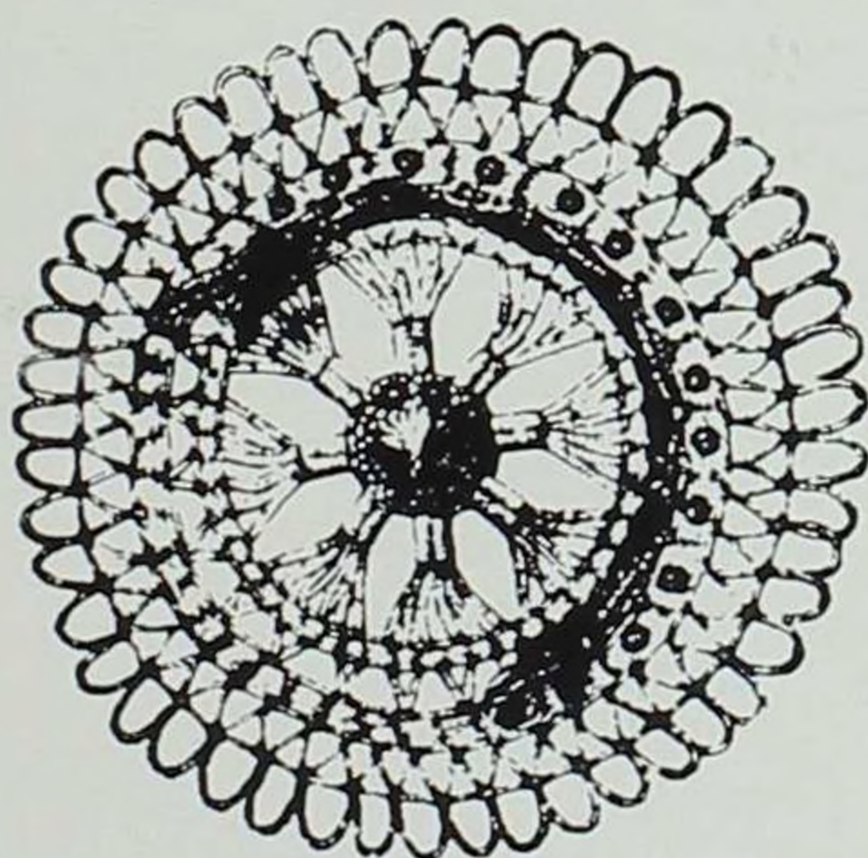

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COVER: Vase, Mary Yancey, 11¼"h. Poppies and buds adorn an example of art pottery produced at Iowa State University as part of the ceramic engineering program in the 1920s. A full-color art pottery display accompanies the story, beginning on page 112. (Photo by Chuck Greiner, Front Porch Studio)

The Hardest Battle We Have Yet Witnessed

by Kenneth Lyftogt

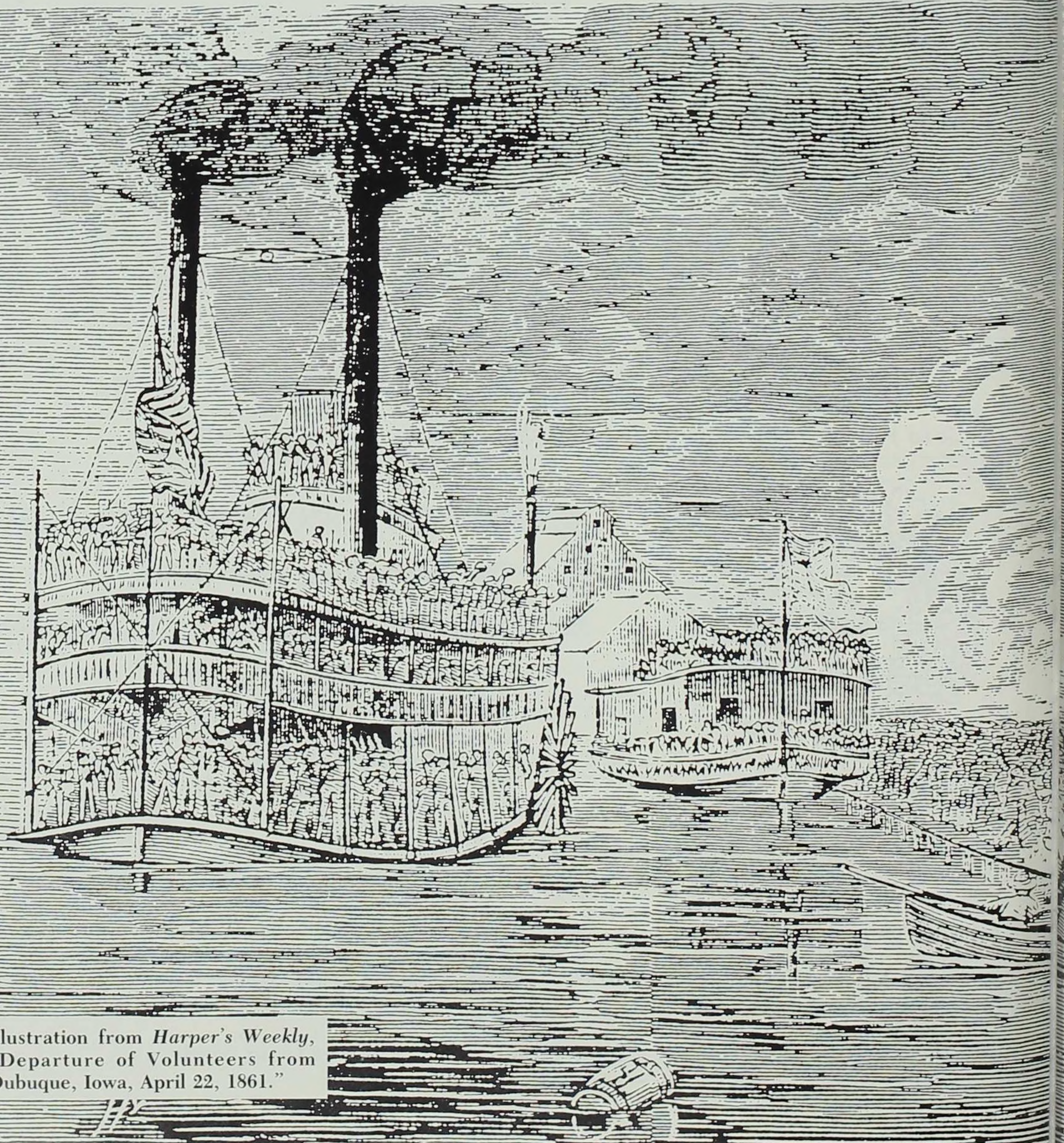
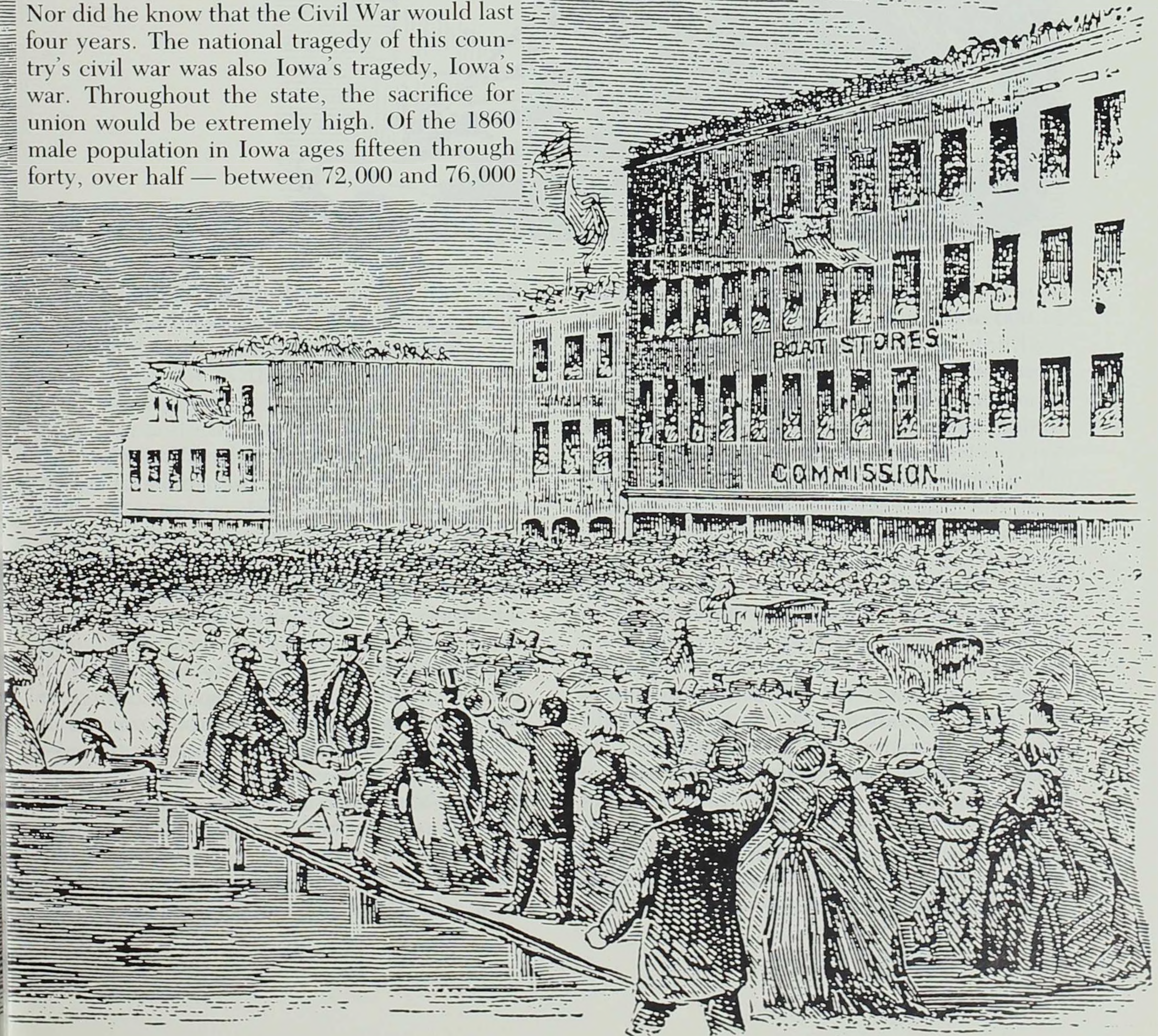


Illustration from *Harper's Weekly*, "Departure of Volunteers from Dubuque, Iowa, April 22, 1861."

"TO THE FRIENDS OF COMPANY K. — We embrace this opportunity to express our gratitude to our friends in Cedar Falls, and that section of the Cedar Valley, for the kind interest they have taken in our welfare. We shall ever think of them with the liveliest emotions of gratitude. We shall never forget our parting scene at Cedar Falls. It was the hardest battle we have yet witnessed and we look forward to the time when peace shall bless our beloved country and we return to our homes in the beautiful valley of the Cedar."

The Cedar Falls soldier who wrote this in February 1862 had not yet witnessed a much harder battle still three months away — Shiloh. Nor did he know that the Civil War would last four years. The national tragedy of this country's civil war was also Iowa's tragedy, Iowa's war. Throughout the state, the sacrifice for union would be extremely high. Of the 1860 male population in Iowa ages fifteen through forty, over half — between 72,000 and 76,000



The Hardest Battle We Have Yet Witnessed

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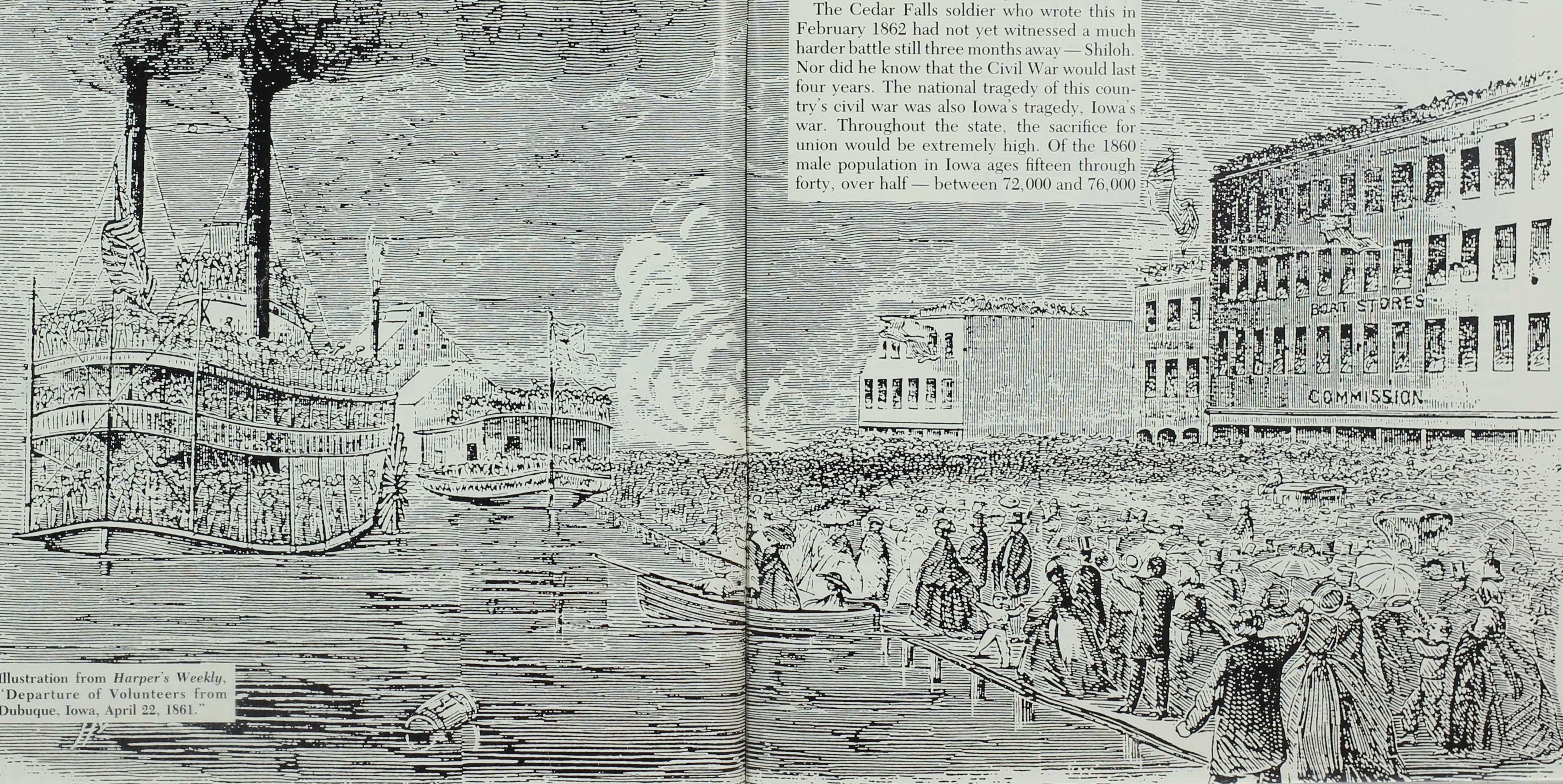

Illustration from *Harper's Weekly*, "Departure of Volunteers from Dubuque, Iowa, April 22, 1861."

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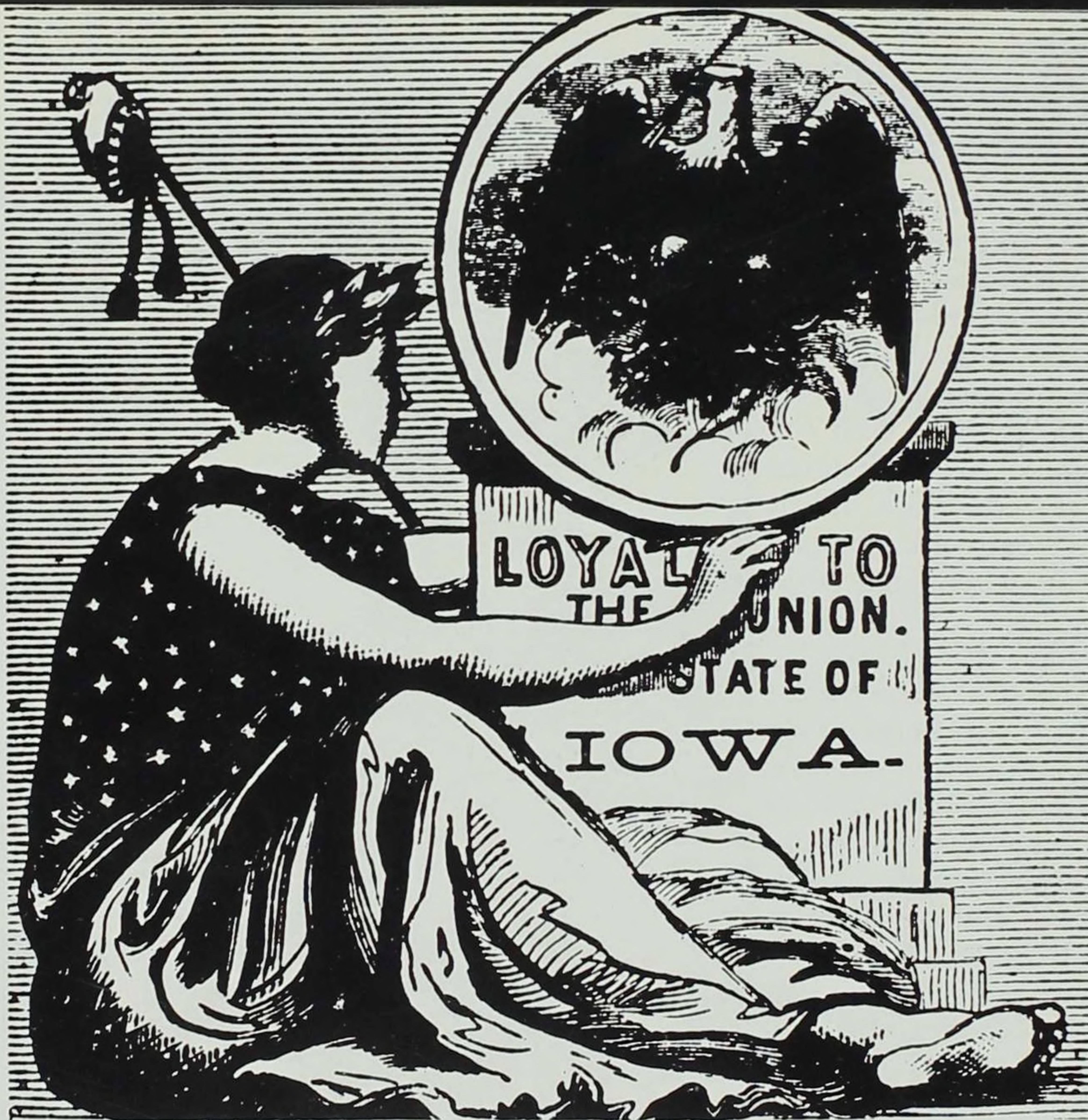


— would serve in the Union army. More than 13,000 of these men would die.

Shiloh would awaken Americans to the depth of sacrifice the Civil War would ask of them. An Iowa soldier who passed over the Shiloh battlefield after the April 6-7 battle wrote: "I saw where the 3d Iowa and some other regiments fought yesterday. There has been the most terrible destruction. I counted 26 dead battery horses on a few square rods of ground and the men were lying almost in heaps. Blue and gray sleep together. Oh my God! Can there be anything in the *future* that *compensates* for this slaughter. Only Thou knowest."

One company of the Third Iowa Regiment that fought at Shiloh was from Cedar Falls, a typical Iowa community that proudly, almost eagerly, had sent its sons into national service and, unknowingly, into this "most terrible destruction." In Cedar Falls, as in many small towns, the preparations for war had been marked by the rhetoric of making sacrifices and preserving the Union. But it would seem that no one then guessed the depth of the sacrifice, judging from the announcements and farewell ceremonies in Cedar Falls in early 1861.

THE LONG BITTER QUARREL over states' rights versus national authority had reached the breaking point in the presidential election in November 1860. Lincoln's election marked the break-up of the Union as the Southern states began to withdraw and form their Confederacy. Southern secession saturated the news of the day; each state, each community was forced to choose sides. Iowa was not prepared to go to war, but its communities began to form volunteer militia companies in case they were needed. The first company of volunteers from Cedar Falls began to form in January 1861 when the prospect of war was still far off — and exciting.

"We have the material here from which to form a 'crack corps,'" announced the Cedar

ALL ILLUSTRATIONS (EXCEPT PAGES 98, 99, AND 110) ARE TAKEN FROM ENVELOPES PRINTED DURING THE CIVIL WAR (SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, SHSI, IOWA CITY).

Falls *Gazette*, "which, if properly organized and equipped, would be of great advantage to us on our gala days and public occasions, — and who knows but in these troublesome times might be the means of preserving the country from ruin and give some of the members an opportunity to cover themselves with immortal glory. Let's have the 'sogers' by all means."

By the spring of 1861 it had become obvious that the soldiers — or "sogers" as the *Gazette* chose to colloquialize — would indeed be needed. On March 8 the *Gazette* announced the formation of Cedar Falls' first militia company, the Pioneer Greys: "We now have a real live 'Infantry Corps,' numbering 60 rank and file, and is composed of men whose motto is 'Excelsior,' and who are determined to do their whole duty under any and all circumstances, men who respect and revere the names and memories of those who have sacrificed so much that we their descendants might enjoy the blessings of a Government free and based upon equality and intelligence, as contrasted with aristocracy and ignorance."

The issue of "equality and intelligence, as contrasted with aristocracy and ignorance" bespoke dual mythologies of antebellum Americans: the self-reliant, self-governing pioneer in the North, and the landed gentry in the South. States and soldiers would go to war carrying these myths, just as politicians and editors were carrying the myths behind the podium and onto the printed page.

In 1846 territorial Iowa had become the first free state admitted to the Union from the Louisiana Purchase. The great promise of the American frontier — and the free states that would be carved out of it — was one of individual potential, in contradiction to the almost feudal image of the Southern plantation. Although Iowa was not entirely spared the mob violence and threats that would accompany the division of the nation, the state's early and popular affirmation of the Union came as a result of faith that the Union stood for equality and individual potential. For many, the Republican party best represented these principles, and Republican domination of Iowa pol-

YOUNG AMERICA OFF FOR THE WAR.

itics was a key factor in Iowa's decision.

The pride that Iowans took in being "free" had more to do with labor than with race, as the Cedar Falls *Gazette* editorialized in 1861: "A government founded by the slave oligarchy, with slavery as the corner stone, must, of necessity, be hostile to freedom. — Mechanics, laborers, farmers, how do they speak of you today? Do they not call you serfs, white-slaves, mudsills, and every opprobrious epithet a pampered and haughty aristocracy can invent? Should the Southern cause prevail the condition of the middle and laboring classes of the North would be on the same footing as those in Poland and Hungary."

The democratic promise of Iowa, and of the Union, was a promise of advancement through individual effort. The institution of slavery was viewed as a threat to this promise because of labor competition. According to historian Morton Rosenberg, "Most believed that slavery was the only natural condition for the Negro. Most also opposed the advance of slavery into Iowa and elsewhere above the limits imposed by the Missouri Compromise — not, however, for moral reasons but from economic considerations. These people feared the unequal competition from slave labor or the cheap labor of free Negroes." In 1850 these feelings had been translated into law when the Iowa General Assembly passed a law making it a penal offense for free blacks to immigrate to Iowa. This and other restrictive laws on free blacks would be a part of Iowa until after the war.

Early Iowa was a state of small farms. Those who did not actually make their living by farming lived in a small-farm environment. Towns had grown up along the waterways that carried produce to market or powered the mills. Merchants serviced the needs of farmers; the laborers worked in the mills and lumberyards.

Cedar Falls was such a town. The first cabin was built in 1845. In 1853, with a population of forty men, women, and children and only four buildings, the town was incorporated and a school district established. By May of 1860, as Southern Democrats muttered over secession at the national convention, the Cedar Falls population had exceeded 1,500. From that 1,500 came the sixty men who called themselves the Pioneer Greys.

IN FEBRUARY OF 1861 the newly formed Pioneer Greys leased a large hall on the third story of the Overman Block building to use as an armory. Each night the company met for voluntary drill and each Saturday night for drill and company business. The men were serious about their duty and appearance as soldiers, as their first statement proclaimed: "We intend, by gentlemanly and soldierly deportment, and strict drill and discipline, to earn a name which shall neither discredit ourselves or the town in which we live."

The Pioneer Greys were fortunate in that the man who initially organized the company and was elected captain, John B. Smith (manager of the Carter House hotel), had formerly been a captain of Dubuque's militia, the Governor's Greys. The Pioneer Greys' orderly sergeant, Fitzroy Sessions, also had had military experience as part of a Massachusetts militia company. Unlike many volunteers early in the Civil War, the Pioneer Greys could boast of at least an elementary military training.

Official regulations of the Adjutant General of the United States required that each company of Federal soldiers consist of a captain, a first lieutenant, a first sergeant, four other sergeants, eight corporals, two musicians, and sixty-four to eighty-two privates. Captain Smith recognized that if his company mustered the required number of troops, almost one out of every twenty Cedar Falls citizens would go to war, leaving the young community severely short of a much needed labor force. Yet, when asked to cast ballots, fifty-seven of the Greys voted that the company nevertheless should be sent into national service; three voted against. The Pioneer Greys were willing to go to war.

On April 18, 1861 — three days after Lincoln's call to arms for 75,000 volunteers — the Pioneer Greys received a communication from the Adjutant General of the Iowa Militia, Jesse Bowen, asking that the company be brought up to wartime strength and stand ready to be called. Two days later the Greys met in their armory to adopt resolutions supporting the Union. The list included: "Resolved, First, that we condemn in severest terms the actions of those engaged in the insurrection and all who sympathize with them as unpatriotic, unloyal and the insurgents as traitors to the country," and "Resolved: That the general

OUR HEARTS ARE WITH OUR BROTHERS IN THE FIELD.

Government ought to be sustained by every true and loyal citizen and that we hereby pledge ourselves as a company to rally to the support of the Star Spangled Banner at any and at all times when the country shall need our services."

Resolutions completed, Captain Smith called the Greys to fall in, and in double file they marched down the flight of stairs and onto Main Street. A large banner stretched across the street from the Carter House hotel to the Overman Block, emblazoned with "OUR FLAG: WE WILL DEFEND IT!" At Smith's command the company wheeled into an open square beneath the banner and gave three cheers. The Cedar Falls Brass Band marched up and began to play patriotic martial music. Passersby downtown this Saturday night cheered, "Now one for the Greys. One for Old Glory. One for our country — our whole country!" Thus began a round of celebrations and ceremonies as the Greys stood ready to be called.

IN THE WEEKS that followed, Cedar Falls became a hotbed of patriotism. "War! War! is all the talk — everybody is for War! Most assuredly this is no place for traitors!" the *Gazette* warned. Flags flew from fences, windows, and porches; one observer counted twenty-seven flags in the four-block business district. Many citizens paid a quarter and proudly wore silver star pins engraved with the words "Constitution and Union." A young bride had her wedding cake decorated in colored sugar spelling out "The Union Forever."

The Pioneer Greys' company roll, as of April 21, listed eighty-two names, but this included men with physical disabilities and some with obligations that prevented them from enlisting in the regular army. The company wanted to recruit many more than the minimum required by Adjutant General Bowen, so they sought recruits from nearby communities. Two men were dispatched by

horseback to Waverly, Charles City, and other towns. Three days later they galloped back into town followed by fifteen riders and with pledges from twenty other volunteers. The horsemen's arrival was an excuse for a large, energetic demonstration and parade.

In May Iowa Governor Kirkwood ordered the companies that would make up the Second and Third Iowa regiments to rendezvous at Keokuk. His order included the Pioneer Greys. To organize a proper send-off and to consider plans for financially aiding the soldiers' families, the town editors and other prominent citizens called a mass meeting for Monday night, May 27. Over six hundred filled Overman Hall that night. The meeting was chaired by Colonel W. H. Sessions, a veteran of the Mexican War and father of Fitzroy Sessions, the Greys' orderly sergeant. While a committee of five drew up specifics downstairs, the crowd listened to impromptu patriotic speeches. Iowa Representative Zimri Streeter and Senator J. B. Powers gave keynote addresses. Congregational pastor R. B. Fifield declared his deep regret that the state of his health prevented him from enlisting. Presbyterian minister William Porterfield announced that he was willing to join and that if his five sons were old enough, he would be proud to watch them march against the South. The crowd called upon a local merchant to speak. Remarking that he had no gift for words, the merchant pointed to the flag draping the speaker's stand and said, "There's Old Glory! That's my flag!"

That Wednesday nearly sixty women gathered in the large Horticultural Room of Overman Hall to sew uniforms of grey woolen trousers and navy blue cotton shirts. They worked for five days. Local tailors J. J. Ball, Rob Roy, and Samuel Berry had set up sadirons, pressing boards, and a half-dozen sewing machines, and directed the work of their own apprentices and the local women

(who also supplied shoes, socks, and underclothing for the company).

The sewing marathon ended on Sunday, June 2, in time for a farewell that would extend through three days of flag-waving and speeches. All Sunday morning the Greys drilled upstairs in their third-floor armory. Below, the streets were filling up. Farm wagons, buggies, and horses brought hundreds from surrounding farms and communities. In the grove along the Cedar River, people opened up picnic baskets. At noon Captain Smith dismissed his men as a special committee moved in to decorate the hall.

Early in the afternoon, Smith led his company, followed by the town clergy and the brass band, back up the two flights of stairs to the hall. They lined up in front of the speaker's platform, from which Pastor Fifield praised them for volunteering and warned them of the temptations and vices they would encounter as soldiers.

About noon the next day a caravan of nearly 40 wagons and teams and 350 citizens from Waverly arrived, escorting their 20 volunteers. A parade formed, led by the brass band in their new wagon and four-horse hitch, followed by veterans of the War of 1812. The Pioneer Greys formed ranks and met the Waverly volunteers with cheer after cheer. Later that afternoon Captain Trumbull of Butler County arrived with his company, the Union Guards, en route to Waterloo. The two companies greeted each other enthusiastically, exchanging cheers and salutes. After less than an hour, Trumbull and his men marched out of Cedar Falls to Waterloo, where twenty volunteers awaited and where more than a thousand people were also celebrating the war. After the Guards left, the Greys formally elected their officers by acclamation — John B. Smith, captain; Fitzroy Sessions, first lieutenant; and Charles Mularky, second lieutenant.

That night eight hundred crowded Overman Hall for more speeches, prayers, and patriotic songs. Representative Streeter begged that the Greys not lay down their arms until every rebel flag had been trodden underfoot. A speaker announced that funds had been raised to purchase a sword and epaulets for Captain Smith. Lieutenant Sessions was presented with a navy Colt revolver. Equipped with honor and

THE WAR FOR THE UNION.

draped in glory, the company was ready, in the view of the citizenry, to depart the next day.

On Tuesday morning Main Street, from the river to Second Street, bulged with over five thousand citizens from Ceder Falls and the surrounding area. The Greys mingled with the crowd and said their farewells to friends and families. When the order came for the soldiers to march, a parade formed. Led by the Cedar Falls Brass Band and the veterans of the War of 1812, the huge mass of people followed the Pioneer Greys across the Millrace Bridge to the new depot on the Dubuque and Sioux City railroad line.

To many in the crowd, there was a certain irony that just weeks earlier Cedar Falls had celebrated the arrival of the first train at the newly completed depot. It was as if the trains had arrived just in time to take their men away. The train sat there now, decorated with flags and cedar branches, smoking and hissing, waiting to depart.

The company broke ranks one last time before boarding, for one last farewell. The reality of what the departure meant struck at least one woman who broke down in sobs, holding tightly her two small children. She begged her husband not to go, but he refused. Moved by her appeal, three young men offered to take the husband's place in the Greys. Again he refused.

THE BRASS BAND and about fifty citizens accompanied the Greys on the train. In Waterloo, six miles down the track, the Butler County Union Guards boarded, conspicuous in their civilian clothing next to the well-uniformed Greys. The five passenger cars reserved for the soldiers were soon filled, and many people rode in the baggage car.

The train took the two companies and the accompanying townspeople to Dubuque to board a steamboat. There the Washington Guards escorted the two companies to a park — for more speeches and band music. The Pioneer Greys made such an impression that six Dubuque men offered $6 apiece to join, but were refused. Quartered overnight in a large brick building near the steamboat landing, the Greys reversed the farewells the next morning

Southern Sympathisers,—Confound the luck, there goes the Steamer Compromise, and we are left behind.

by escorting their hometown citizens back to the Dubuque depot. The band members presented the Greys with a new tenor drum. Tearfully, Lieutenant Sessions called for three cheers for the people back home.

An incident at the send-off the next evening gave the Pioneer Greys a glimpse of the violence and hatred into which the war would take them. A crowd had gathered at the Dubuque wharf to watch the soldiers board a steamboat bound for Keokuk. The crowd included several Southern sympathizers who jeered at the troops. In anger, a member of the Greys on the boat grabbed a bucket and hurled it at them. On shore one of the Southern sympathizers grabbed a rock and threw it at the soldiers on the boat. The rock struck Lieutenant Fitzroy Sessions in the chest. In an instant the lieutenant drew his bowie knife and revolver, and with knife clenched between his teeth and revolver in hand, he jumped from the steamboat into the crowd. With one punch he knocked the rock-thrower to the ground. As the boat pulled away, Sessions leaped several feet across the water to the reaching hands of his men. The Pioneer Greys from Cedar Falls were on their way to war.

In Keokuk the ten companies that would make up the Third Iowa Volunteer Infantry were read the Articles of War and sworn into regular service. The Pioneer Greys were mustered in as K Company. On June 29, 1861, the regiment — issued grey dragoon style uniforms by the state, armed with smoothbore 1848 Springfield muskets, but lacking both cartridge boxes and cartridges — were crowded aboard two ferryboats lashed together and sent south.

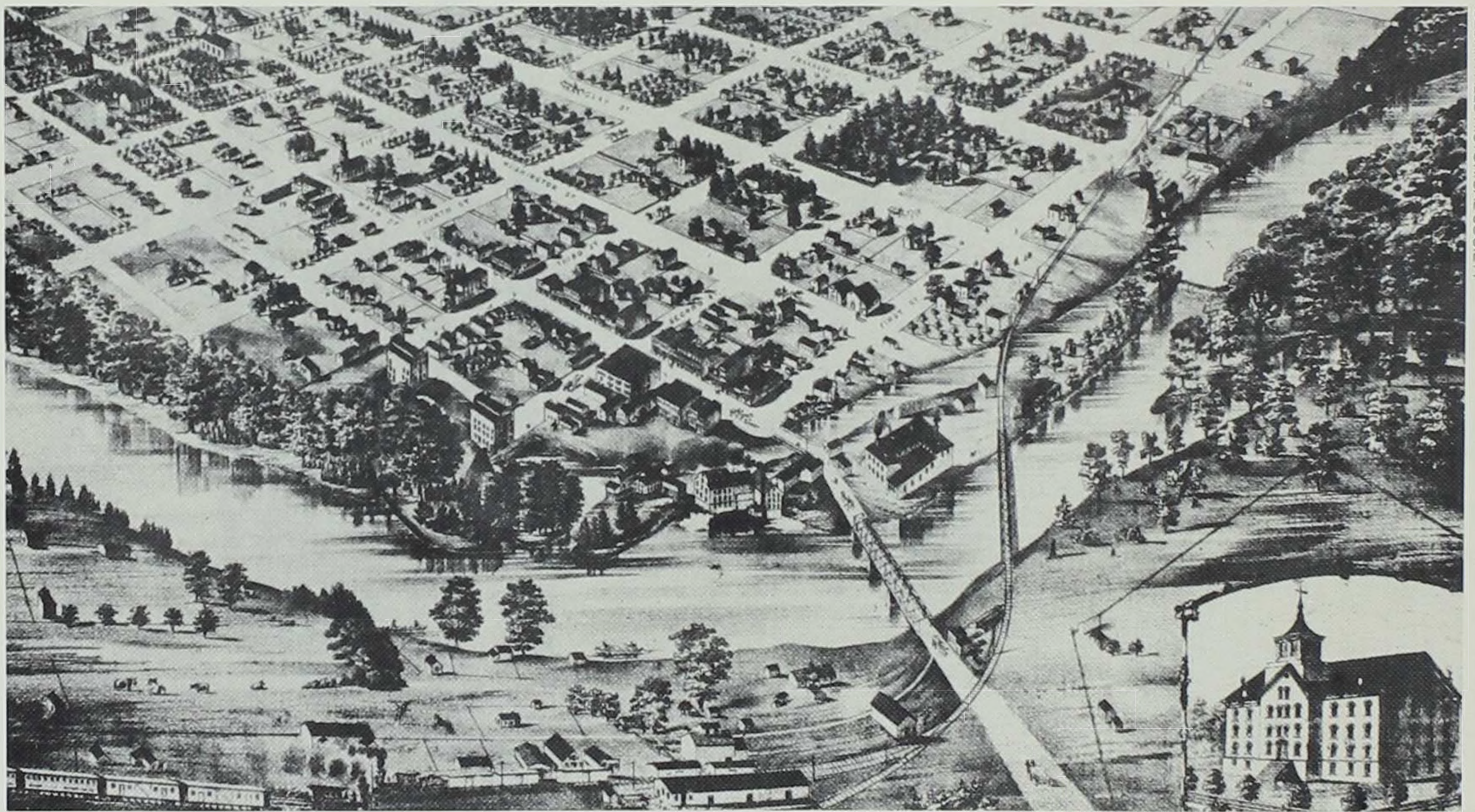
RALLY, BOYS.

EPILOGUE

A YEAR LATER, in the summer of 1862, in response to Lincoln's call for more volunteers, Cedar Falls fielded a second company of soldiers, the Cedar Falls Reserves. The Reserves were made up of many of the young businessmen of the community. Mayor Edwin Brown took on a partner in the flour mill so that he could join; Edward Townsend gave up his position as bank partner to join, along with *Gazette* editor George Perkins and over ninety others.

The Cedar Falls Reserves were not sent out of town with the brass band playing. The war had become a grim, tragic business by then. The Pioneer Greys had fought their first battle at Blue Mills, Missouri, in September 1861; one of their men had been killed and five others wounded. In December another member had been killed, accidentally by a comrade, while in winter quarters. That spring on the first morning of the Battle of Shiloh, April 6, 1862, the Greys with the rest of the Third Iowa had taken their stand in the Peach Orchard. It had been a bloody day for the Cedar Falls troops: seventeen had been shot, two had died.

Cedar Falls and the state of Iowa had few romantic illusions of war left by September of 1862, when the Reserves left home. There was no parade for the Reserves or cedar wreaths on the train. The men left Cedar Falls for Dubuque riding on the flatcars of a gravel train. The crowd that saw them off was not cheering. □



CEDAR FALLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A bird's eye view of a tranquil, orderly Cedar Falls, three years after the end of the Civil War.

NOTE ON SOURCES

This article was developed from a paper submitted at the request of the Northeast Iowa Civil War Association to mark the 125th anniversary of the departure of the Pioneer Greys. The most important primary sources were the newspapers of the time. The Cedar Falls *Gazette* covered the Pioneer Greys quite extensively, as well as often printing soldiers' letters. Of earlier *Palimpsest* articles on the war, those by Luella M. Wright and Mildred Throne are invaluable to anyone studying the subject. The University of Northern Iowa library contains many sources on Iowa and Cedar Falls history, including brief sketches of the different regiments. Some of the most important are in the five-volume *Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion* (Des Moines, 1908/11). Lieutenant S. D. Thompson's *Recollections With the Third Iowa Regiment* covers the first three years of the regiment's service and is a well-written contemporary account of a soldier's life. The author thanks Jeff Piper (President, Northeast Civil War Association) and Dr. Alvin Sunseri (University of Northern Iowa) for their support and valuable suggestions. Michael Prahl patiently proofread the many drafts and offered valuable criticism.

Two Songs

In February 1862 the Cedar Falls *Gazette* reprinted this item from the *Third Iowa Gazette*, a newspaper produced by soldiers in the Third Iowa Regiment in Missouri. The Pioneer Greys, now known as Company K, were represented in a parody to the tune of "Dixie."

"COMPANY K IN DIXIE"

From Cedar Fall we took our leave
The fourth of July, we went by steam.
Look away, look away
Look away, look away.

At Keokuk we first encamped
Many miles we had to tramp.
Look away, look away
Look away, look away.

Then we wished we was in Dixie,
Oh! Oh! Oh!
In Dixie land we take our stand,
To win or die in Dixie land;
Away, away,
Away down South in Dixie.

Two years later another song appeared in the Cedar Falls *Gazette* (January 1864). For the unidentified songwriter, the war had lasted too long and the price of sacrifice had been too high. The willingness to fight was now replaced by a sense of relief. Having filled its quota, Cedar Falls would not be asked to send more men.

"SONG OF THE STAY-AT-HOME"

Hurrah, our quota's filled!
And we are out of the draft;
Hurrah, hurrah, let all hurrah
For we are out of the draft.

Cedar Falls has her quota full!
The best of the news I've heard!
No draft! all danger o'er, hurrah!
I feel I could fly like a bird!

Last week I thought they wouldn't fetch it,
And I dreamed of the draft to be;
I saw myself with accoutrements
Standing picket in the army.

But, oh! how happy wife'll be
When she hears the glorious news;
She so sure that I'd be drafted,
Now will slightly change her views.

But tell you what *I* feared it,
With no hope to get exempt,
For I'm young and strong and rugged —
'Twould be nonsense to attempt.

I have no taste for soldiering,
And my business ties are strong.
Then my wife — I know 'twould kill her,
And for me to go! how wrong.

But those boys who've volunteered,
They as well as not can go.
'Tis for their interest every way,
And so the bounty makes it so.

Brave boys they are, and patriots
Who've gone to join the holy fight,
Not hesitating till conscripted
Into the triumphing cause of Right.

To Cedar Falls 'tis creditable
Thus answering Abraham's call;
And I hope that now Rebellion
May in its last ditch fall.

Hurrah! our quota's filled,
And we are out of the draft!
Hurrah, hurrah! let all hurrah,
For we are out of the Draft!

BRUNNIER GALLERY AND MUSEUM, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

A Collaboration in Clay

Iowa State's Prairie Pottery

by Susan Russo

Paul Cox (at wheel) instructs two potters. In the 1920s Cox and designer Mary Yancey collaborated to create marketable, handcrafted art pottery. Right: Vase, Paul Cox, 4¾" high. All ISC pottery shown here through the courtesy of Brunnier Gallery and Museum, Iowa State University, and photographed by Chuck Greiner, Front Porch Studio.

FOR SIX YEARS, from 1924 to 1930, two individuals at Iowa State College in Ames produced for sale hundreds of pieces of art pottery. Paul E. Cox, head of ceramic engineering, and Mary Lanier Yancey, an instructor, were involved in this commercial enterprise not because it was part of their teaching duties (it wasn't; they worked in the studio in their spare time) and not because it brought them extra income (it didn't; none of the profits went to either person). Their involvement — particularly Paul Cox's — was motivated by their own aesthetic philosophies and a need to publicize and promote the ceramic engineering program at Iowa State College and to generate income for purchasing materials and equipment for the program. Cox also hoped to create an awareness of a still largely untapped natural resource — Iowa's clay beds — that might build economic diversity in an agricultural state. His efforts were challenged, however, by the problems of profitably marketing handcrafted art.

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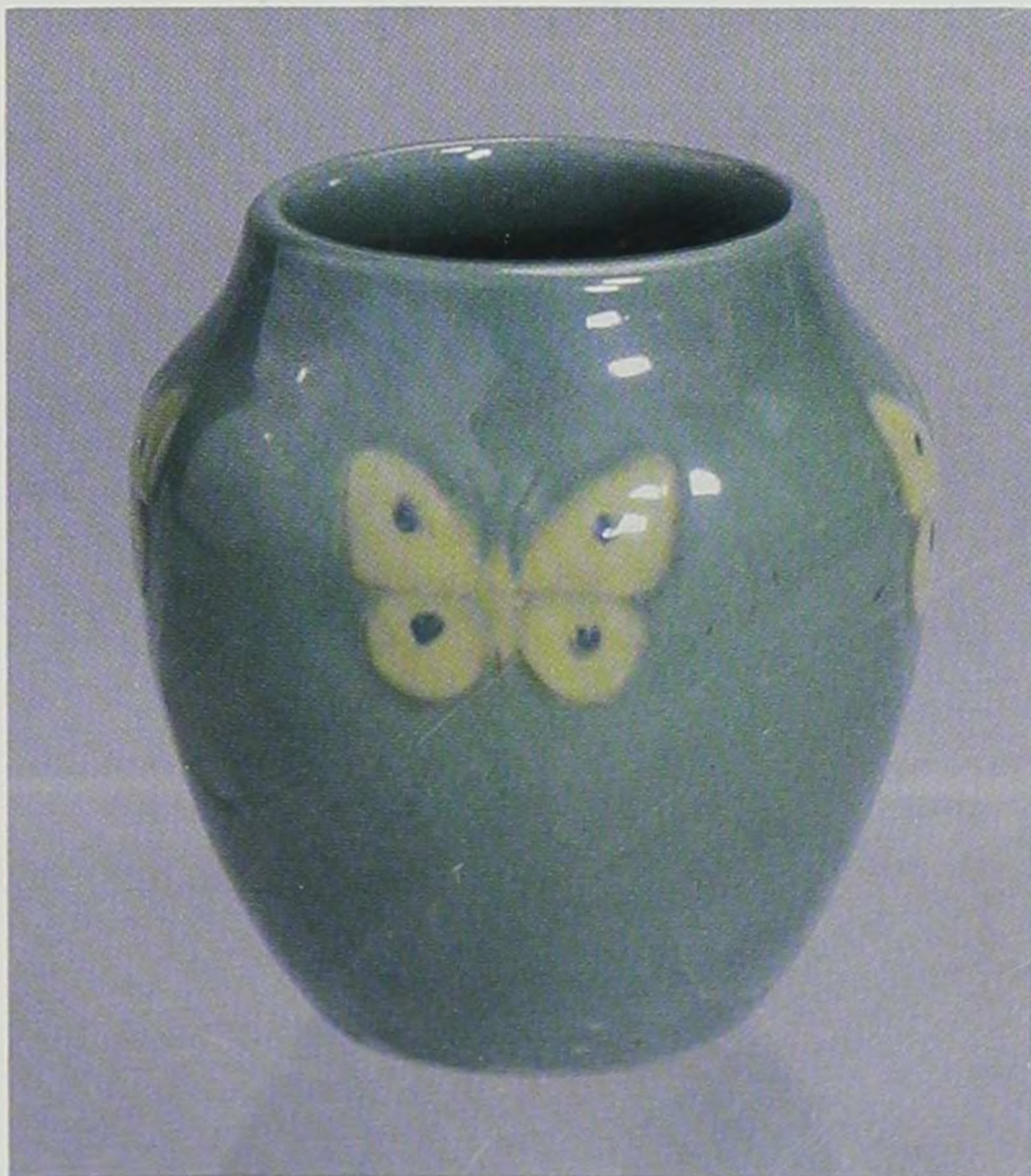

BRUNNIER GALLERY AND MUSEUM, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

A Collaboration in Clay

Iowa State's Prairie Pottery

by Susan Russo

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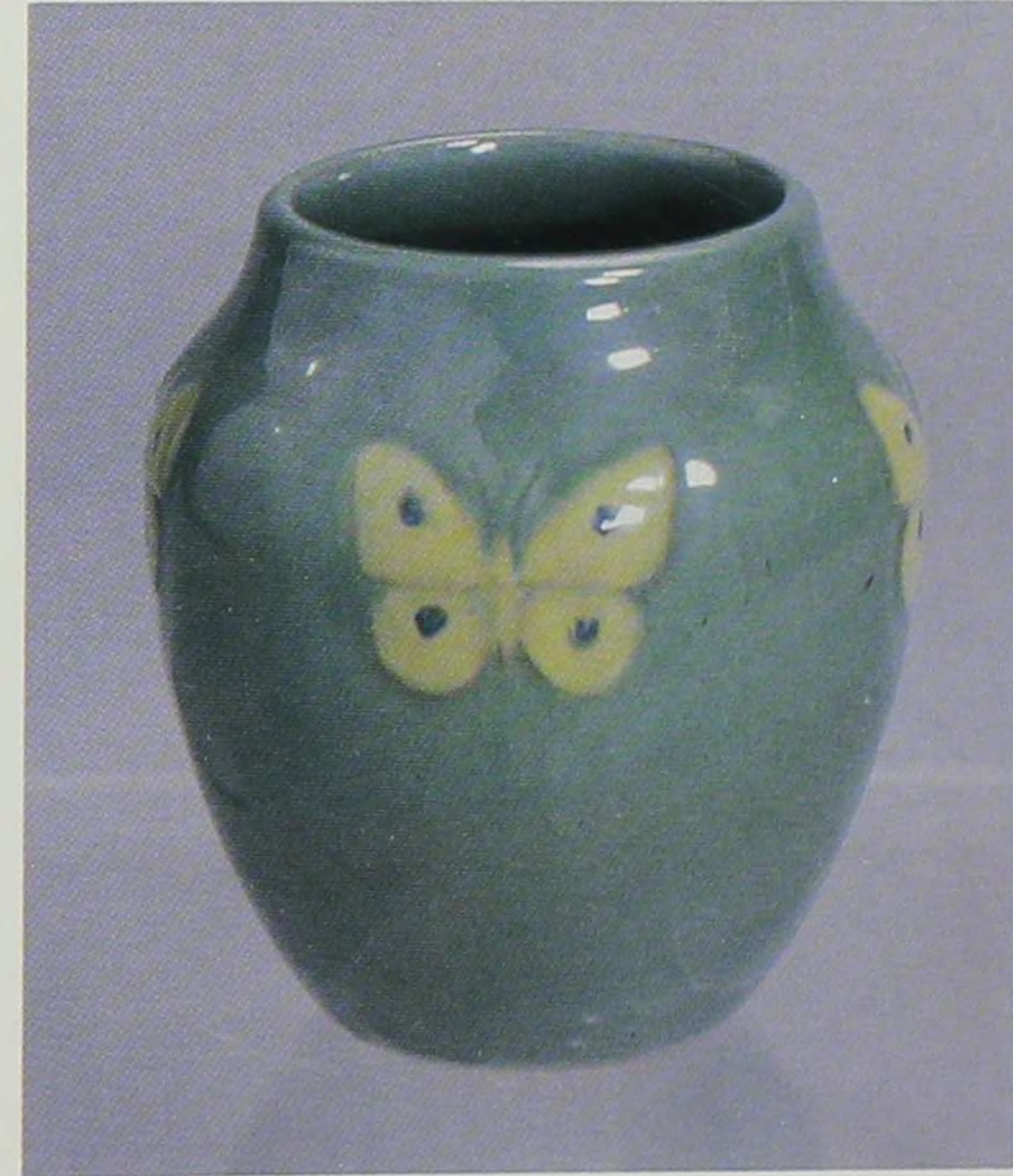

within an ongoing commercial organization. When any aspect of the union of artist and artisan is eliminated, the work ceases to be art pottery. In general, styles and techniques are varied, and the artist's individuality is commercially supported.

LONG BEFORE art pottery ever came to be produced at Iowa State College, strong historical forces had been at work. Because Great Britain was the first European country to industrialize during the nineteenth century, it is not surprising that some of the earliest voices protesting the mechanization of goods came from the British. The International Great Exhibition of 1851 at the Crystal Palace in London wakened many cultural leaders to the lack of design standards in mass-produced goods. Many English intellectuals, especially John Ruskin and William Morris, called for a return to the simple aesthetic individualism of the Middle Ages, when art and artifacts revealed an authentic craft simplicity based upon a strong and enduring system of values; their writings led to the important aesthetic movement called the arts and crafts movement.

Directly and indirectly, the arts and crafts movement influenced attempts at producing interior furnishings (such as furniture, china, and art pottery) that would once again inspire the mass industrialized society of the West with a sense of beauty and style. As incomes rose for middle and lower classes, so did the demand for non-utilitarian objects for their homes. Art pottery was produced to meet that demand.

Many art potters derived their primary income in the relatively large-scale factories that were established to meet the growing demand. They left their own stamps of individuality on their work — through modeling or throwing, developing new glazes or clay compositions, or decorating. Not all pieces produced in such settings were strictly "art pottery." If a firm produced its artwares by applying industrial techniques and mass manufacture, in imitation of handcraftsmanship, some would argue this to be "industrial artware" rather than art pottery because the pieces were not handcrafted, a basic tenet of the arts and crafts philosophy.

In the United States the art pottery movement began to flourish in the late nineteenth century. American potters largely adapted popular European design trends, such as two-dimensional oriental styles; the energetic, flowing lines of art nouveau; and the often two-dimensional, schematized repeat designs of arts and crafts patterns. To their credit, American designers did seek to create a craft tradition equivalent to Europe's medieval tradition by turning to crafts of the American Indian — weaving, basketmaking, and pottery. The geometric simplicity of design and handcraftmanship of Indian wares were particularly appealing to the American public. And certainly, as scholar Lillian Bregman has noted, American potters also developed innovations such as airbrushing and matt glazes that were later adopted by European potters.

During the late 1890s the Society of the Arts and Crafts was organized to help potters display and sell their wares, necessary if they were to remain independent of industry. Although the Society of the Arts and Crafts promoted handicrafts as a better alternative to mass-produced wares, it largely failed to establish standards of high quality in America or to develop a methodology or philosophy, perhaps because of the emphasis upon individual creativity. A great deal of outright copying occurred, and no distinctive new pottery forms developed. Many feared that in America the art of pottery design was stagnating. They were especially sensitive to this when American work competed in European exhibitions. Worse, perhaps, was that most of the potters who represented American arts and crafts had little technical knowledge of their field. Blind experimentation was generally the answer if a new clay composition or glaze was needed. In some instances, new research was kept secret. The movement needed an organized effort to define standards and aesthetics and to disseminate technical information. One method of accomplishing this came about through the rise of college and university ceramics programs.

Located in western New York State, Alfred

University's New York School for Clay Working was the first school in the United States to offer a course in ceramic art and design. Under the leadership of English ceramist Charles Fergus Binns, Alfred University fostered in the United States the concept of formally training potters in the aesthetic and technical aspects of ceramics. Binns is regarded by many scholars as the founder of American studio pottery. His personal aesthetic sense, which favored classical simplicity in form as well as decoration, influenced many — including Paul Cox, who in 1905 became the second student to graduate from the three-year-old ceramics program at Alfred and who would eventually direct Iowa State College's program.

IN THE SOUTH, another educational institution had already begun a ceramics enterprise that would profoundly affect American art pottery and would directly influence the program at Iowa State. In 1886 in New Orleans, Newcomb College had been founded as part of Tulane University, through an endowment from Josephine Newcomb in memory of her daughter, Sophie. Likely influenced by the woman suffrage movement, Josephine Newcomb wanted to help young southern women obtain a liberal arts education that would enable them to earn a living wage. No doubt the economic circumstances of the area also influenced directions Newcomb College would take. Even though New Orleans was a commercial city, the South's agricultural base did not seem conducive to the flourishing of an art school, particularly because the South was emerging from hindering economic effects of Reconstruction. Many southern women needed to work for financial reasons. The presidents of Newcomb and Tulane decided that Newcomb College would blend the educational ideas of traditional female colleges, such as Vassar and Smith, with those of industrial institutions, such as Drexel and Pratt. Thus, in 1894 the Newcomb experiment in commercial production of art pottery began. As a model industry it would demonstrate the practicality

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At Iowa State, Cox (above) rejected the matt glazes, often in blues and greens, that he had developed at Newcomb. Below: Two examples of Newcomb pottery. Covered jars by Joseph Meyer (potter) and decorators Henrietta Bailey, 1918 (jar on left) and Sadie Irvine, 1920 (jar on right).

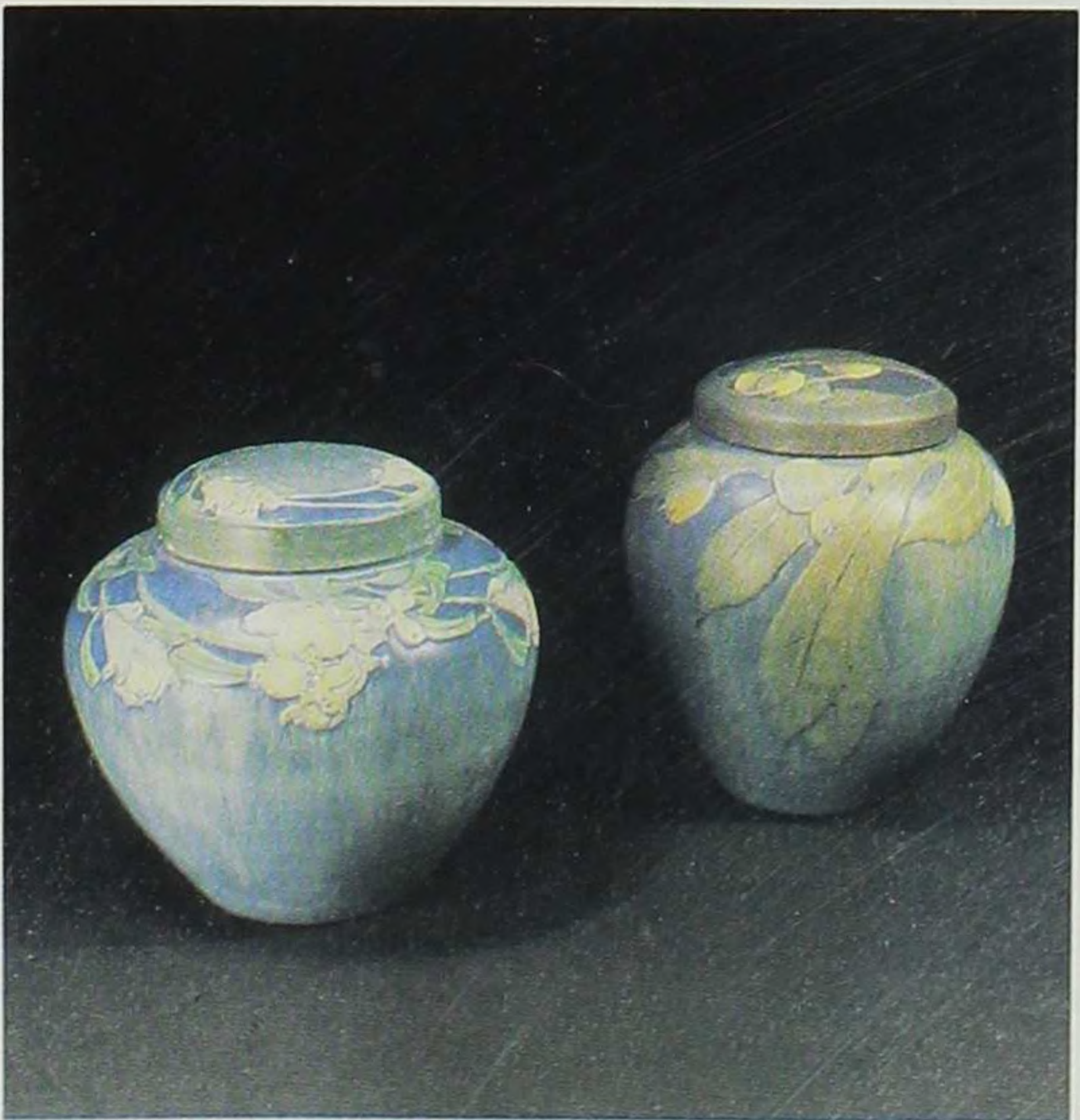
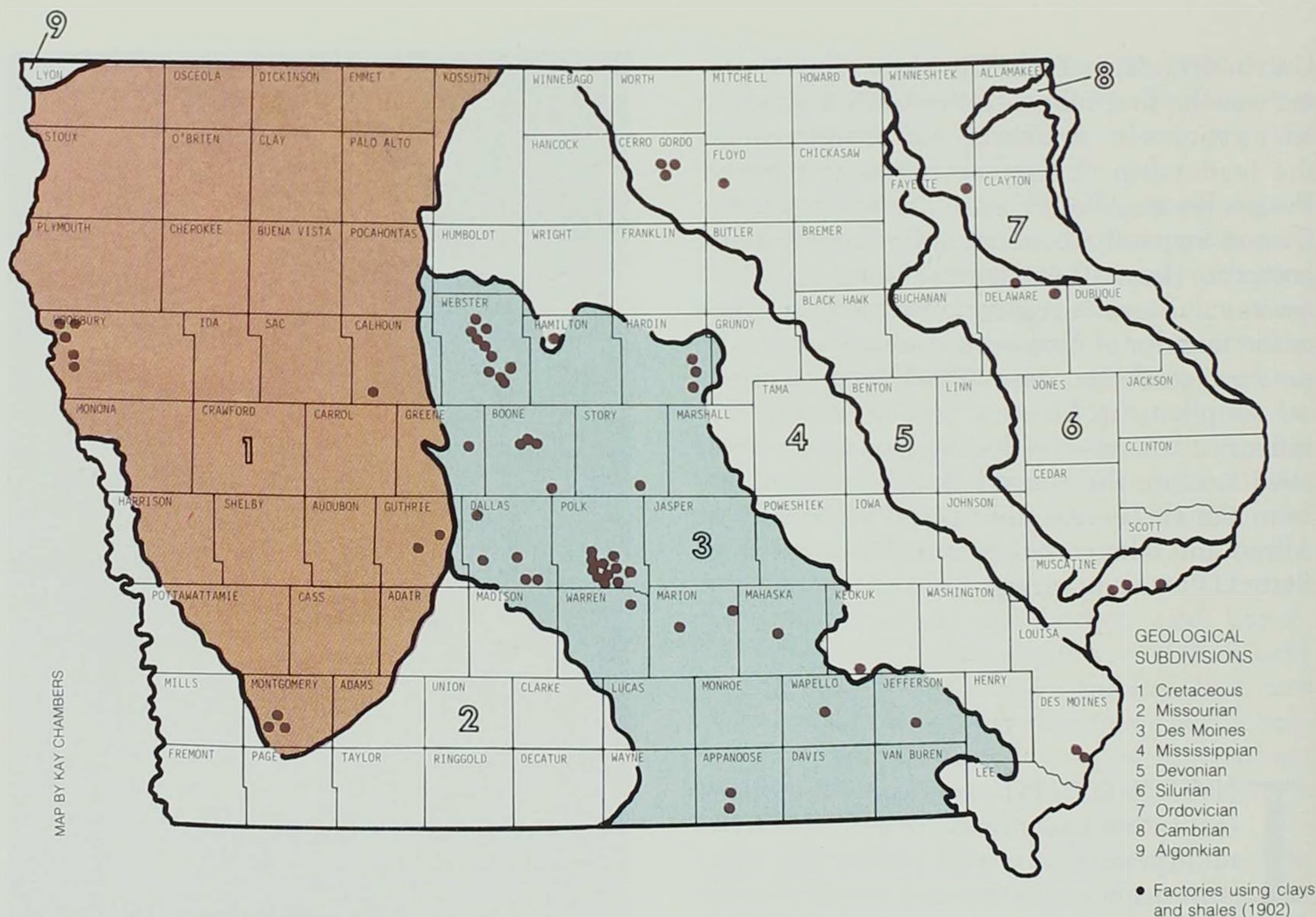


PHOTO BY ALISON J. SCOTT, COURTESY SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION



This map, redrawn from a 1902 Iowa Geological Survey map, shows Iowa's nine geological subdivisions and the location (by dot) of factories then using clays and shales (largely to make brick and agricultural drain tile). Most factories were in Subdivisions 3 and 1 (colored). Cox used the original map in his proposals for greater use of Iowa's shale deposits.

of artistic training for women in a commercial venture using local resources.

By 1910 the output was modest at best, producing a few hundred dollars worth of pottery. Newcomb needed a trained ceramics technician who could improve the quality of the wares through controlled experimentation. That fall the college hired Paul Cox, graduate of Alfred University and student of Charles Binns. Cox immediately set out to improve the body composition of the clay by adding feldspar and flint.

The next year Cox tackled the problem of glazes. Elsewhere, other potteries were receiving critical acclaim for duller matt glazes (for instance, Rookwood in Cincinnati for its vellum and Hugh Robertson for his oriental crackle glazes). Despite the waning popularity of high-gloss glazes, they were still used at Newcomb until Cox developed a raw lead glaze of semi-matt texture to be used over the underglaze colors. After three firings this semi-transparent matt glaze produced a finish in which the underpainting appeared (as one writer described it) as "through a morning mist." Underglaze blues and greens proved particularly successful and soon replaced the old high-gloss glazes at Newcomb. To the public the blue and green glazes became the hallmark of Newcomb pottery. Cox also improved the technique of underglaze painting by carefully spongeing the unfired bisque (unglazed, low-fired ware) to produce an even texture. And under Cox's leadership, incising decoration on the pots in the bisque state became the prevalent decorating technique, rather than painting or spraying a surface pattern.

Cox's decisions were often prompted by what he thought was marketable, keeping in mind that one goal was providing a livelihood for the artist. Although certainly backed by artistic principles and good taste, he no doubt

moved toward more naturalistic designs because of what he thought would sell and later noted that when matt glazes were introduced "the pottery became much more popular, with the sales wares increasing noticeably. Large kilns were added and production developed on an improved mechanical basis. Thus, it became worthwhile financially to be a decorator in the Newcomb Pottery. This pottery," Cox would later write, "next to that of Rookwood, became the largest producer of individually designed art pottery in the country." Newcomb pottery would win several awards in exhibitions at home and abroad for many years before the program closed in 1940.

Mary Yancey worked as the designer in the artist/artisan collaboration with technician and promoter Paul Cox.

MEANWHILE AT IOWA State College in Ames, enrollment in ceramic engineering had increased slowly since its founding in 1906 as a department in the Division of Engineering. At that time, ceramic engineers were employed mostly by manufacturing concerns to make fired clay products, grinding wheels, glass, electrical porcelains, and spark plugs, and to develop machinery and equipment. There were perhaps close to sixty plants in Iowa manufacturing brick and agricultural drain tile.

Seeking ways to attract more students, the department logically recognized that making pottery was a natural sideline for ceramics programs and might pull in more students. In 1915 the first class in modeled pottery was offered, and women from the Division of Home Economics, as well as engineering students, enrolled eagerly. For the next few years the class continually had at least twenty students enrolled.

In 1920 Paul Cox was offered the position as head of ceramic engineering at Iowa State College. Cox accepted the job and soon determined that the task confronting him involved more than publicizing his department and attracting students. Iowa's political leaders sought ways to infuse industry into a cyclical agricultural economy. Cox agreed with manufacturers of clay products that using Iowa's largely untapped shale deposits was one way to expand the state's industrial base. Cox also needed to devise a way to buy equipment and materials for a first-rate program.

Paul Cox was perhaps the consummate public relations man. He worked tirelessly to advertise ceramic engineering at Iowa State. As part of an extension program in Iowa, he traveled widely to educate the public about ceramics and its importance to industry and home decoration. At the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines, he set up a potter's wheel under the grandstand. At that time a potter's wheel was a novelty in the Midwest, and he attracted curious crowds. Throwing pots on the wheel and giving them away to the onlookers, Cox talked nonstop about the ceramic engineering program in Ames. He wrote prolifically, for professional journals and popular magazines, and kept the public aware of his department's pottery production, exhibitions, and sales.

With Cox's enthusiasm and drive the ceramic engineering program began to grow. By 1924 thirty men were enrolled in the four-year program, and fifty women from other departments (many from home economics) were in the modeled pottery class. The teaching staff included George Peterson and Ethel Bouffleur. Cox needed someone to take over for Bouffleur as teacher of the modeled pottery class. He hired another graduate of Newcomb — Mary Yancey. Yancey had received a bach-

Bowl, Paul Cox, 5½"h. Day lilies sprawl over the blue glaze exterior. Green leaves match the interior glaze.

elor's degree in 1922 and had taught ceramics and jewelry at a Cincinnati high school.

THAT YEAR Yancey and Cox began their six-year collaboration in producing commercial art pottery. By December, plans were taking shape. Cox wrote his mentor, Charles Binns, "I am carrying a rather heavy load of detail because we plan to produce a pottery on the Newcomb plan and at present I am both potter and research man. I have a good designer from Newcomb but I plan to develop, if possible, a special technique of our own. I wonder if I am man enough to really devise something both good and original."

Cox did not spell out what he meant by producing a pottery "on the Newcomb plan." But there would be many similarities between the Newcomb program in New Orleans and what would be accomplished at Iowa State College. Like Louisiana, Iowa needed to infuse new industry into an essentially agricultural economy. And as in Louisiana, Iowa's deposits of shales were suitable for pottery, and thus held economic potential. And like Newcomb, Iowa State College would be the principal means of implementing this economic goal.

Pieces produced at Iowa State would be handcrafted and indigenous, as they were at Newcomb. Whereas Newcomb pottery often depicted flora and vegetation of the South, Iowa State College pottery would incorporate prairie motifs and plants native to Iowa. Newcomb used indigenous Louisiana shale; in Iowa, Cox would use shale from deposits near Fort Dodge, Des Moines, Adel, Nevada, and Mason City. He often used the clay in its pure form, washing the shales but adding nothing to them.

Certainly Cox and Yancey's prior training and experiences at Newcomb influenced their Iowa work. Cox was proud of his association with Newcomb and personally ranked Newcomb pottery second in importance only to Rookwood. Established in 1880, the Rookwood Pottery employed a division and specialization of labor in producing its pottery. This approach allowed greater artistic expression and incorporation of new stylistic trends, not to mention greater output. Rookwood's modern manufacturing techniques set an example that was fol-

lowed by most art potteries in this country.

At Iowa State Cox was very conscious of trying to produce a ware that was as technically and artistically good as Newcomb's. Yancey's work is Newcombesque in her precise execution of design motifs that enhance the shape of each piece.

BUT COX AND YANCEY did break away from Newcomb in what was perhaps their most innovative decision — using tin enamel glazes rather than the matt finishes that had helped popularize Newcomb pottery. Perhaps here Cox and Yancey acted on their desire to do something original, "to develop a special technique of our own." Cox chose a basic transparent glaze that could be turned into various colors. By adding different amounts of cobalt or manganese or nickel, for example, Cox could produce blues or browns or grays — as well as greens, white, and yellows from other powdered compounds. Blood red was produced by adding chrome tin pink. The glaze fired well on a variety of clays, ranging from red shales through stoneware clays to faience bodies that use varying amounts of whiting.

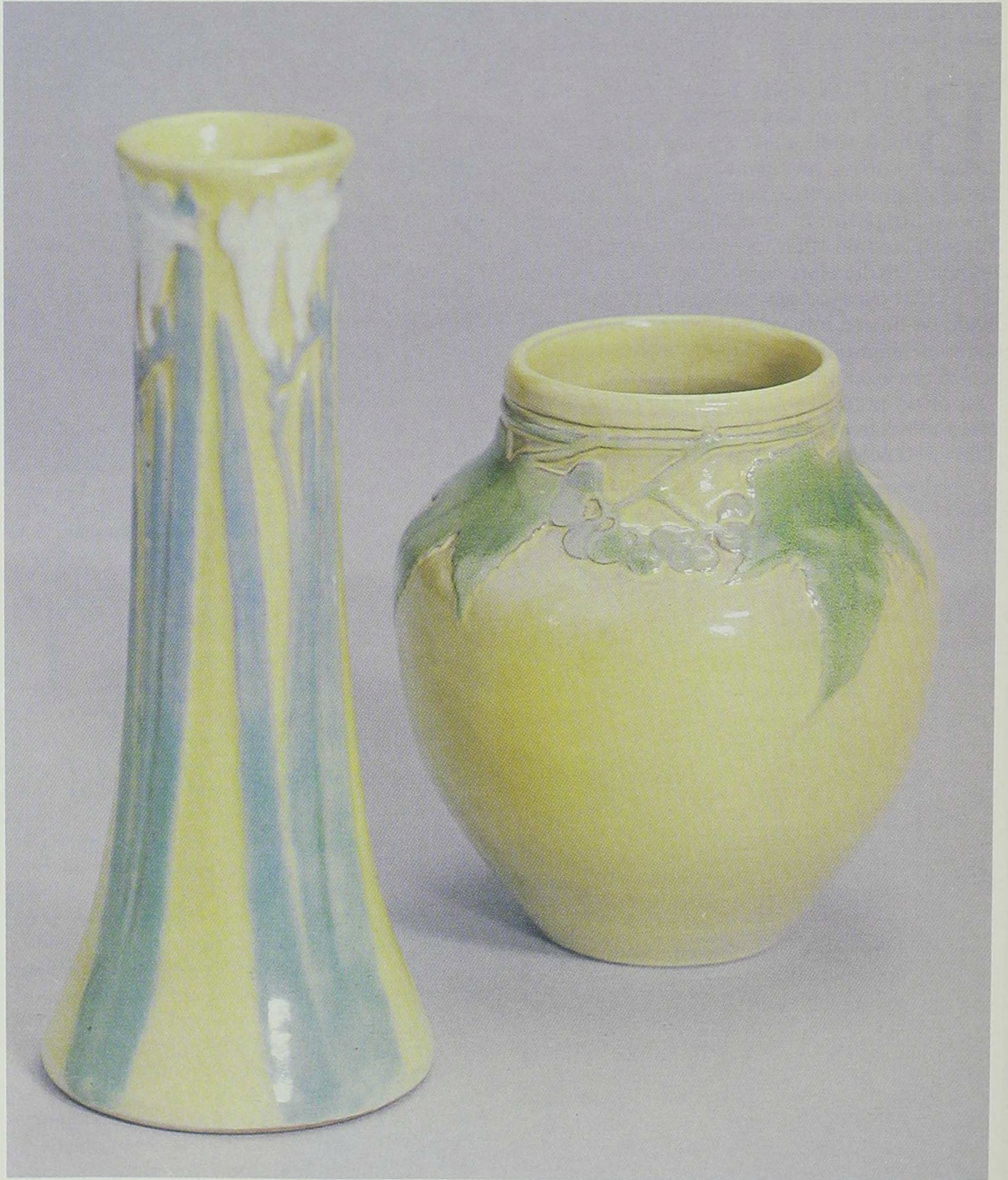
Cox threw the pottery freehand on a potter's wheel, and later, while the clay was leather-hard, he turned or trimmed the walls and foot of each pot. Cox threw the vast majority of the work, but Yancey did throw an occasional piece.

Enhancing the form of each piece, Yancey carved or incised a design and decorated it with inlaid painting. She often created abstract or realistic patterns of clover, lilies, poppies, jonquils, tulips, blackberries, maple seedlings, and pine cones and needles. She stamped or painted the bottom of the piece with the college's mark ("ISC-Ames," circled), plus "Cox" and a circled Y for Yancey. (Occasionally a piece is labeled only with the college's and Yancey's marks, but not Cox's.)

Cox and his engineering students did all the kiln work and mixed glazes. After the biscuit

Green vase, Mary Yancey, 7¾"h. Blue bowl, 4⅛"h. Cox added powdered cobalt to a basic transparent glaze to produce blues. Different powdered compounds produced other colors.

Cylindrical vase, Yancey, 8¼"h. Vase in background, Yancey, 5½"h. Yancey often chose Iowa flora as design motifs. Here, jonquils stretch to the rim of the slender vase, and grape leaves and grapes rest on the neck of the other. Cox supported Yancey's choice to work in lively colors.



firing, Cox dipped each piece in the major glaze. Because the glaze was a commercial type, it required firings of ten or twelve hours beyond the glassy stage (considerably longer than the six to eight hours that hobby potters might fire).

Yancey scraped the color from the design and with a fountain pen filler, brush, or medicine dropper added new colors. Once they were dry, she rubbed the decorative areas level with her fingertip to exactly match the thickness of the base glaze. With a spray gun Cox applied a final, thorough coat of glaze to the entire piece.

ONE CAN ONLY estimate how much pottery Cox and Yancey made — perhaps at least seven or eight hundred pieces. Cox would later state that $10,000 or $12,000 worth of art pottery had been made at Ames. Prices ranged from $2.50 to $50, with an average selling price of $10 to $14. Smaller pieces averaged $3 or $4. Cox priced the best pieces between $20 to $50 — though these were reserved for exhibitions and were not immediately for sale.

Cox had decided to market the pottery as an exclusive, high-priced ware because it was handmade and every piece was an original. He was annoyed by the "kick-about prices" on handcrafted products, the designs of which were never duplicated. Artistically speaking, he ranked the ISC wares with the best in the United States. Although pricing was generally below that of pottery produced at Rookwood and Newcomb, it perhaps was high for a midwestern agricultural economy falling into a depression. Prices above $10 or $12 were probably out of range of the average citizen's pocketbook. (In 1926, by way of example, $12 could buy a walnut-finish dresser.)

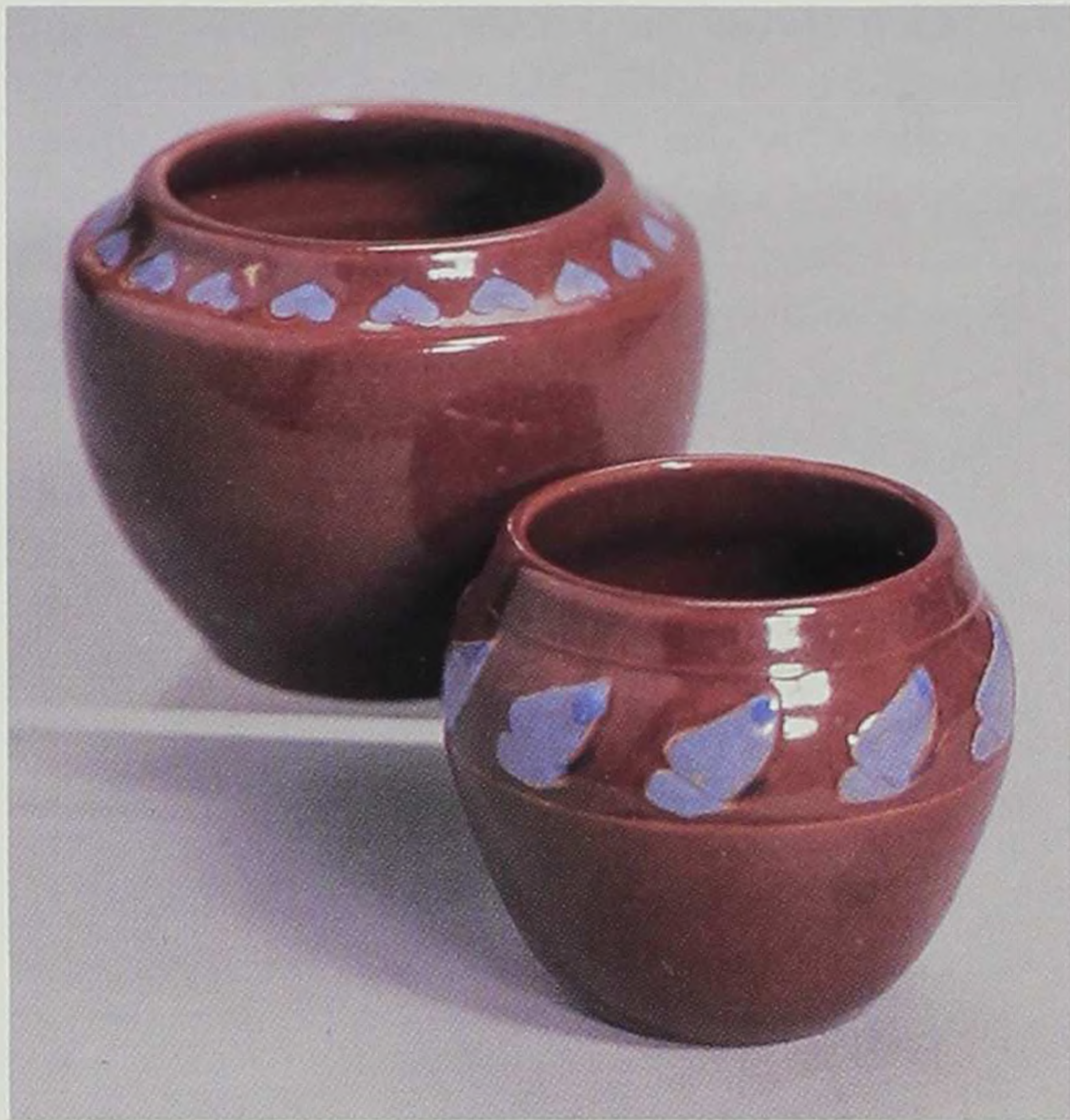
Cox exhibited the pottery wherever possible in Iowa and around the country. He aggressively contacted museums and galleries to book exhibitions. Pieces were included in the Traveling Exhibition of American Pottery of the Federation of Women's Clubs, and many were sold as a result of these exhibits. During this time presenting papers on American art pottery was in vogue among women's art clubs in Iowa. Club women often solicited Cox for written material, and if the correspondent did not request sample ISC wares to accompany her talk, Cox did not hesitate to offer some. Two or three sales generally resulted from each club meeting. Cox gave the women's clubs a 25 percent discount off the list price, allowing them to put the savings into a special scholarship or book fund.

The pottery was sold on the Iowa State campus, and several agents in Iowa handled it on consignment, though many had difficulty selling the wares. Reactions to the pottery were mixed. The women's clubs, often effusive in their praise of the quality of the work exhibited, also expressed their delight that the pottery was made in Iowa. When criticism came, it came in two forms: the pottery was too high-priced, or the enamel glazes were not appealing.

In Iowa City, the proprietor of the Davis Gift Shop wrote Cox that he personally preferred matt glazes to the high-enamel glazes of ISC pottery. In response Cox explained that the composition of Iowa shales lent itself to the making of faience (earthenware decorated with opaque colored glazes), and by tradition faience is tin-enameled. When choosing glazes to apply to Iowa clays, Cox had come to believe that tin enamels increased the indigenous quality of the faience.

Furthermore, he and Yancey were striving for a style that was "lively" and a finish that would always look clean. To Cox, a matt finish looked "shabby" after being on display for a long time, even when washed with a grit soap. He had grown tired of the dominance of blues and greens in American art pottery (even though he had helped start the trend at Newcomb) and now enjoyed the wider color palette available with tin enamels. Cox considered the preponderance of matt glazes on pottery as a waste of other materials if all light was to be absorbed rather than reflected.

In mid-November 1926, a New York antique and pottery dealer named Adelaid Ehrich wrote Cox about the shipment he had sent her. Ehrich did not care for either the glazes or shapes of the pottery. In her opinion, a piece of pottery should be not only pretty, but useful. If craftspeople gave more consideration to the relationship of each piece to its environment,



Bowl with hearts, Cox, 3½"h. Vase with butterflies, Cox, 3¼"h. Cox favored high-gloss tin enamel glazes for their consistently clean look and their greater reflection of light.

Ehrich continued, they would be more artistically and commercially successful. And she stated her own particular grievance against vases glazed in colors that did not harmonize with any known flower.

Ehrich's criticism probably was fresh in Cox's mind ten days later; in a letter he wrote that day he explained, "Mary L. Yancey, my designer, has chosen to work in lively colors and expects the purchaser to use the wares as color emphasis rather than for harmony. We want to do something distinctive," Cox continued, "and Miss Yancey has decided to try out this thought. It is easy to use a piece that blends without effort by the owner, but calls for intellectual effort if the surroundings must be cared for and Miss Yancey is asking for this effort."

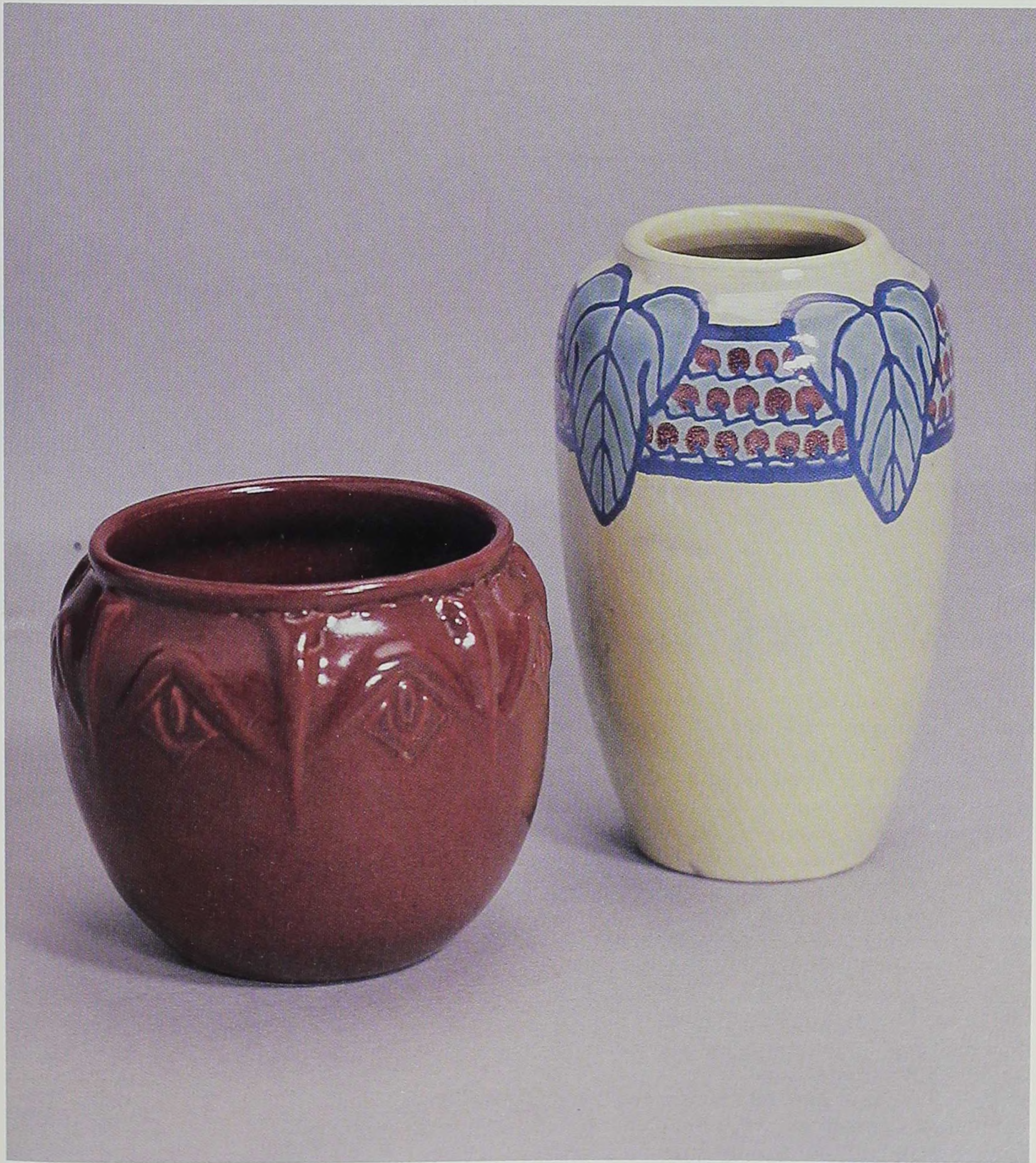
ONCE PAUL COX determined the course that art pottery at ISC was to follow, he held to it. What he and Yancey produced in collaboration was to be representative of ISC pottery. Cox did not allow his personal preference for undecorated pottery to influence design decisions. Much like his mentor, Charles Binns, Cox believed that the Greek and Chinese potters in their search for classical simplicity had already given the world the best in ceramic form. But here Cox's sense of marketing held sway over his sense of aesthetics. In a letter to the Davis Gift Shop he confided, "Within our own circle and not for publication, I much prefer my pictures on canvas or etcher's paper, and my pottery without any little flowers, and I prefer to put my flowers into my vases and to have beauty that way. Most decoration detract[s] from the form rather than add[s] to it, but the average person wants to put some sort of design on the pot, and we have Miss Yancey on that account."

From time to time, when sending a shipment of pottery for exhibition, Cox would include a few of his own large-scale pieces that Yancey had not decorated. He did not offer these pieces for sale because he did not want to compete with Yancey's work. But he did want to acquaint the public with the idea of using larger vases and standing ashtrays to decorate lobbies of hotels, hospitals, and libraries.

Cox's personal pieces often received more favorable response than Yancey's decorated items. With irritation, he wrote the Davis Gift Shop that if the owner wanted undecorated pottery with matt finishes Cox was willing to make it because it could be crafted a lot more easily than the pottery he and Yancey produced. There is no indication that he carried through on this. When he received serious inquiries on the production of such pottery, however, Cox generally offered only to share his technical knowledge. He was willing, he said, to help others do the work themselves or to find someone to do it for them.

Would sales have been higher if Cox had followed his own sense of aesthetics in marketing art pottery? Perhaps. Yet Cox often maintained that he did not perceive himself as an artist — a technician and a sound potter of artistic tendencies, yes — but not a true artist. Yancey agreed in this assessment. Years later she would describe Cox's personality as "very direct — curt as opposed to suave. Utterly sincere. Intelligent but not intellectual. Highly motivated. Capable, but not 'artistic.' Appreciative of art achievement and individuality." In their collaboration Mary Yancey filled the

Red vase (Yancey?), 3⅞″h. Yellow vase, Yancey/Cox, 6″h. A frequently used blood-red glaze was produced by adding chrome tin pink to the transparent glaze. Cox enjoyed the wider color palette of tin enamel glazes.

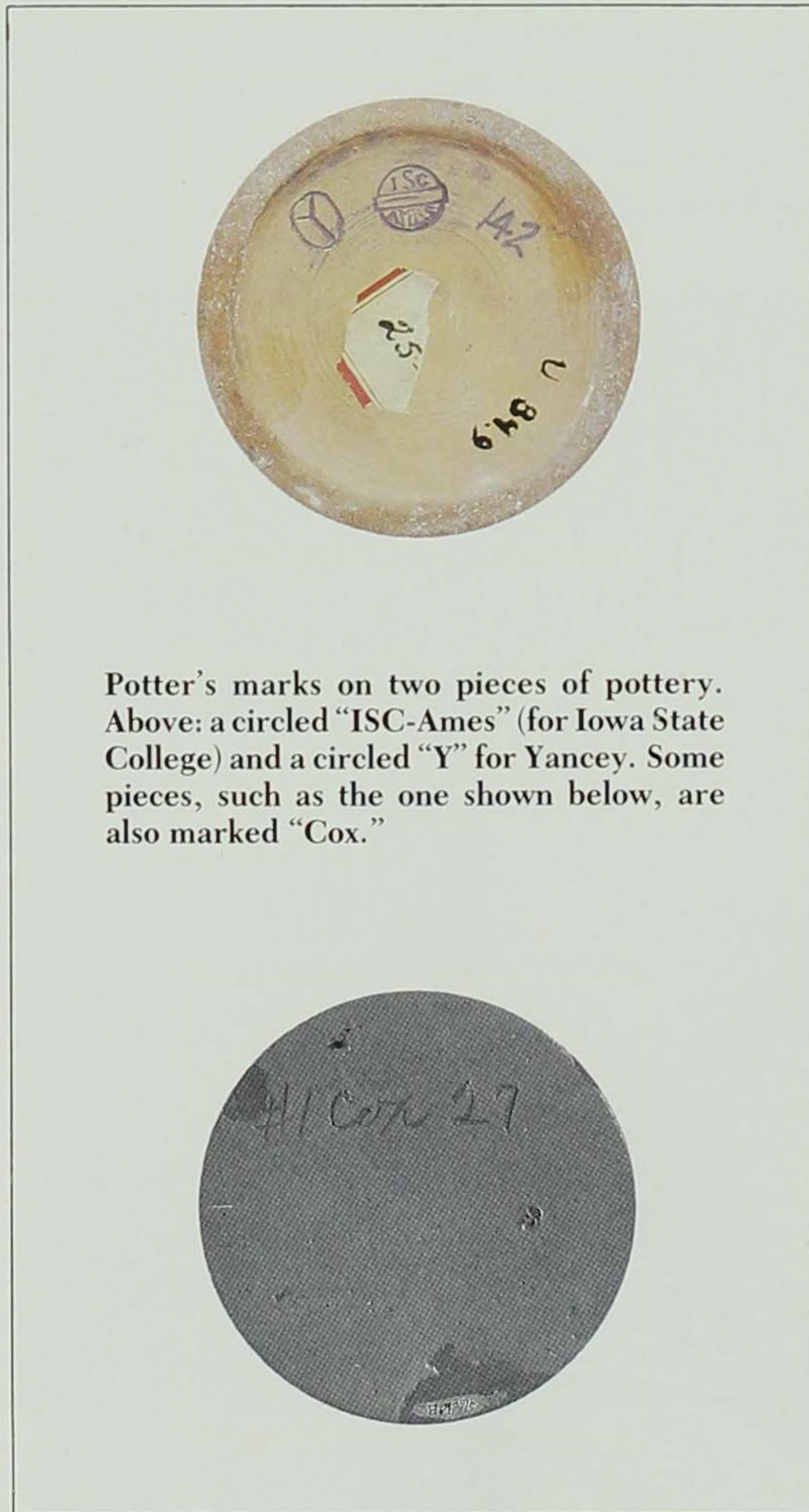


Blue bowl, Cox, 5¾"h. Green vase (Yancey?), 5¾"h. A circled Y on the bottom of the green vase suggests that it is Yancey's work, as does its stylized, repeating design (compared to Cox's often more simple designs).

role of artist, and Cox greatly respected her work as a designer for her honest drawing, design, and color. Cox believed that blending their talents was essential for producing art pottery that was technically and artistically successful and commercially marketable.

Cox continually looked for ways to promote ISC art pottery. Cox's students made small ceramic pitchers, tiles, and vases to offer visitors during open house at the pottery. He and Yancey encouraged their students to create parade floats for the annual Veishea student celebration in the spring. In 1926 their float won second place with a towering Wedgwood-type vase reportedly over ten feet high. Cox did not let these publicity opportunities go unnoticed. In 1927 he wrote the dean of the Engineering College, Anson Marston, "It may

Bowl (Yancey?), 3½"h. Vase, Yancey, 8"h. Yancey often used a design motif to enhance the shape of each piece. Here, different positionings of similar flowers accentuate the shape of each piece.



Potter's marks on two pieces of pottery. Above: a circled "ISC-Ames" (for Iowa State College) and a circled "Y" for Yancey. Some pieces, such as the one shown below, are also marked "Cox."

be of interest to you to know that I have been given publicity for the Veishea float in four publications, the combined circulation of which will be close to 300,000 and one of them reaches every crockery dealer almost in America, and even goes abroad."

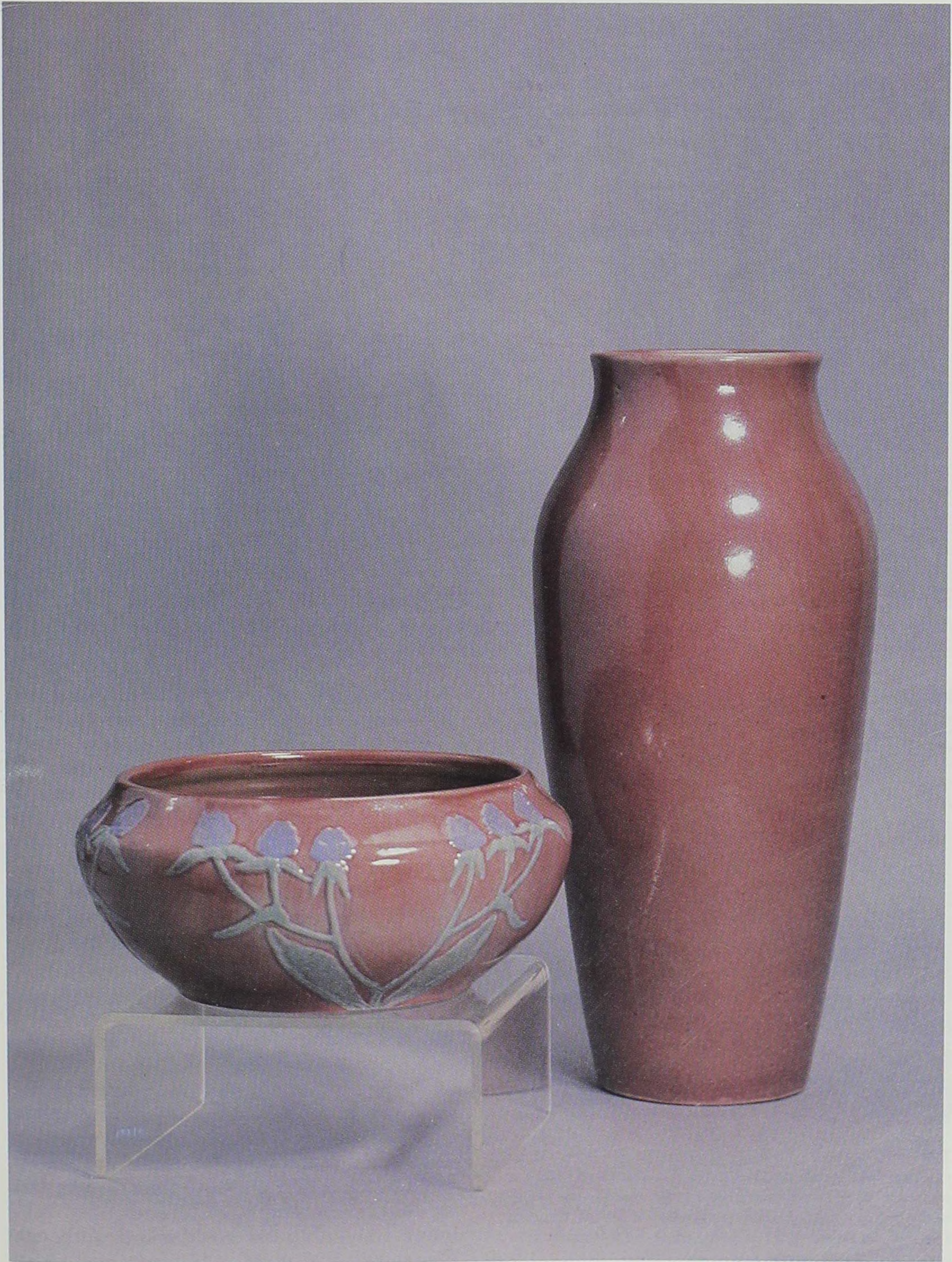
The year 1927 may have been their peak year. Over two hundred students were enrolled in Yancey's modeled pottery class. Cox and Yancey were invited to exhibit six to ten significant pieces in a show of the best work in contemporary American pottery at the Memorial Art Gallery in Rochester, New York. The ISC pottery was exhibited among the works of the Rookwood Pottery, Adelaide Robineau, Mary Sheerer, Leona Nicholson,

Bowl, Yancey, 4¼"h. Tall vase, Cox, 15¼"h. Personally favoring classical simplicity, Cox occasionally distributed his own larger, simpler pieces to encourage the idea of using large pottery in lobbies and public places. "Most decoration detracts from the form," he wrote, "but the average person wants to put some sort of design on the pottery and so we have Miss Yancey for that."

Charles Binns, and others. Cox also sent representative pieces to national ceramics meetings in Detroit and Atlanta to be viewed by manufacturers and educators. Accompanying the exhibitions was a gleaming sign printed on glass in red and gold that read "Ames Pottery Made from Iowa Clays."

Cox considered their art pottery to be a technical and artistic success and was extremely proud of it. But ever a pragmatic man, he candidly admitted that sales were slow and that financially speaking it was a "fizzle." Even though sales did not go well, Cox understood that such endeavors take time (the Newcomb program had taken over twenty years to develop). Yet by 1928, Yancey was spending less time decorating pottery. She directed her efforts more towards making terra cotta heads, the Veishea floats, and teaching design to advanced ceramic students. Hence, of the six years of production, only four were of much consequence.

THE ARTISTIC collaboration between Paul Cox and Mary Yancey ended in 1930 when Yancey married ISC ceramic engineering student Frank Hodgdon and moved to Massachusetts. When Anson Marston retired as dean of the Engineering College in 1932, Cox lost the administrative support he had enjoyed for the production of the pottery. And the entire nation by then was suffering the effects of the Great Depression. The economic devastation felt in the Midwest and certainly in Iowa throughout the 1920s had spread across America. The generally somber mood was translated into budgetary austerity, in the business community and in the academic community. Although Cox's correspondence does not mention it, surely the economic times contributed to consumers' reluctance to buy ISC pottery. More than once in the 1930s he stated that if



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Yancey worked with students to build Veishea floats promoting ceramic engineering; in 1926 this tribute to Wedgwood won second place. In turn, Cox used such publicity opportunities to nationally promote ISC art pottery.

Tile, 4¼″ square. View of Campanile on Iowa State campus. Cox's students produced tiles and small pitchers and vases as souvenirs for guests to the open houses held at the pottery. Cox also set up a potter's wheel at the state fair and, as he shaped Iowa clay on it, he told onlookers about the pottery program.

the depression ever ended and if times became good again, he hoped to make more art pottery.

Cox had hoped that ISC pottery would advertise Iowa's natural clay resources for potential industries, bring beauty to those who viewed and purchased the wares, and promote and help finance a fledgling university ceramics program. The program did influence one or two small plants in Iowa to begin production. There is no evidence that the plants survived the Great Depression, but in a sense Cox did meet his goal to stimulate industry in Iowa. That the pottery was artistically successful is a credit to Cox and Yancey. That it was not a financial success was in many ways beyond their control.

The high pricing of wares — justified by the great amount of time required of handcrafted labor — has been a recurring problem within the history of the arts and crafts movement. What began in part as a movement to create art for the middle and lower classes often produced wares that few could afford. Although the art pottery movement had fared well across

the nation and the major potteries had been enormously successful, the movement by now was declining. Economic pressures following World War I had forced many art potters into academic institutions and industries. Ironically, by 1920 the only means of economic survival for many art potteries was to mass-produce pottery — the very action that the arts and crafts movement had attempted to counteract. Potters who continued to struggle to produce a "pure" handcrafted pottery became the basis of the studio pottery movement, in which the studio potter alone was responsible for a piece from beginning to end. Studio potters worked in small studios with small kilns, or taught at colleges and universities where kilns were at their disposal.

After leaving Iowa State College, Mary Yancey Hodgdon became a studio potter. In 1931 she founded Clay Craft Studios in Massachusetts with three other women. Two years later, she joined the faculty at Fullerton Junior College, outside Los Angeles, where she became a renowned ceramist. She retired from Fullerton in 1962.

Paul Cox left Iowa State in 1939 and never returned to academic life. Instead, he tried his hand at several ventures, including operating a commercial pottery for a few years in Baton Rouge. After his retirement, Paul Cox remained active in the ceramics world through his monthly contributions to *Ceramic Age*. He died in 1968 at the age of 89 in Baton Rouge. It is ironic—but not unusual—that although the inability to continue producing art pottery at Iowa State College was a great disappointment to him, it has made the pottery quite rare today, and only more esteemed by collectors. □

NOTE ON SOURCES

The University Archives, Iowa State University (Ames) and the College Archives, New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University (Alfred, New York) hold letters and other materials written by Paul E. Cox that were used in researching this article. The author's interviews with Mary Yancey Hodgdon in 1985; with Dr. David Wilder, head of the Department of Material Science and Engineering (Iowa State University); and with former ceramic engineering students yielded more information. Articles written by Cox that were consulted include "Potteries of the Gulf Coast" and "A Review of Glaze Making Aids" in *Ceramic Age* (1936 and 1948); and "Kilns, Furnaces, Bodies and Glazes for Small Commercial Production and Educational Work," *Journal of the American Ceramic Society* (Aug. 1928). The story of Newcomb pottery was compiled from Lillian Bregman, "Going to Pottery," *Nineteenth Century* (Nov. 1982); Jessie Poesch, *Newcomb Pottery: An Enterprise for Southern Women: 1895–1940* (Exton, Penn., 1948); and Kenneth E. Smith, "The Origin, Development and Present Status of Newcomb Pottery," *Bulletin of the American Ceramic Society*, 17 (June 1938).

The Greatest American Living Machine

by Michael Mullen

A WARNER BROTHERS CARTOON from the 1930s shows a dog trying to escape the clutches of another dog, the bully, by running into a modern, streamlined home. The bully follows and both dogs become the comic victims of the mechanical devices that fill the house. At the same time that the house served as the backdrop for the dogs' antics, it also gave the creators of the cartoon a chance to poke fun at the modern, futuristic appliances that threatened to change the way people lived.

Edward Earle Butler of Des Moines did not see such inventions as a threat. Instead, Butler built a house in Des Moines in 1935/36 that would showcase the exciting possibilities of the modern home in America. What he offered was not a cartoon fantasy, but a functional, livable home reflecting many of the most progressive ideas in house building at that time.

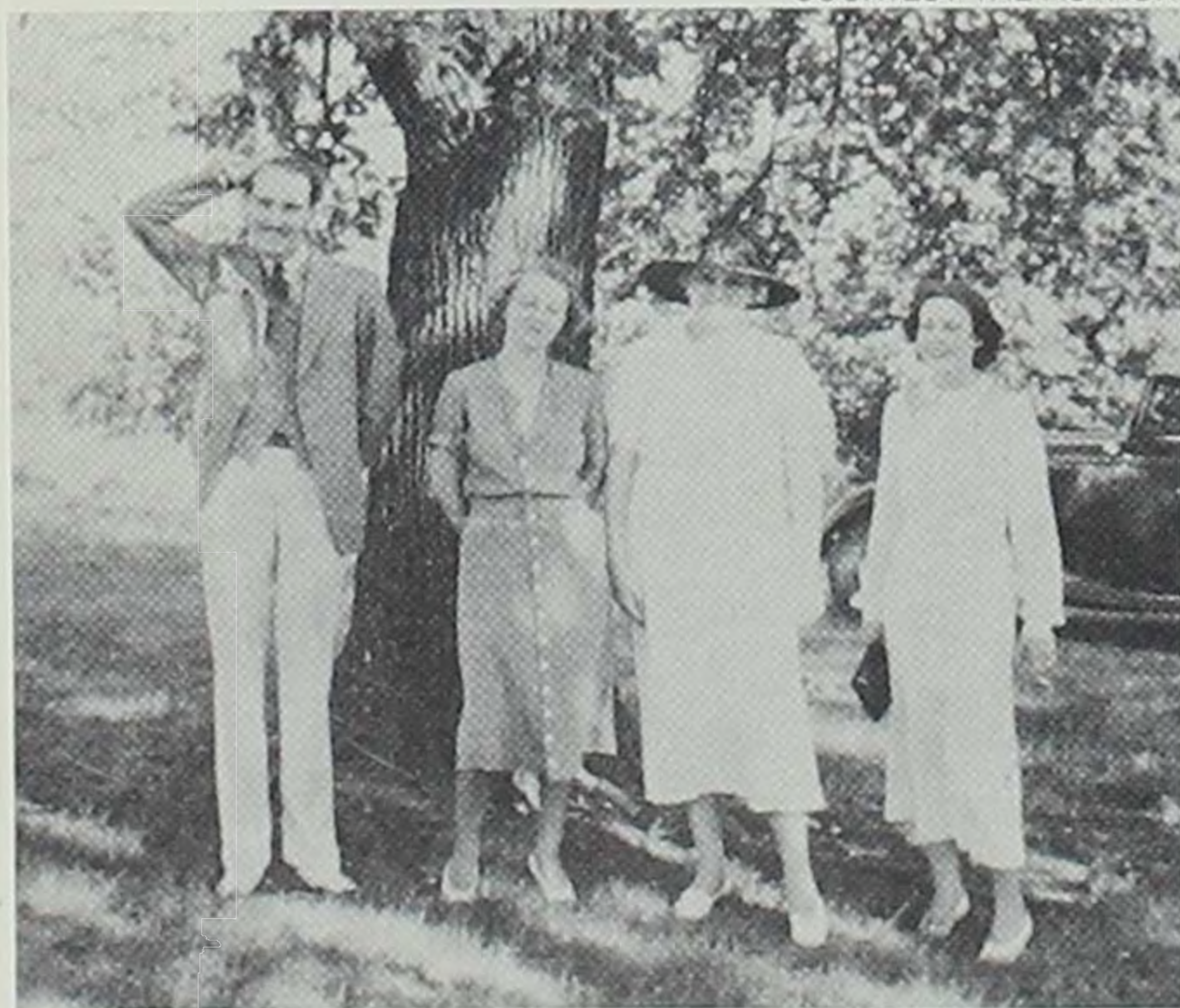
Butler was a likely candidate to build one of the best examples of streamline deco architecture in the country. For one thing, he had money. His father, Eugene K. Butler, was a millionaire when he retired as general manager at McCormick Harvesting Company in 1900 and moved from Chicago to Des Moines. Butler's own occupation was managing his family's investments, which included many real estate properties in downtown Des Moines. Besides his financial resources, Butler was a thoughtful and practical man who looked to the future.

According to an article in *American Magazine* in 1937, Butler was graduated from Culver Military Academy and the University of Chicago, where he majored in chemistry, and served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps during World War I. He was 23 when he first decided to build a house on a hillside overlooking Des Moines, a site that continues to provide an exciting view of the capital city. But it would be more than two decades before he would begin.

Butler and his wife, Fannie Harriet Butler, had lived in Des Moines hotel suites or apartments from the end of World War I until the mid-1930s and traveled extensively during that time. Butler preferred plane flights over train travel. His son, Edward B. Butler, was manager of United Airlines in Des Moines, and Butler himself knew many pilots and had his own license. On their travels, Butler enjoyed looking at houses and planning his own. Finally he decided to act on his interest in house design and his desire to create his own house. He purchased an eleven-acre tract of land and began plans to build at 2633 Southwest Twenty-First Street (now Fleur Drive).

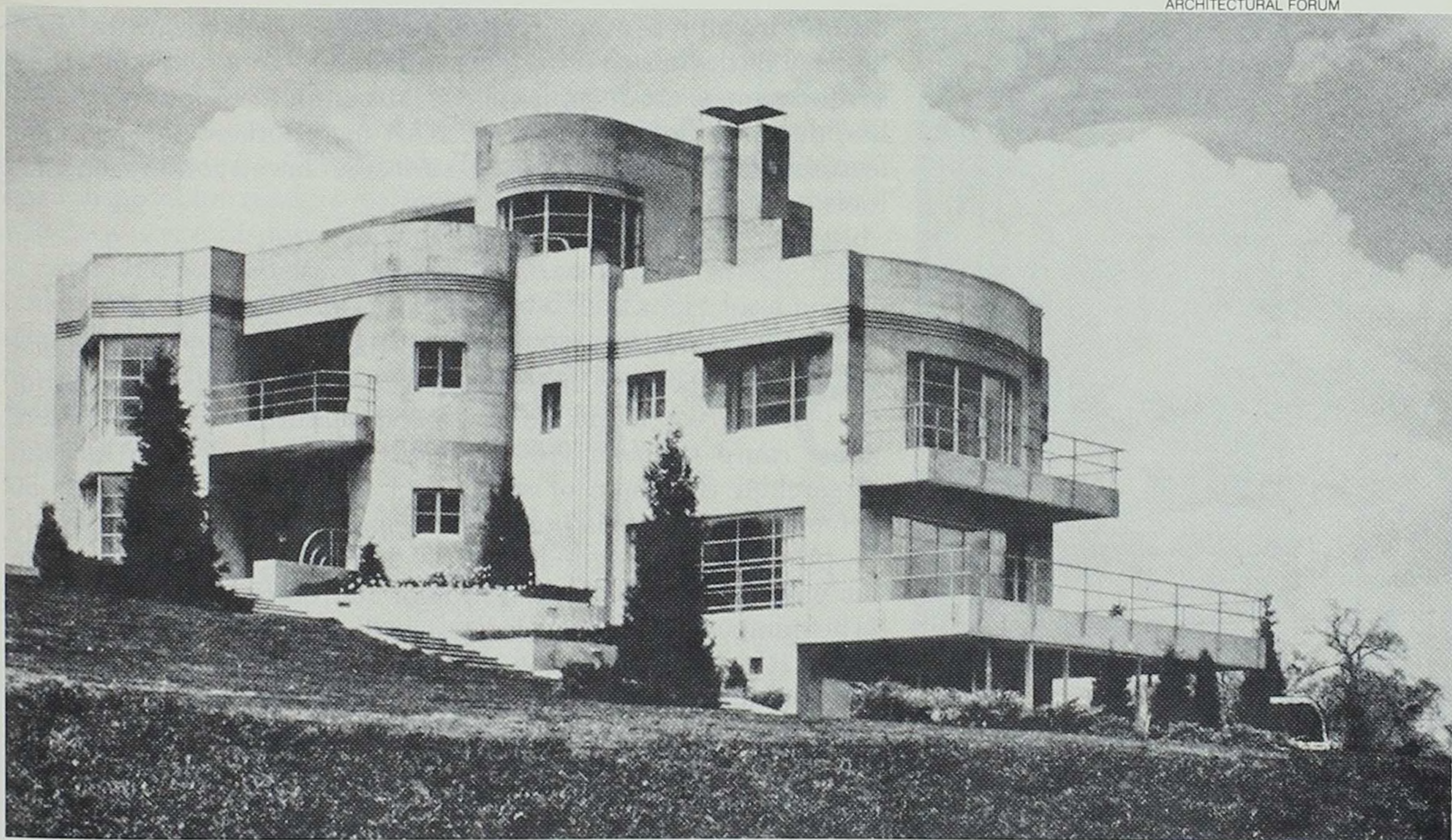
Butler's landmark house suggests that he may have visited the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago in 1933 and 1934. House design was an integral part of the Home Exhibits section at the exposition. He was certainly aware of what many believed to be a coming revolution. *Home and Furnishings*, published in conjunction with the exposition, announced that "the design of the 'perfect' home seems to be the same in everyone's mind. Its main qualifications are only four in number. It must be DURABLE;

COURTESY THE AUTHOR



Edward Earle and Fannie Harriet Butler flank their daughter Sarah and an unidentified woman (in large hat).

ARCHITECTURAL FORUM



Built of ten-inch poured concrete walls, the Butler house in Des Moines is distinguished by the curved corners, flat roofs, and terraces characteristic of streamline deco architecture.

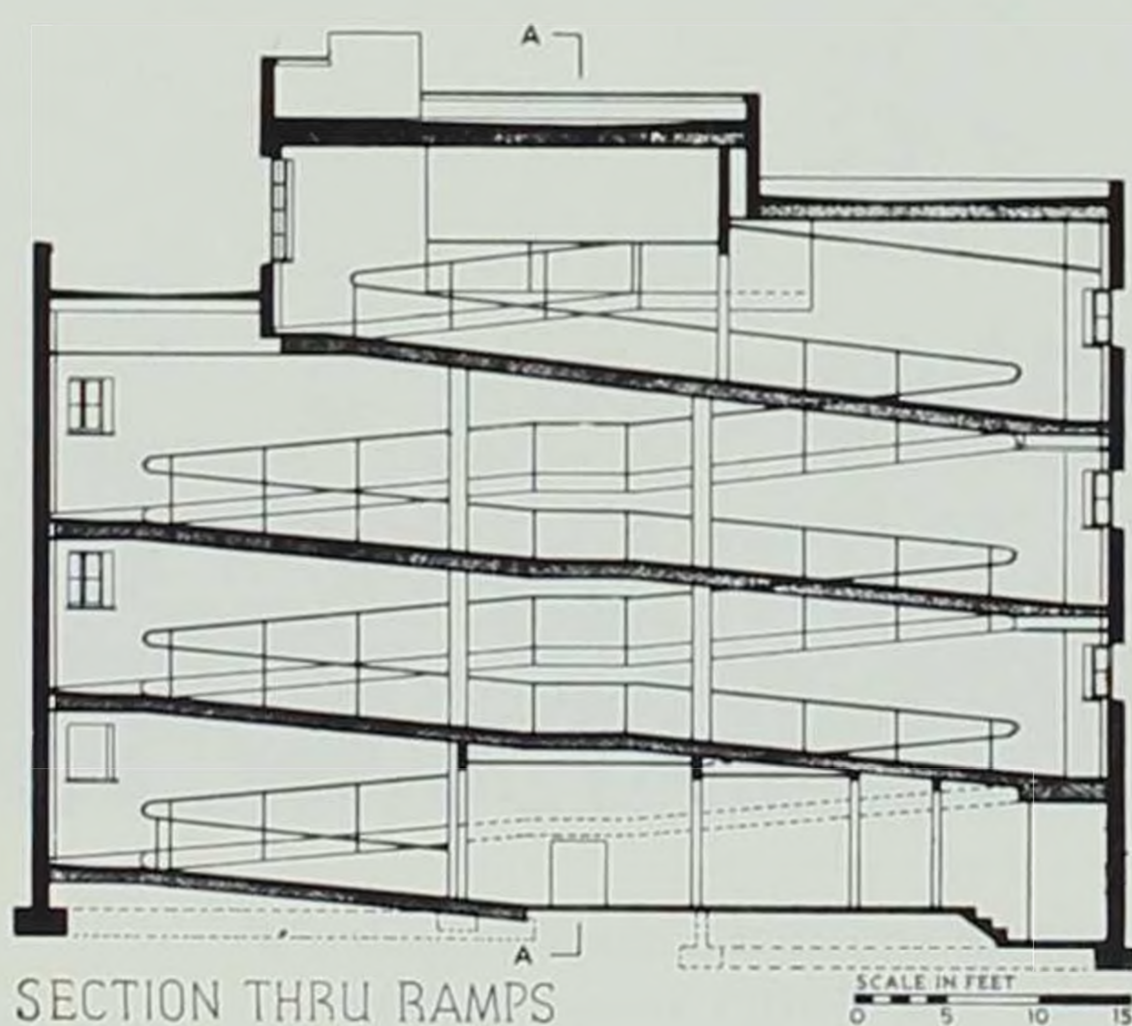
CONVENIENT; LIVABLE; AND INEXPENSIVE." Butler's house in Des Moines would meet the first three qualifications. And though the house would not be inexpensive, Butler would emphasize that the principles he incorporated into it could also be part of a more modestly priced house.

Butler participated "to an unusual degree" in planning and supervising construction, according to an article in *The Architectural Forum,* which called the house "the result of two years' close collaboration between a strong individualist and his architect." Butler worked closely with friend and architect George A. Kraetsch (partner with his brother William Kraetsch in the architectural firm Kraetsch & Kraetsch). To satisfy their requirement of durability, Kraetsch and Butler chose concrete, reinforced with steel. Exterior walls were made of ten-inch-thick monolithic concrete (poured into a form as a continuous mass), furred on the inside with latticed metal studs and lath. Interior partitions were of cinder concrete blocks covered with hardwall plaster. The floor was also reinforced concrete over steel joists. Double-paned windows kept out cold and heat.

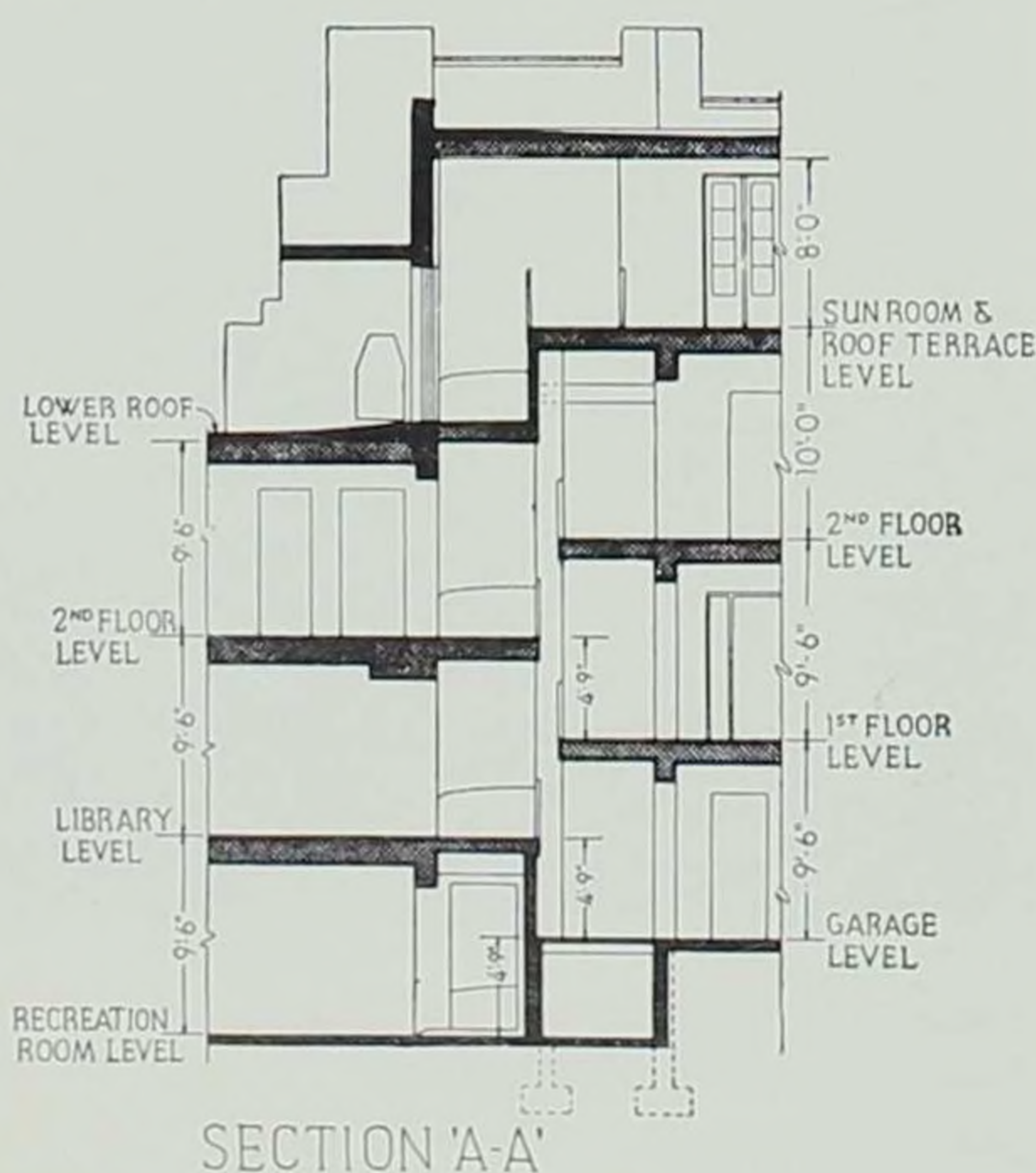
With 15 carloads of Portland Cement, 110 tons of steel, and over 19,000 feet of telephone wire and cable, Butler and Kraetsch created a house that was remarkable for its practicality. In the *Architectural Forum* article Butler explained, "Materials were selected for permanence and ease of upkeep; they were to be fireproof, tornado proof, earthquake and termite proof, assuring a nominal insurance rate. Surplus materials for decorative purposes are totally lacking as I believe that simplicity and good

design are much more restful and inherently beautiful in a home." Butler chose an architectural style generally known by several names: art deco, moderne, streamline moderne, streamline deco, or depression modern. It incorporated the common features of relatively unadorned surfaces, curved corners, and flat roofs.

BUILT INTO A HILLSIDE, the house had three floors, which became six staggered layers (plus garage and sunroom) when divided by a special feature — a wide concrete ramp that served as a central staircase. Butler had researched the topic of safety and had found that almost 50 percent of accidents in buildings happened on stairs. To alleviate the problem, he designed a central ramp that gently spiraled from the ground floor up to the top-floor sunroom. As he explained, "The ramp was selected for the convenience in circulation it offers. It provides a method of wheeling vehicles anywhere in the house and also to permit older people to meter their rise and descent to their physical ability. It has proven very successful in use, and practically puts the basement and two stories above on one level." The ramp was less tiring to climb and allowed quicker and freer movement along it.



The ramp zigzagged up from the recreation room and three-car garage, through the living areas, to the glass-walled sunroom on the top floor.



ARCHITECTURAL FORUM

In his research on home design, Butler had noted that few owners are satisfied with their homes and that defects in equipment and construction cause friction and expense. He believed, according to *American Magazine*, that "a perfect house . . . has a psychological effect which may alter entirely a family's outlook on life, stimulate it socially, and even prevent a divorce."

Butler designed the house to be practical and efficient, but not at the price of comfort. The master suite included a bedroom, closets, bathroom, dressing room, and a shoe closet. Most rooms — there were twenty-eight — had adjoining terraces, porches, or balconies, allowing the Butlers, their adult daughter, Sarah, and their guests to enjoy the pleasures of fresh air and sunshine. The low walls built around each terrace were tilted back slightly so that they were more comfortable to sit against, and the concrete terraces were painted to reduce glare. From the glass-walled sunroom the Butlers enjoyed picnics and an unparalleled view of Des Moines and the Raccoon River valley. Butler could plug his portable grill into an electrical outlet there or build a fire in the fireplace.

Butler took advantage of modern technology to install labor-saving devices "that would pay for themselves in time saving and low cost of operation," he wrote, "and that if necessary would make one independent of servants." In a description that must have overwhelmed the masses of rural Americans who still lacked electricity on their farms, Butler listed some of these labor-saving devices: automatic heating and air conditioning; automatic water softening and heating; an electric towel dryer; an electric eye that

responded to blinking car headlights to open and close the garage doors; eight intercom "house telephones"; and one of the first residential dishwashers and electric garbage disposals. Such features, though fairly standard today, in the mid-1930s required some explanation; a *Des Moines Register* reporter defined a garbage disposal for readers as "an electric sink, a feature of which will be a waste disposer in which garbage may be thrown, pulverized, and worked down the sewer." As might be expected, the house had an electric refrigerator — and a bit more for a homeowner who liked to hunt ducks and entertain: "a small cold storage room for freezing game; a cooling room for storing meats in quantities that make wholesale purchase possible; [and] an extra ice cube freezer with a 675-cube capacity."

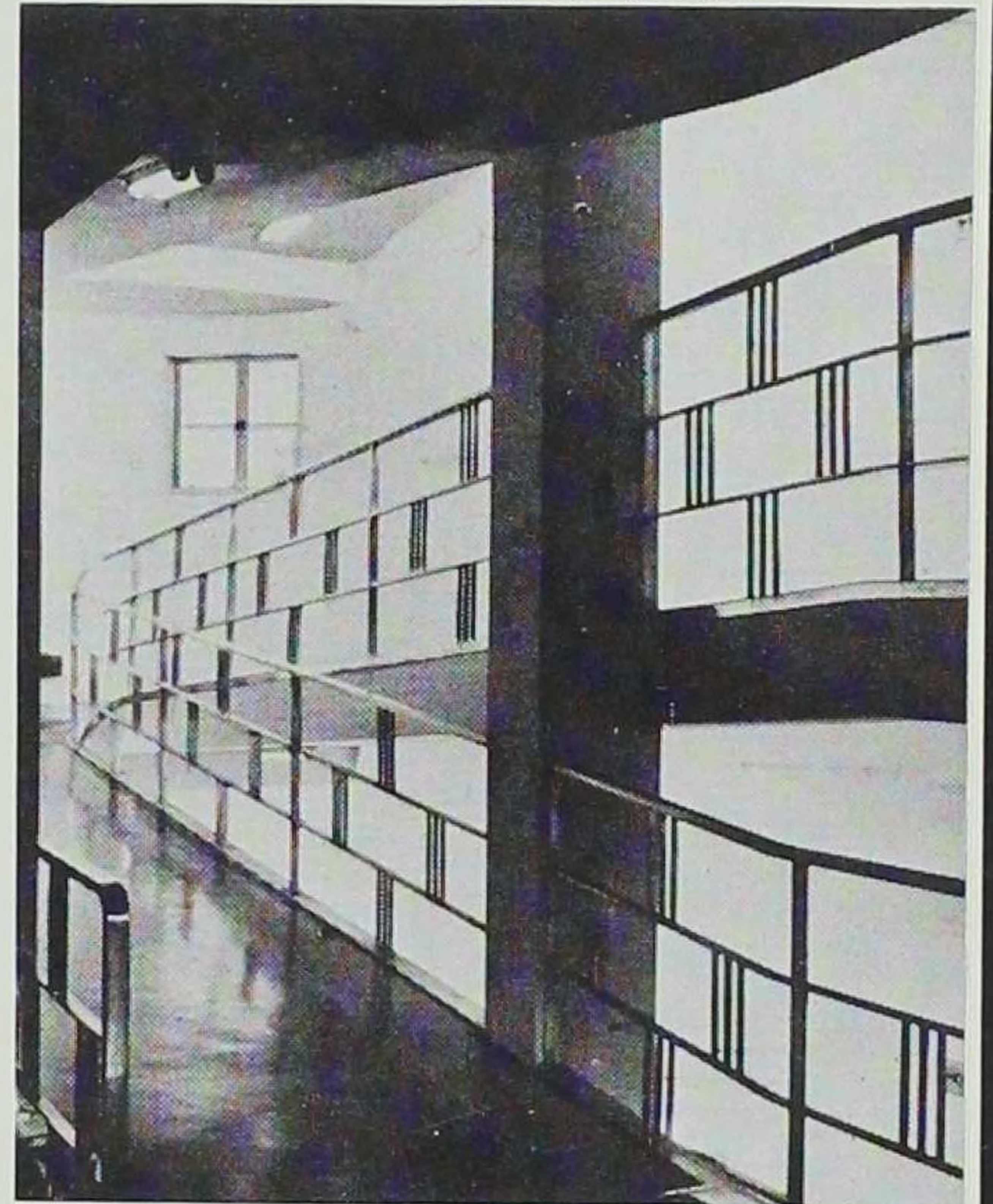
DURING CONSTRUCTION, lighting engineers from General Electric went through the entire house with a foot-candle meter to determine the precise degree of lighting needed in each room. Five hundred light bulbs were installed, many in recessed banks that would direct light on the object or work surface. Ninety-six bulbs lit the dining room, with controls to change brightness and color (for example, the lighting in the room could be adjusted to complement the appearance of the most important female dinner guest). Butler's stated goal was no less than "perfect illumination in all the house to prevent eye strain."

In late October 1936 General Electric executives from Cleveland and New York met in Des Moines to tour the completed house, marking the first time such a large group of G.E. executives had met on this side of the Mississippi. Judging from their enthusiastic response, the trip was not wasted. Carl Snyder, G.E. manager of the home bureau, called the house "the first truly American home in America," explaining that "all the things we have done in the past have been borrowed from Europe. We think the Butler home includes all the elements we need in the American home today."

The general sales manager of the appliances and merchandise division, P. B. Zimmerman, was equally enthralled. "Mr. Butler," Zimmerman said, "has built his house from the inside out, employing only modern standard equipment, just as an automobile comes in one unit. He has set a mark in unified architecture, and the building industry must follow his example." Zimmerman called the house "the charm home of America" and "the greatest American living machine ever devised."

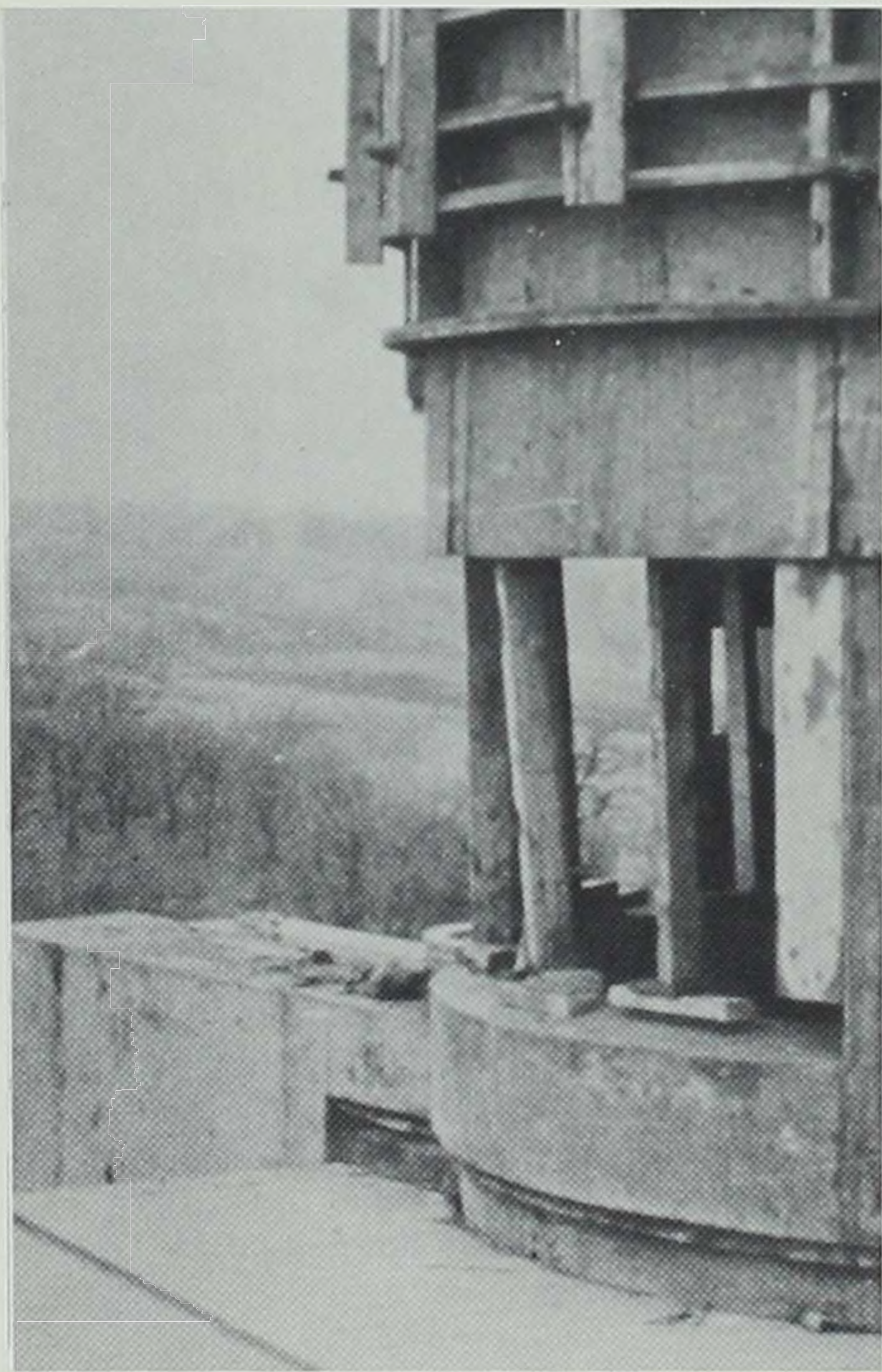
Originally a $55,000 building permit was issued, but the 1937 *American Magazine* article states the cost at $150,000. Yet throughout construction and thereafter Butler insisted that the design principles in his house could be applied to houses costing much less. He wrote in *Architectural Forum*, "Our electric bills are no larger than those of our neighbors with homes of compara-

ARCHITECTURAL FORUM



Wanting to avoid the frequent household accidents that happen on stairs, Butler designed this three-story ramp. Later he tested the incline by riding a coaster wagon down it — and then quickly and wisely banned children's wagons and skates in the house.

COURTESY THE AUTHOR



The balconies (here still under construction) offered the Butlers fresh air and a view of the wooded Raccoon River Valley.

ble size. In other words, we have tried to include all the things which add to the pleasure and convenience of a house without anything in the nature of a gadget. There is hardly anything that we have used that can't be used in lower priced houses." To further his point, he instructed Kraetsch to draw up plans for a $10,000 house with similar features, taking advantage of the extensive planning and testing they had done. "Concentrate for a year or two on planning a house," Butler advised homeowners, "and no matter whether it is large or small, you will spend the rest of your life enjoying it."

ONE MIGHT WONDER why so few other examples exist today of what G.E. executives heralded as "the start of a new era in American home building." The largest concentration of streamline deco buildings can be found in cities that showed enormous growth during the 1930s, such as Tulsa, Oklahoma. American architects were addressing a housing crisis brought on by the influx of industrial workers into the cities during World War I. Prevailing economic conditions of the 1930s and returning veterans after both world wars would deepen the crisis. Americans needed immediate housing, not streamlined "living machines."

The new era never came; nor did the Butler house prove as durable as Butler had believed it would be. Built to withstand fire, tornado, earthquake, and termite, the house nevertheless developed cracks in the roofs and walls. The brass hardware supporting the terrace awnings broke away from the concrete.

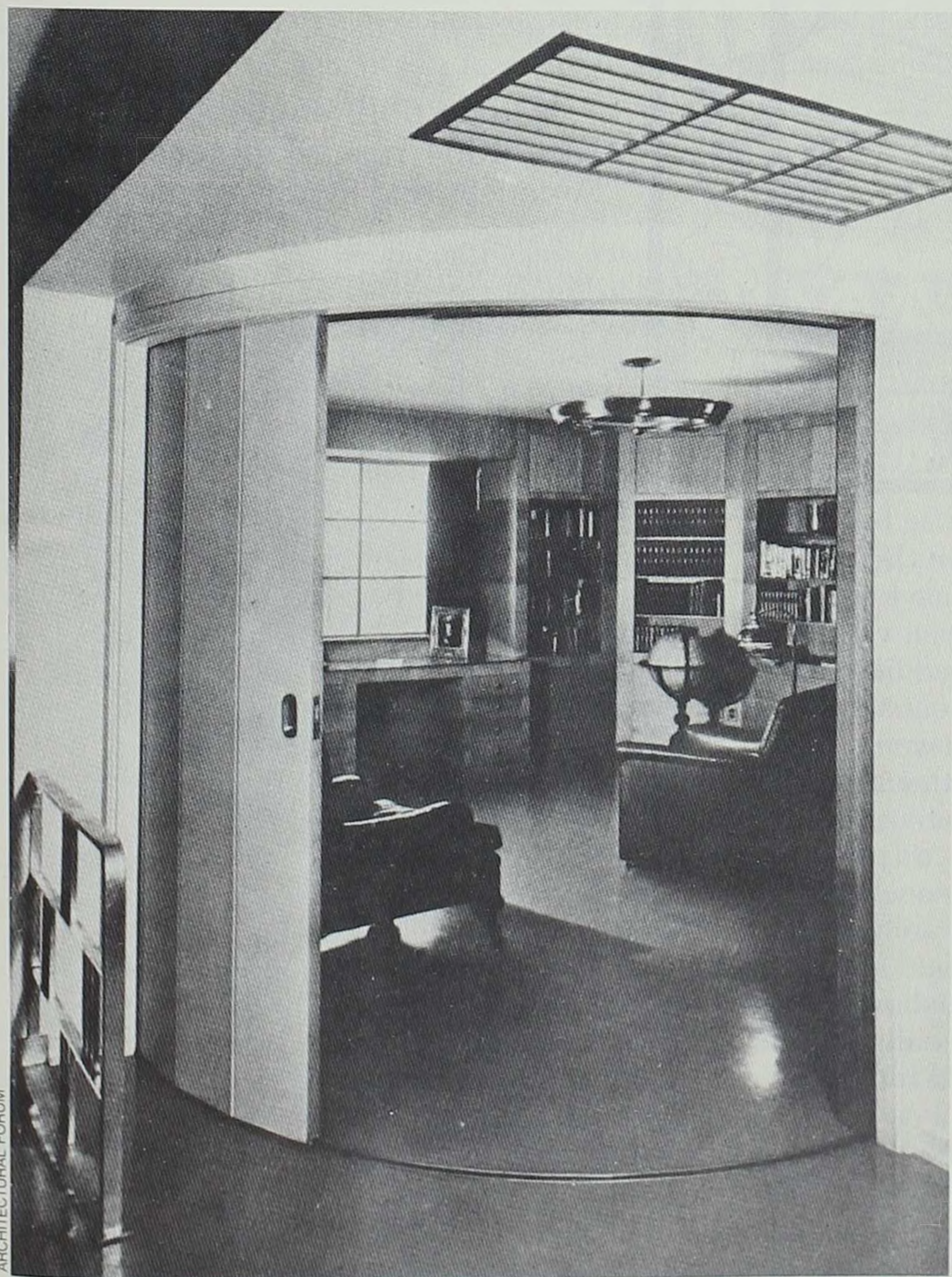
Butler and his wife lived in the house until September 1966, when they moved to a Des Moines apartment. Butler died in February 1970, a month after his wife. The new owner, the Open Bible College, used the house for administrative offices and classrooms. The college fixed the cracked walls, sealed the exterior, and placed a rubber membrane over the roof to stop further leaking. The next project — window renovation to prevent fogging up — stopped at the planning stage when the college decided in 1986 to merge with its sister campus in Oregon and sell the Butler house.

STREAMLINE DECO was a short-lived style in residential architecture. But the Butler house was to some a convincing example that the truly modern home was feasible and sensible. Another Des Moines couple read about Butler's home and commissioned Kraetsch and Kraetsch to build them a similar modern, though more modest, home in Des Moines. Butler had told *American Magazine* writer Lawrence McCann that his wife had originally disliked modern architecture, preferring a "nice colonial house with green shutters." But once the house was built, she "wouldn't swap this one for six dozen colonial

houses." And even McCann was convinced; instructing his readers on what "modernism" meant, he wrote, "When Mr. Butler told me the idea behind his house, I understood for the first time what this modern movement is all about. The word 'modern' had suggested something that would give ordinary folks the fidgets — queer gadgets, goofy furniture, jazzy decorations, weird exteriors.

"Actually," McCann continued, "modernism in housing is . . . a plan to make your life more comfortable — to obtain, in a home, durability, beauty, utility, and economy. When you bought your first vacuum cleaner and electric toaster you joined the modern movement."

In applying that definition on a much grander scale than toasters and vacuums, Edward Earle Butler set a nationally recognized example of the modern movement in American residential design. □



ARCHITECTURAL FORUM

A semicircular sliding door opened into the library. Many rooms continued the sleek curves and clean lines of the exterior of the house.

NOTE ON SOURCES

For an overview of the 1930s streamline style, see Martin Greif, *Depression Modern* (New York, 1975). The most comprehensive article on the Butler house is Lawrence McCann, "The World's Most Modern Home," *American Magazine* (March 1937). Another important article, because it contains Butler's remarks, is "House for Earl Butler, Des Moines, Iowa," *Architectural Forum*, 67 (Sept. 1937). The *Des Moines Register* followed the house as it was being built; see "New Butler Home in Des Moines to Embody the Best in Scientific Construction," June 23, 1935; "New Butler Home Nearing Completion," April 26, 1936; "Home of Tomorrow — New Times — New Ways," Oct. 30, 1936. Rev. Dennis Schmidt, former president of the Open Bible College in Des Moines, was exceedingly helpful in sharing his knowledge of the house. His interest in preserving the history of the house, as well as the structure itself, was admirable.

Adjusting to America

by Lilly Setterdahl

"Up they go!" announces this May 1904 magazine cover, as American and Swedish flags are hoisted. Adjusting to America while valuing one's Swedish heritage was editor Ida Hansen's challenge to her readers in a unique magazine published in Cedar Rapids for Swedish-American women.

COURTESY THE AUTHOR

URING one of the peak years of Scandinavian emigration, seventeen-year-old Ida Jensen arrived in America with her parents. In the years ahead, she would help the hundreds of thousands of other Scandinavian immigrant women adjust to America, at a time when the role of women was undergoing substantial change. For three decades she would serve as chief editor and part owner of *Qvinnan och Hemmet* (Woman and home), the only known Swedish-language women's magazine published in the United States.

Born in Ringsaker, Hedmark, Norway, Ida Jensen and her parents left Norway in 1870. Five years later in Chicago she married Nels Fredrick Hansen, a Dane who had emigrated from Schleswig in 1872. They settled in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where they would raise six sons and a daughter and build a publishing center of Scandinavian periodicals and books.

The couple's first publishing venture, however, was not particularly successful. In 1888, after three years and heavy financial losses, they ended publication of *Fra alle Lande*, a monthly Norwegian-language newspaper for which Ida Hansen had edited a section titled "Husmodern" (The house wife). That same year, however, Hansen, as editor, and her husband, as publisher, started a Norwegian-language magazine, *Qvinden og Hjemmet* (Woman and home). They added a Swedish supplement to the Norwegian magazine, and in 1893 this Swedish supplement, *Qvinnan och*

All illustrations (including boxed letters) are from various issues of *Qvinnan och Hemmet* (1904–1906); microfilm loaned through the courtesy of the author.

Hemmet (also translated as "woman and home"), became a separate eight-page periodical with its own identity.

Forty-five years later, Ida Hansen's epitaph in the magazine would explain her motivation — to " 'build a bridge' between the new country and the old, and this wish carried the company. She was driven by a burning desire to lessen some of the consuming homesickness which hits everyone who moves to new surroundings where strange customs are encountered on all fronts."

As chief editor and part owner, Ida Hansen must have worked diligently on the two Scandinavian magazines. No Norwegian words appeared in the Swedish magazine, and no Swedish in the Norwegian edition. Any duplicate articles therefore had to be translated and typeset in both languages. In its early years, according to a 1903 article in the Cedar Rapids *Gazette*, the magazine had been produced completely by the Hansen family. No outside help had been hired, even for typesetting, although printing had been contracted out. In 1888 a thousand copies had been printed of the first issue, which had more than covered the number of subscribers.

COURTESY THE AUTHOR

Through her magazine, editor Ida Hansen wanted to "lessen some of the consuming homesickness" of Scandinavian women immigrants in America.

But subscriptions and staff grew rapidly. By 1903, the *Gazette* reported, the staff of thirty was headquartered on the entire third floor of the YMCA. Five presses and machines for typesetting, folding, and binding occupied a first-floor store room turned into the press room. The magazine had expanded from eight to forty-eight pages plus cover. Each month the presses churned out 78,500 copies, with "Cedar Rapids, Iowa" prominently on the cover as the place of publication.

Hansen's husband also operated the N. Fr. Hansen Publishing Company and book stores in Cedar Rapids. This zeal for publishing extended to the next generation of Hansens. Two of the six Hansen sons would later publish a magazine called *Woman's World.*

A SAMPLING of issues of the Swedish *Qvinnan och Hemmet* from the 1890s through 1915 reveals that Ida Hansen and her editorial staff worked for a balance of articles that would appeal to readers ranging from domestic help to upper middle-class homemakers in rural and urban settings. A look at the contents of many issues suggests that *Qvinnan och Hemmet* tried to imitate contemporary American women's magazines such as the successful *Ladies' Home Journal. Qvinnan och Hemmet* is filled with poems, short stories, serials, and text and music to Swedish and American songs; news stories, editorials, profiles of individuals, letters to the editor, and travel articles about Scandinavia, Canada, and the United States; sections for children; regular departments on needlework and sewing, cooking, flower gardening, health and child care; and several pages of advertisements. It also included various supplements such as "Our Library" and "Farm and Home."

A typical cover presents a fashionably dressed woman with children on her knee in an elegantly appointed parlor or in a seasonal outdoor setting. But the similarities stop here in comparing Hansen's magazines to the *Ladies'*

The American middle class was an ideal often portrayed, although the editor recognized that many of her immigrant readers were laboring in factories and on farms.

The Scandinavian Woman and Home.

Qvinnan och Hemmet.

A Monthly Journal for the Swedish Women in America.

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA.

Vol. XVIII. OCTOBER 1905. No. 10.

Home Journal, which had a male editor during this period and a quite conservative viewpoint on women's rights. As the masthead proclaimed, *Qvinnan och Hemmet* was "for the Swedish Women in America," and one of Ida Hansen's major purposes was to help her Scandinavian sisters face unfamiliar conditions in America and confront their duties as new citizens — which, in Hansen's mind, definitely included the issue of woman suffrage.

The magazine's policy was probably influenced by the women's movement and the temperance movement in the United States and Iowa. Ida Hansen, being of Norwegian birth, was also no doubt influenced by the women's movement in Norway. The 1880s were an important decade for feminist organizations and journals. There was a constant exchange of views between the Scandinavian countries and the United States. Literary fiction and feminist magazines played an important part in this interaction. Many literary immigrant women added strength from within the Scandinavian-American community. The women's congresses gave the women's movement a big boost, and *Qvinnan och Hemmet* covered these events. Later on, influences from Scandinavia became even stronger as legislation gave women in those countries voting rights — which American women still lacked.

Perhaps Ida Hansen observed that other Scandinavian-American publications were paying little or no attention to the woman-suffrage movement or the many women's congresses held at the turn of the century. Hansen proudly reported the participation of Scandinavian leaders in the women's movement at these American congresses. In the first issue of *Qvinnan och Hemmet* (September 1893), Hansen published two articles on suffrage. One was a speech given by Kristine Fredriksen before the Congress of Women at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago that year; there Fredriksen had labeled the women's movement conservative (rather than revolutionary) because it advocated a return to a more equal relationship between men and women. The second article was by a woman who believed that gaining suffrage was essential to temperance work. With that first issue, the magazine became a forum for debate. Believing that each woman should be able to do what she wished to do, Hansen did not criticize women with opposing views. In the second issue, for instance, she published two contributions denouncing woman suffrage.

Hansen regularly reported on the progress of woman suffrage in Scandinavia, the United States, and other countries. There were several publications and organizations devoted to the women's movement in Scandinavia. Hansen was aware, no doubt, that Swedish women had been granted municipal suffrage in 1862 (the first country in Europe to do so), and that Finnish women received the same right in 1872. (In fact, Finland would be set up as the model country when it granted women full suffrage in 1906.) Women in Norway received restricted suffrage in 1907. When the reality of women's rights did not meet expectation, the discrepancy was pointed out — as in the Editor's Corner of February 1914: "The fact that women in the Nordic countries, Finland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are more equal

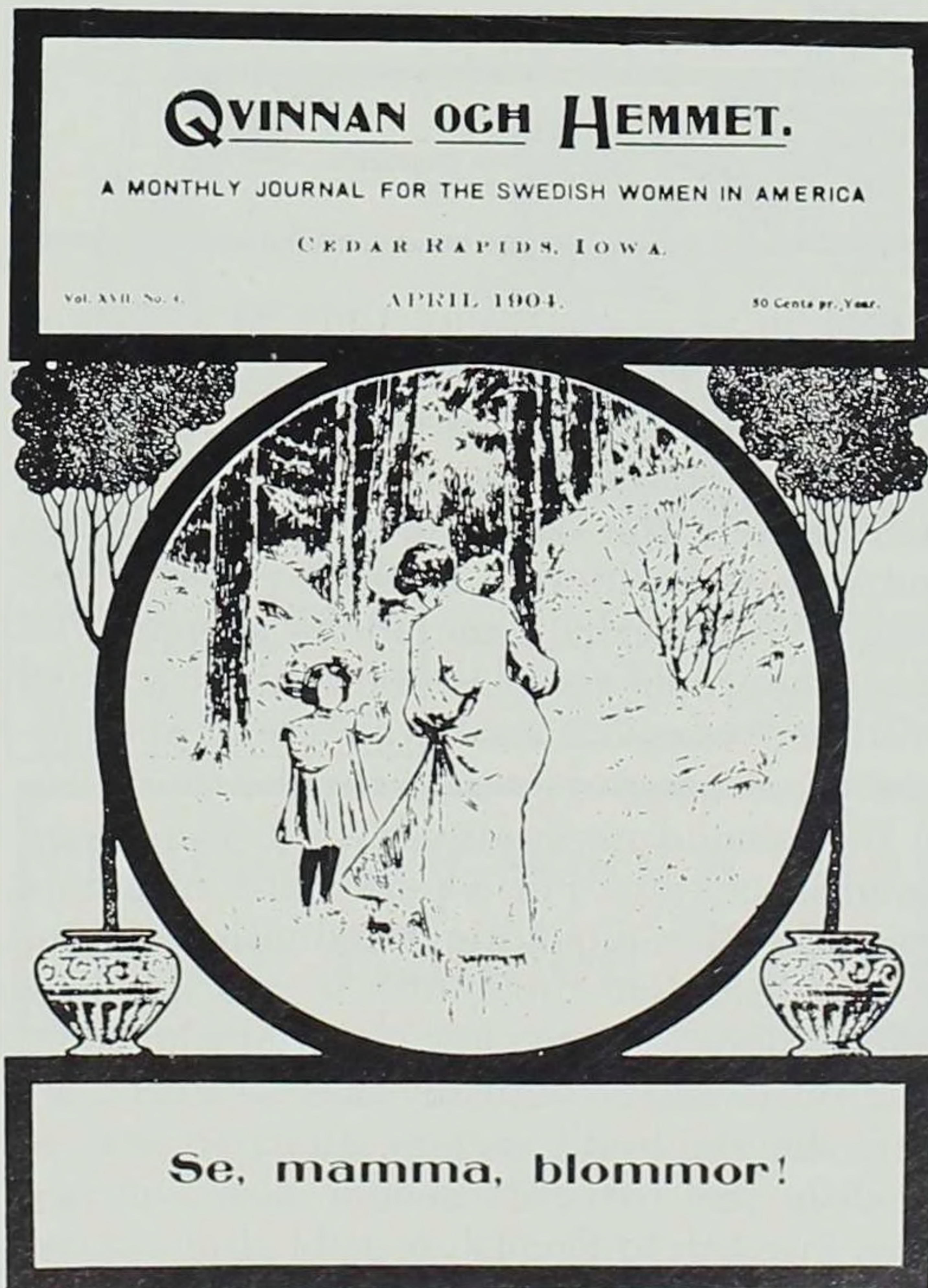
with men than women in larger cultures has not gone unnoticed. Finland and Norway have granted full suffrage to its women, and if the signs are not completely misleading, it's only a matter of time when they get it in Denmark and Sweden . . . the foresightedness of men and women in the Nordic countries is commendable."

Hansen also reviewed or printed work of Scandinavian writers who shared her viewpoint on women's rights. The poems of Björnstjerne Björnson, who had lectured in the United States while attending women's congresses and who supported American feminist leaders, often appeared in *Qvinnan och Hemmet* — as did the writings of Swedish feminist author Elin Wägner.

Basically Ida Hansen advocated education of women, social reform, and suffrage. The issue of suffrage was often tied to temperance work in the magazine. In 1894 a supporter of woman suffrage wrote that she believed women's votes would not be as easily swayed as men's, and that it was up to women to vote for temperance because they suffered the most when men in their families drank. The March 1904 issue reported that 10,000 women had moved to close all saloons in St. Louis in the daytime during the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. In 1908 a writer who likened temperance work to a "woman's military service" (*Kvinnans värnplikt*) warned that women could lose their husbands and sons to drunkenness as surely as to wars.

ABOUT the progress of women on different fronts, we will report truthfully," Hansen assured her readers in January 1908, "but we will not forget the other half of our journal's name, the Home." According to *Qvinnan och Hemmet*, the particular challenge confronting Scandinavian-American women was to appreciate both American and Scandinavian cultures and to incorporate both into family, church, and community — in other words, to be assimilated into American culture and still maintain one's ethnicity. The vision of American middle-class life was represented in each issue in terms of clothes, furniture, family life, and food, at the same time that readers were urged to hold onto their ethnic heritage, particularly regarding their language, literature, and religion. In September 1907 Hansen commented, "It's apparent that those of the second generation look down on their parents' language and culture and that we don't appreciate our forefathers' country enough."

The editor advised readers not to compare a small place in their native Scandinavia with a metropolitan city in America. In a response to immigrants who had become critical of conditions in their native homeland, she reminded readers that just because something is big, it does not mean that it is better: "We have here in America much which is both beautiful and practical, and many of us have much to thank America for, but as the proverb says: '*Spotta ej på det treppsteg du lämnat*' [Do not spit on the threshold you just left]. We can love our adop-



A woman's role as parent was often the subject of cover illustrations and regular departments.

Illustrations of Scandinavian customs (maypoles and midsummer's eve) no doubt brought comfort to immigrants an ocean away from their old homes.

tive country at the same time as we show appreciation for our fatherland."

The Hansens' enterprise was dependent on a second generation of Americans of Scandinavian descent who valued their ethnic heritage and who were literate in their parents' language. Without that generation's support, the magazine would soon lose subscribers and fail to attract younger ones. Two sections of *Qvinnan och Hemmet* showed particular sensitivity to the second generation's shift away from Swedish culture. For a period the magazine regularly offered children's and girls' columns in Swedish, but apparently it was not long before there were too few children who could read the language to justify these features. By 1907 the children's section appeared only in English, and the girls' section also switched from Swedish to English in 1911. But readers wrote in, demanding that the columns return in Swedish. Women declared that they wanted their children, who were learning English at school, to read Swedish as well, because sharing the language brought the family closer together. In August 1912 the columns were once again in Swedish. (Hansen's daughter, Anna, edited the girls' column from 1910 to 1912.) Although the less-frequent children's column stopped completely in 1915, the girls' column continued in Swedish until September 1922.

In its discussion of the adaptation process, the magazine emphasized that it was the immigrant mother who must teach her children about their heritage so that they would not become a generation without a past. Women were encouraged to be diplomatic in their new bilingual and bicultural settings — to delicately balance the need for assimilation against the second-generation syndrome of disavowing one's ethnicity. In April 1908 an editor addressed the difficulties Scandinavian-born mothers might have in recommending and providing American literature for their children: "School libraries are helpful, without digging into mothers' purses, but the desire of the young to have something truly American is irresistible," she wrote. "Even though we believe that Scandinavian mothers ought to do everything to familiarize their children with the Scandinavian literature in the original language, the mothers must understand that their children need to get to know the people and the literature of the country which is going to give them a chance in life. One good does not negate another good. . . . Nothing leads so surely to revolt and argument as when parents ignore the taste of their children. We must be careful so that the young do not get the idea that everything that Father and Mother recommend is dull."

ESPITE the magazine's emphasis on maintaining ethnic ties, the American middle class was the ideal portrayed in its pages. A multitude of paid advertisements (often of American products advertised in Swedish) suggest that with middle-class life came the desire for certain consumer goods. Several

advertisements imply, for instance, that to own and play the piano was enriching and well worth the money and effort. Newly arrived immigrant readers wrote in asking for the American word for common household items or for explanation of unfamiliar items first encountered on store shelves or in magazines and newspapers. The array of products advertised each month generally duplicated what was advertised in most other American newspapers or magazines — including Lydia Pinkham's tonics, furniture, land, snuff, farm equipment, corsets, railroad rates, and an occasional ethnic product, such as *sill* (herring).

The products advertised may have been similar to those in other magazines, but the editors maintained that their readers, Swedish-American women, were not included in the sometimes unflattering picture that major American magazines painted of women. Assistant editor Magnhild Anderson commented in the May 1907 issue that judging from such magazines, women's interests seemed limited to wardrobes and beauty. Contradicting that stereotype, Anderson pointed to the different skills a woman needed in managing a home; to women's efforts for the benefit of their families and communities; and to their work in high schools, business schools, and universities.

Particularly important were Swedish women's contributions to their churches. In January 1913 the editor wrote, "Anyone who has studied our people's church work in this country is surprised by the support from the women for a church in which their mother tongue is spoken and taught. One wonders how many churches would have been built and supported without the help of a united front of women. Surely not very many."

The short stories in *Qvinnan och Hemmet*, as well as news and editorial writing, were clearly directed to an immigrant audience. The fiction published often reflected the difficulties faced by immigrant girls and women, and often pointed toward the need to eliminate class structure and sex discrimination. Short stories end happily — even if the situation originally seems hopeless. The general themes were the need for social reform and the benefits of investing in a daughter's education (as well as a son's) because daughters also could succeed in business and trade. Successful working women back in Scandinavia and in other nations were portrayed as models of what women could accomplish.

The editors believed that Scandinavian-American mothers had an important role in

A variety of American products were advertised in Swedish — from free Montgomery Ward catalogs to stylish children's shoes, from cream separators and seed to the material mark of success, a piano in the parlor.

För gossar
För flickor
Mayer
SKOL-SKODON
F. Mayer Boot and Shoe Co.,
SEGSLITNA LIKT JERN

BÄTTRE ÄN FÖRENTA STATERNAS BONDS
ÄRO GODA KOR OCH EN
U.S. CREAM SEPARATOR
Försök kombinationen och bevisa det!
En $40 ko och en U.S. Separator kan tjena $40 på ett år
VERMONT FARM MACHINE CO.,
BELLOWS FALLS, VT.

Utsäde
för farmen och trädgården, bästa qvalitet: slår rot alldeles säkert.
STERLING SEEDS
NORTHRUP, KING & CO.,
SEEDSMEN,
MINNEAPOLIS, - - MINN.
KATALOG FRITT, om Ni nämner "Qvinnan och Hemmet"

CORNISH PIANOS AND ORGANS
TVÅ ÅRS KREDIT OM SÅ ÖNSKAS.
$25 Första inbetalningen.
Resten efter råd och lägenhet.

Montgomery Ward & Co.s
Stora Katalog Fritt.

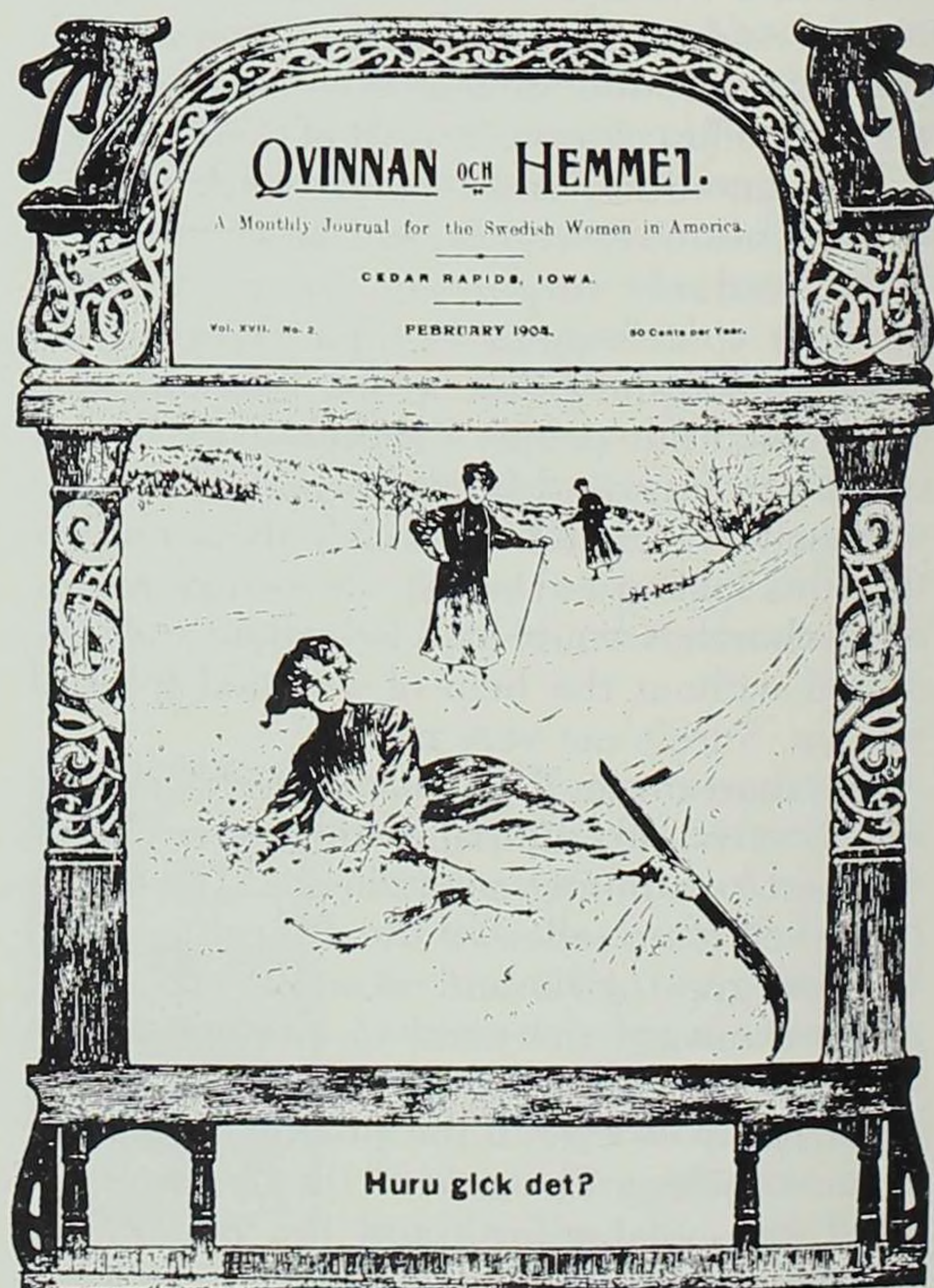
their children's education — and often advised them how to fill that role. A writer in a 1906 issue declared, "I don't know of anything more useful for young people to diligently pursue than the reading of good books. Good books are, next to good and understanding people, the best and most agreeable company. Young girls with inadequate schooling are encouraged to enter one of the colleges organized by Scandinavians." Likewise, it was the mother's responsibility to introduce culture and the "finer things in life" to her children in the setting of the home. In November 1904, assistant editor Anderson wrote: "A home without books, newspapers, magazines, music, and the like is a shallow-minded and boring home regardless of expensive furniture and rugs."

LTHOUGH the magazine's advertisements, departments, and illustrations suggest middle-class life as the ideal, the editor recognized that not all immigrants were living the good life. The Hansens gave free advertising in *Qvinnan och Hemmet* to welfare organizations. The goal of one such organization, called Freja, was to unite Scandinavian women in the United States and Canada for the purpose of founding homes for orphans and the elderly, providing funeral funds, and assisting needy Scandinavians. The first Freja Society began in Cedar Rapids in 1902, and Ida Hansen served as president.

The magazine staff also acknowledged that a large number of women of all nationalities worked outside the home — over 3.5 million in American factories in 1907, according to one writer. Hansen reprinted speeches and articles about factory work: "Newly invented machines have simply deprived us of our work in the home," stated one speaker. "We no longer have to spin and weave. Instead of the cottage industry, we now have big businesses. We have to work in large, smoky, unhealthy factories and become apathetic appendages to the machines that produce more in one day than we could in a year."

The debate between women's role in the home and their entrance into conventionally male occupations was frequently played out on the pages of *Qvinnan och Hemmet*. "Could married women become storekeepers?" for instance, was a topic addressed in May 1905, in a reprinted article from *Woman's Home Companion* by Margaret E. Sangster. She wrote, "It seems that a housewife would have enough to do at home . . . and yet there are hundreds of married women who long for an opportunity to make some pin money for welfare, art or music lessons for their daughters. They miss the time before marriage when they were paid a weekly or monthly salary and always had money to spend. The thought has an undermining effect of making their lives miserable."

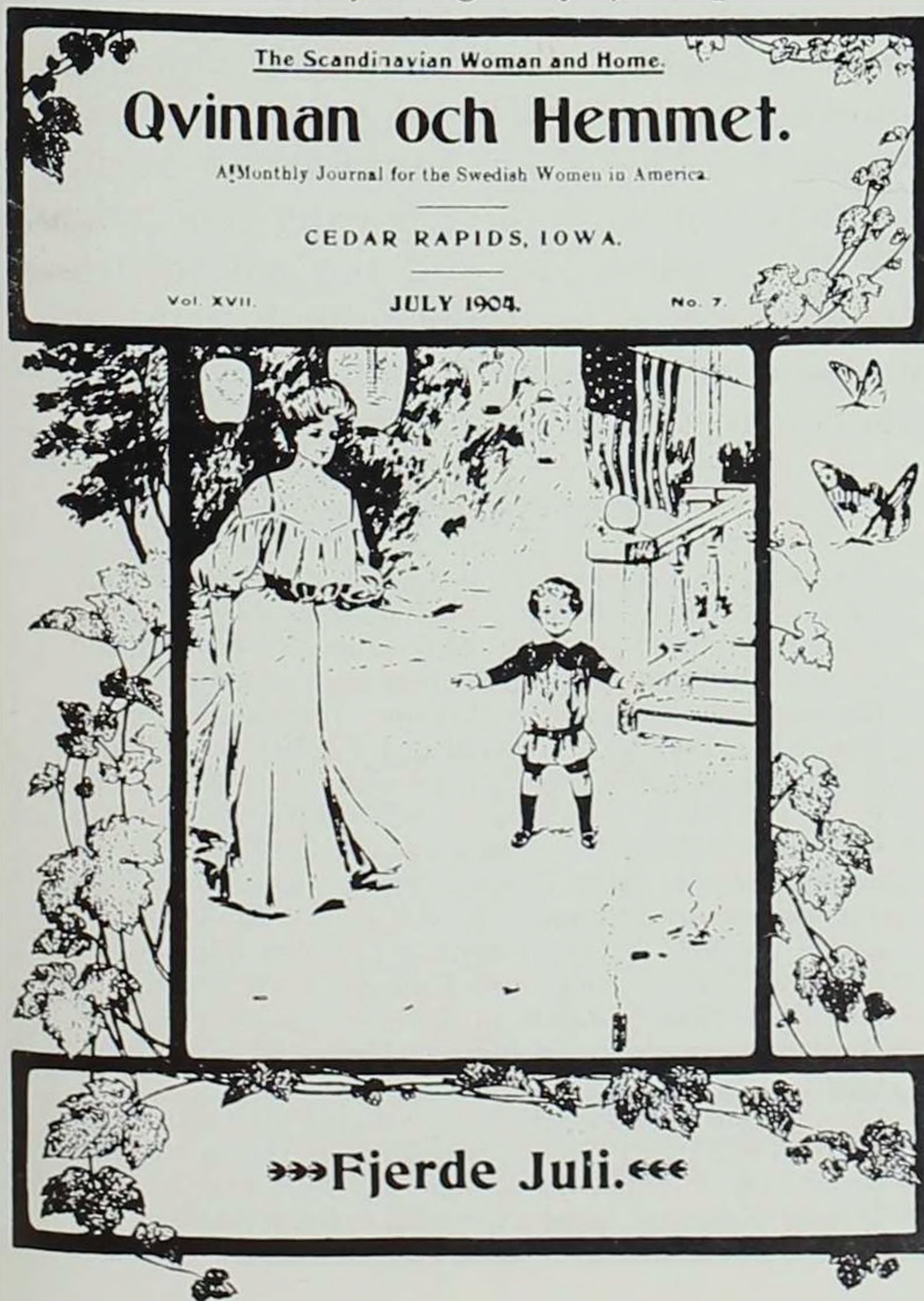
In October 1906 the new assistant editor, Ellen Lindström, tackled more aspects of the conflict between women's roles in the home and industry's effect on those roles. Lindström argued that the role of women in the oldest



institution, the home, had not been modified when work done in the home had been shifted into large factories. Her writing hints at a belief prevalent in Swedish periodicals, too, that women would never again spin, weave, sew, or make anything in the home that could be made in factories. Lindström lamented this change because it meant the home would never again serve as a school of life for children. Only cooking, she said, could still be taught at home — even though city housewives bought cutlets, steak, and ground beef at butcher shops. Yet Lindström recognized that times were changing, and so must a child's education. "If the homes are going to continue to be a primary school for the young, our children have to be prepared to face a new way of life," Lindström relented, "and they must get to know this world as well as the previous generation knew theirs. The world is going to need female workers now as in the days of our mothers and grandmothers, but the work has to be *with* the times and not against it."

Men entered *Qvinnan och Hemmet*'s debate over women's place in the working world, too. The Reverend John B. A. Idstrom, an Augustana Synod pastor, asked this question in August 1905: "Wouldn't women lose some of their femininity and real purpose in life if they step into the fields that really belong to men?" Idstrom believed that women were indispensable in the homes but not in the working places. Women in the job market made it harder for men to find jobs, he claimed, making it difficult for men to know if they could support wives and families. He advised women not to boast too much about their progress, because "*hogmod går före fall*" (pride will have a fall).

Elaborate seasonal or holiday covers graced the magazine. Here: February skiing and July independence.



IDA and Nels Fredrick Hansen had moved to California in 1904, but continued to publish *Qvinnan och Hemmet* and its Norwegian counterpart in Cedar Rapids. In 1905 the magazine listed offices in Chicago, New York, and Minneapolis, and in 1910 in Flensburg, Germany. In 1908 circulation peaked at 83,000. An office in Oceanside, California, was opened in 1912. Hansen employed an assistant or co-editor and other *medarbetare* (co-workers).

By the end of World War I, the editorial staff recognized that some of the goals shared with other American women were taking shape. In January 1919 Lindström noted, "We truly believe that the woman's role in the working place has improved and that it will continue to improve if we seriously devote our energy to what we have set out to do. We believe that women have a better chance than ever to receive equal pay for equal work."

In April of that year Swedish feminist Elin Wägner reported that Sweden had finally granted full suffrage to women. Just before American women gained suffrage in 1920, Lindström again wrote, "Now that we have won full citizenship rights after years of struggle by many energetic women, it's only proper that we carry out our duty as citizens. We must show that we do not lack initiative and willpower." But after the suffrage battle had been fought and won, *Qvinnan och Hemmet*

För "Qvinnan och Hemmet"

JANE ADDAMS OCH HULL HOUSE.

Through frequent articles on social reform, the magazine championed role models such as Jane Addams and her pioneering work at Hull House in the Chicago slums.

became less involved in the debate about women's rights, though not less concerned. In January 1930, the title of an article was, significantly, "The Woman's Place Is No Longer in the Home."

In January 1938 the name of Ida W. Howard-Manville, who had served as co-editor since 1922, appeared as chief editor of *Kvinnan och Hemmet* (in 1926 the spelling had been changed from *Qvinnan* to *Kvinnan*). Ida Hansen was listed as assistant editor. In April 1938, at the age of 85, Ida Hansen died, two years after her husband. *Kvinnan och Hemmet* continued publication for another nine years. The final issue was August 1947.

OR Hansen's sixty-fifth birthday in 1918, assistant editor Ellen Lindström had written a tribute to her that clearly described Hansen's mission: "Mrs. Hansen wanted to give her Scandinavian-born sisters a paper for the home, which gave them, in their own language, knowledge of what the American home required of those who settle and live in this land." For researchers today, the magazine sheds light on many different aspects of Swedish-American culture — the language and how it changed; the clothes people wore, the food they ate, the books they read; what their houses and furniture were like; how they decorated their homes and what they planted in their gardens; how they reared their children; what songs they enjoyed; and what they believed about women's political rights.

Yet perhaps the magazine tells us more about Ida Hansen and the other professional women who edited it than about its eighty thousand readers, who remain largely anonymous except for signed letters to the editors. The magazine's success was evident in its high circulation figures, its pages of advertising from nationally established businesses, its offices throughout the United States. Readers wrote that they were pleased with the magazine and did not want to be without it. Its message to immigrant women was important and complex: there is much to value in the nation of your past, and there is much to value in the nation of your future; choose the best of each. The magazine channeled Scandinavian news and literature to a reading audience probably eager to maintain some connections with their home country. In its vigilant news reports of the women's movement, social reform, and women's employment, it goaded the American political system to match suffrage advances made in Scandinavia and offered role models of politically active and gainfully employed women. In its idealization of the American middle class, it gave women a material goal towards which to strive and advice on how to create a healthy, aesthetic, and educational home environment. The magazine encouraged women to value their Scandinavian heritage and to pass it on to the following generations.

If the readers followed the advice in Ida Hansen's magazine, their difficult transitional positions as immigrants or children of immigrants may well have been eased. □

NOTE ON SOURCES

This article was developed from a paper presented at the 1984 conference of the International Association for Scandinavian Studies (University of Washington, Seattle), and incorporates material from another article by the author, "*Kvinnan och Hemmet*: A Woman's Journal Written in Swedish, Edited by a Norwegian, Published by a Dane," in *Scandinavians in America: Literary Life*, edited by J. R. Christiansen (Decorah, 1985). Details about the expansion of *Qvinnan och Hemmet* appeared in the Cedar Rapids *Gazette*, May 7, 1903. The magazine has been microfilmed by Microfilm Services, East Moline. Film copies are held by the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center (Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois) and three libraries in Sweden and Norway; the Norwegian version is at Rolvaag Memorial Library (St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota). English translations appearing in this article were done by the author. An annotated copy of the manuscript is on file in the *Palimpsest* office, SHSI, Iowa City. Editorial work by John Melvin (Editorial Assistant, SHSI) is acknowledged.

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Michael Mullen is an instructor at Indian Hills Community College in Ottumwa. He is the author of *Pictures*, a collection of prose pieces. Currently writing a novel about the 1939 New York World's Fair, Mullen has written numerous articles, many dealing with the streamline style of the 1930s.

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SUBMISSIONS

The editor welcomes manuscripts and edited documents on the history of Iowa and the Midwest that may interest a general reading audience. Submissions that focus on visual material (photographs, maps, drawings) or on material culture are also invited. Originality and significance of the topic, as well as the quality of research and writing, will determine acceptance for publication. Manuscripts should be typewritten, double-spaced, and follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* (13th edition). Standard length is within ten to twenty manuscript pages, but shorter or longer submissions will be considered. Include a list of sources used and a brief biographical sketch. Because illustrative material is integral to the *Palimpsest*, the editor encourages authors to include photographs and illustrations (or suggestions). Please send submissions or queries to Ginalie Swaim, Editor, *The Palimpsest*, State Historical Society of Iowa, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Iowa in the Roaring Twenties

On page 46 of the Spring 1987 issue [the unidentified Iowa campus is] the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls — then Iowa State Teachers College. The building on the left is the women's gymnasium. The background building is Bartlett Hall, a women's dormitory. . . . Isn't the American Trust and Savings Bank Building picture on page 35 now the Merchants National Bank Building?

Fred Everett, Kissimmee, Florida

You're right on both counts. Thanks for the campus identification, which our archive photo lacked. We appreciate sharp-eyed readers who provide missing information. Gerald L. Petersen (UNI Special Collections Librarian) adds that the Physics Building is on the extreme right.

— Editor

I grew up in Iowa City when [Clarence Andrews, author of "Cedar Rapids in the Roaring Twenties"] was growing up in Cedar Rapids. . . . My father was president of the Iowa City Chamber of Commerce at the time [of the airport rivalry] and I remember how hard he worked on the project. It was a thrill to go down to the airport when the mail plane came in, and it was a lovely sight when they turned on the airport lights so the single-engine, open-cockpit plane could land. . . . When Hoover opened his 1928 campaign, [I, too, was in West Branch]. After the events in the big tent he and Mrs. Hoover went to the adjacent school building, and I was among a few Boy Scouts chosen to shake hands with the Hoovers. . . . Everything I have read about Lou Henry Hoover since that time confirms the impression I found then — that she was surely the greatest women I had ever seen.

Carl B. Cone, Lexington, Kentucky

Family History

I hope that ["A Farm Family Enters the Modern World," Summer 1987] encourages more subscribers to research their own families beyond genealogies. Whereas dates of birth, marriage, and death can provide the framework for a family history, much more fleshes out the story; through the blending of fact, personalization, and interpretation the characters seem to come alive. . . . Though family history often becomes increasingly obscure with the passing of time, this is an issue the Graber family can preserve and treasure through subsequent generations. Thank you.

William B. Graber, Iowa City, Iowa

The *Palimpsest* welcomes letters from its readers. Please include your complete address and phone number. Letters that are published may be edited for clarity and brevity. Write: Editor, *Palimpsest*, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

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