

The PALIMPSEST



Dedication of Centennial Building

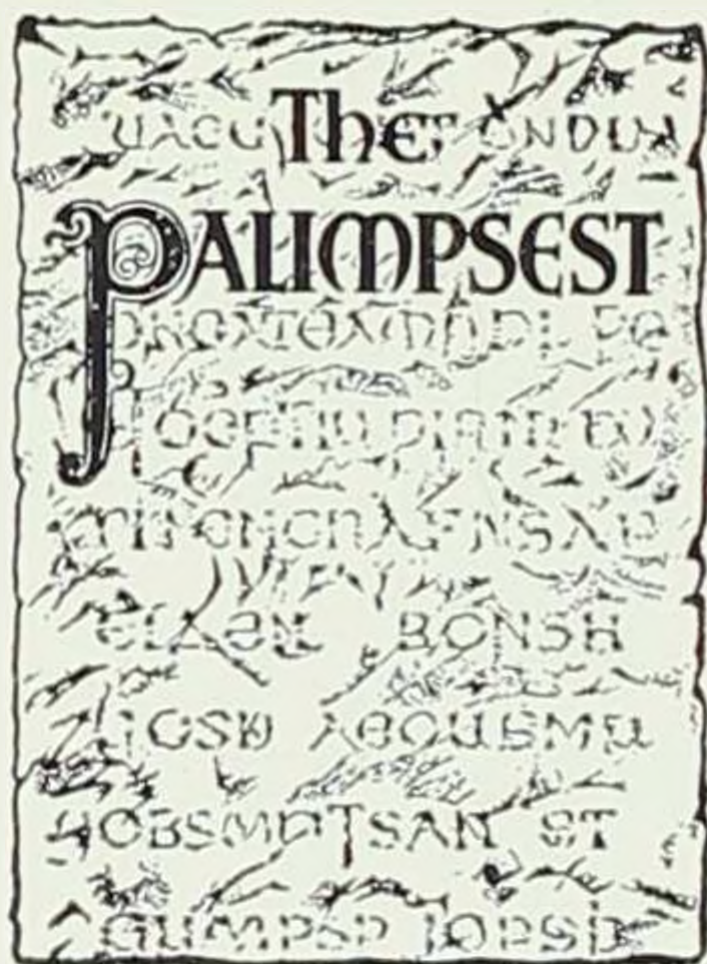
The State Historical Society of Iowa

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The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the 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.

Contents

THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

In the Beginning	357
A Century of Service	367
The Centennial Building	381
Dedication Day	397
Doorways to Culture	403

Illustrations

All illustrations are from the collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa. Inside back cover: *top* — Dr. Clifford Lord of Columbia University addresses Centennial crowd; *middle* — Dr. Floyd C. Shoemaker addresses luncheon group; *bottom* — MacKinlay Kantor speaks at Centennial Dinner.

Author

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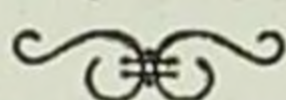
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In the Beginning

Iowa was in a history-making mood in 1857. The Sixth General Assembly was in session in Iowa City grinding out its usual quota of laws. The Iowa Supreme Court was rendering decisions of far-reaching importance that year. Finally, a constitutional convention met in Iowa City and supplanted the Constitution of 1846 with the Constitution of 1857, a document destined to serve the people of Iowa for more than a century.

If history seemed to be in the making in 1857 it should be pointed out that giant strides had been taken since the first spray of settlement fell in the Black Hawk Purchase on June 1, 1833. The region had been attached to Michigan Territory in 1834, formed a part of Wisconsin Territory in 1836, became the Territory of Iowa in 1838, and achieved statehood in 1846. Between 1833 and 1850 population increased from 0 to 192,000; during the Fabulous Fifties it zoomed from 324,401 in 1854 to 417,875 in 1856, a gain of 193,474 in two years. Truly, a young giant was in the mak-

ing west of the Mississippi. Little wonder that the principal actors in the drama should envision the need of an historical agency to record the story.

The first man to conceive the idea of an Iowa Historical Society was James Clarke of Burlington, a native of Pennsylvania and the owner of the *Iowa Territorial Gazette and Burlington Advertiser*. On September 22, 1838, Clarke editorialized as follows:

To the formation of Historical Societies in the various states of the union we are greatly indebted for much of the knowledge we possess on the subject of the early settlement of our common country; and had associations of this kind been commenced at an earlier day, we should have been in the possession of much more. Almost every state of the union can now boast of its Historical Society, each of which is diligently and successfully striving to make the people better acquainted with the history and resources of the state in which they reside. Why, then, we have often asked ourselves, is Iowa without one? Surely her citizens cannot be indifferent to the subject. Our territory, it is true, is yet in its swaddling clothes, and cannot be expected to emulate her grown up sisters in fostering and encouraging the culture of the sciences and arts; but we are, on this very account, the better qualified to snatch from the "stagnant oblivious pool" which must otherwise necessarily engulf it, the history of the settlement, cultivation and resources, of this region of forests, and lakes, and prairies, as well as the expulsions of those "stoics of the wood," the red men, from it. There are those among us who know all of this by heart — "all of which they saw, and part of which they were;" but unless some measures are soon taken to collect and pre-

serve it, and put it in proper shape, it will soon pass from us. To do this would be the province of a Historical Society. What is fact to-day will be tradition to-morrow, and the next day it will be entirely forgot.

The organizing of a society of the kind to which we refer, in this town, would, we are firmly persuaded, be productive of good results. When we reflect that three different sovereignties have at different times claimed our allegiance — that our flag has changed five times — that before we obtained a foothold on the soil, we had to contend with the primitive people around us — that since that time, emigration has poured in upon us like the waves of the ocean — who, we say, after reflecting upon these things, will say we have no history to write — nothing worth preserving? There are stories connected with this part of the Louisiana purchase, of thrilling interest; and we are desirous and esteem it a duty we owe as well to ourselves as to our posterity, to collect and preserve them.

We suggest, then, that measures be immediately taken by the citizens of this place, for the formation of the "Historical Society of Iowa." Let there be but an organization of this kind, and we doubt not but enough gentlemen will be found ready to communicate information heretofore unwritten. It will not be necessary for persons to attend the meetings of the association — their communications can be transmitted in writing, and laid before the society by the president, and filed among its archives. Let a general invitation be given to gentlemen in possession of information worthy of communication, to unlock their stores of knowledge, and our word for it, Iowa Territory will very soon be more generally known not only abroad, but to ourselves.

Although no immediate action was taken, favorable editorial response resulted in the formation of

the Iowa Historical and Geological Society at Burlington in 1843. During the years that followed some valuable collections were made by enthusiastic Burlingtonians. Unhappily, on January 16, 1853, the entire collection of the Iowa Historical and Geological Society was destroyed by a fire that gutted the three-story brick building housing it. Among the items lost were five hundred "rare and valuable" books, several hundred mineralogical specimens, and other miscellaneous rare items including the bones of Black Hawk.

Burlingtonians were stunned by the loss but promptly instituted a new Society. On the eve of the meeting of the Sixth General Assembly in 1857, news trickled out that Iowa Citians contemplated the formation of a State Historical Society of Iowa in their city. Burlingtonians sent a memorial to the General Assembly urging the selection of Burlington but it went unheeded. The final decision was made when the Federal Relations Committee, which was chairmaned by Senator Samuel Jordan Kirkwood of Iowa City, took command of the bill in the Sixth General Assembly.

Who were some of the other men who led in the formation of the State Historical Society of Iowa? The initial impetus was given by a group that included Reverend C. Billings Smith, George D. Woodin, Thomas Hughes, M. B. Cochran, George W. McCleary, F. H. Lee, M. L. Morris, D. F. Wells, J. P. Wood, William Reynolds,

G. H. Jerome, and C. W. Hobart. These men met in the State Treasurer's office early in January for "the purpose of considering the propriety of organizing a State Historical Society." A path had already been cleared for them when Senator Julius J. Matthews of Clinton County, but formerly of Iowa City, introduced a bill "to provide for an annual appropriation for the benefit of a State Historical Library." After being read a first and second time this measure was laid on the table, whence it was removed on motion of Senator Matthews who proposed that it be referred to the Federal Relations Committee.

The bill was reported out on the floor by the Federal Relations Committee on January 23, 1857, with but one significant change. This change, doubtless at the instigation of Senator Kirkwood, saved the institution for Iowa City. The Federal Relations Committee proposed striking out the words "and executed at the capital" and substituting "in connection with, and under the auspices of the State university." Obviously the Committee had a definite idea in mind — it wanted the State Historical Society to be permanently located at Iowa City and not move with the state government to the new capital. The bill as thus amended was approved by the Senate the same day it was offered and immediately passed.

The plan to keep the State Historical Society at Iowa City was made permanent by a provision in

the State Constitution of 1857 which located the state capital "permanently" in Des Moines and the State University "permanently" in Iowa City. On Saturday, January 24, the Senate Bill was reported to the House of Representatives. The following Tuesday the measure was approved by the House and sent to Governor James W. Grimes for his approval or rejection. On January 28 Governor Grimes, who served as first president of the Society, approved the act which created the State Historical Society of Iowa and which made an annual appropriation of \$250 for it to carry on its work. The names of Samuel J. Kirkwood, Julius J. Matthews, and James W. Grimes stand at the forefront of the men who created the State Historical Society.

On January 30, 1857, a group of Iowans met in the Stone Capitol in Iowa City to form a State Historical Society. George W. McCleary was elected president of the meeting and George D. Woodin was named secretary. Most of those attending were Iowa Citians, with Reverend C. Billings Smith, the pastor of the Iowa City Baptist Church, probably being the most influential man present. After appointing a committee to draw up a constitution for the Society the meeting adjourned "to meet again at the Capitol on the 7th day of February next."

On February 7, 1857, the group reassembled in the Stone Capitol and approved the constitution

presented by its committee. Consisting of five chapters, the Constitution of the Society provided for: name, membership, object, officers, and amendments.

The name of the organization was to be the "State Historical Society of Iowa."

Members were to be elected or authorized by officers of the Society. Dues were one dollar per year and entitled members to free admission to the Society's rooms and lectures and "the privilege of consulting its books, maps, charts and papers."

The objectives of the organization were many:

The object of this Society shall be to collect, embody, arrange and preserve in authentic form, a library of books, pamphlets, maps, charts, manuscripts, papers, paintings, statuary and other materials illustrative of the history of Iowa; to rescue from oblivion the memory of its early pioneers; to obtain and preserve narratives of their exploits, perils and hardy adventures; to secure facts and statements relative to the history, genius, progress or decay of our Indian tribes, to exhibit faithfully the antiquities, and the past and present resources of the State; and to promote the study of history by lectures, and diffuse and publish information relating to the description and history of Iowa.

The officers of the Society were to be a President, six Vice Presidents, a Corresponding Secretary, a Recording Secretary, a Treasurer, a Librarian, and eighteen Curators to be chosen annually. The duties of the Curators, "a majority of whom shall reside in the vicinity of the State University, and five of whom shall constitute a quorum, shall

be the executive department of this association, having full power to manage its affairs in harmony with this constitution."

The officers elected, with their counties, follow:

PRESIDENT

Governor James W. Grimes, Des Moines

VICE PRESIDENTS

H. W. Gray, Linn	Eliphalet Price, Dubuque
George G. Wright, Van Buren	Filander H. Lee, Johnson
C. F. Crookham, Grundy	Samuel J. Kirkwood, Johnson
Corresponding Secretary	C. Billings Smith, Johnson
Recording Secretary	Thomas Hughes, Johnson
Librarian	John Pattee, Johnson
Treasurer	J. P. Wood, Johnson

The first Curators and their counties were:

Hon. John Shane, Benton	M. B. Cochrane, Johnson
Hon. D. P. Palmer, Davis	H. D. Downey, Johnson
Hon. D. W. Price, Pottawattamie	J. C. Culbertson, Johnson
Hon. Charles Negus, Jefferson	W. P. Clark, Johnson
W. F. Coolbaugh, Des Moines	G. D. Woodin, Johnson
L. H. Langworthy, Dubuque	G. W. McCleary, Johnson
T. S. Parvin, Muscatine	E. K. Rugg, Johnson
S. G. Winchester, Hardin	William Vogt, Johnson
F. W. Ballard, Johnson	LeGrand Byington, Johnson

The creation of state historical societies through private or public funds, or a combination of both, was not without precedents in American history. On the eve of the establishment of the State Historical Society of Iowa, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin recorded in its Second Annual

Report the state historical and private agencies existing in 1856:

<i>Historical Society</i>	<i>Date Founded</i>	<i>Volumes in Library</i>
Massachusetts	1791	8,000
New York	1804	25,000
Virginia	1818	1,200
Rhode Island	1822	—
New Hampshire	1823	1,560
Connecticut	1825	8,000
Pennsylvania	1825	2,000
Ohio	1831	1,000
New Jersey	1834	1,930
Kentucky	1838	1,000
Georgia	1839	—
Maryland	1844	2,128
Missouri	1844	300
Wisconsin	1849	2,115
Minnesota	1849	400
American Antiquarian	1812	22,000
New England Historical and Genealogical Register	1844	400

In his First Annual Report to Governor James W. Grimes on December 1, 1857, C. Billings Smith, Corresponding Secretary for the Board of Curators, aptly concluded with the following paragraph from the annual report of the New York Historical Society:

The advantages resulting from the study of history, and the collection of historical records, cannot be too strongly urged on the attention of the members of this Society. In

order that history may be written the most authentic materials must be provided. No generation comprises within its own knowledge and experience all that is necessary to secure the integrity of its annals. It must rely upon records, it must examine and compare opinions, it must study the events of the past. It must have the means of investigation and analysis at hand. Collections like these by which we are surrounded, and which are designed to preserve the memories of other days, will be deemed of inestimable value by generations which are to come after us.

Truly, the guideposts were out and able, far-seeing men were mindful of the need for establishing effective state historical agencies throughout the Nation. Fortunately, like-minded pioneers were alert to this need in the young State of Iowa. These men laid a firm foundation upon which generation after generation has built the rich storehouse of books, newspapers, manuscripts, maps, and pictures, destined to give the varied publications of the State Historical Society of Iowa a position of preeminence among its sister institutions of these United States.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

A Century of Service

Despite its humble beginnings in 1857, the State Historical Society has continued to serve the people of Iowa for more than a century. At the time of its Centennial in 1957 it was one of the oldest state institutions in point of continuous service. If its beginnings in 1857 seem humble today, it should be remembered that its sister educational institution in Iowa City was equally humble — opening its doors in 1856 and counting only 124 University students (117 from Johnson County) in 1858. Meanwhile, our present-day Iowa Geological Survey did not come into being until 1892.

The Board of Curators

The State Historical Society of Iowa has been guided for more than a century by a Board of Curators of eighteen members. Originally all eighteen Curators were chosen annually by members of the Society. Since 1872, however, nine Curators have been elected for a two-year term by members of the Society in the odd numbered years, and nine appointed by the Governor for a term of two years during even numbered years. A total of 289 men and women have served on the Board of Curators in the 103 years since the

Constitution of the State Historical Society of Iowa was adopted on February 7, 1857.

Between 1857 and 1872, a majority of the Board of Curators was elected from Iowa City and the vicinity, partly because the bulk of the population was concentrated in the eastern half of Iowa, and partly because the Society had not achieved through its publications a statewide significance.

Since the reorganization of the Society in 1872, all Curators appointed by the Governor have resided outside of Johnson County and there has been a definite effort to see that all sections of the State are represented on the Board. The Society, as a result, has tended to take on a broader statewide representation. Those elected by members of the Society since 1872 have generally served longer terms, hence, it is not surprising that there were 118 Curators appointed by the Governor of Iowa between 1872 and 1960 compared with 72 Curators elected by the Society. Curators who have served twenty or more years include:

S. C. Trowbridge—1864-89	S. E. Paine—1869-1903
John F. Duncombe—1873-1900	C. M. Hobby—1879-1901
	Peter A. Dey—1887-1910
J. L. Pickard—1879-1901	Arthur J. Cox—1907-32
George W. Ball—1888-1915	Marvin H. Dey—1910-47
Henry G. Walker—1909-36	Charles M. Dutcher—1912-36
S. A. Swisher—1911-36	
Thomas Farrell—1921-47	William R. Hart—1937-60

Many notable Iowans have served on the Board of Curators. Such names as James W. Grimes and Samuel Jordan Kirkwood, William Boyd Allison and John A. Kasson, Thomas H. Benton, Jr., and Theodore S. Parvin, Austin Adams and Josiah B. Grinnell, David Rorer and John King, George G. Wright and G. W. McCleary, James (Tama Jim) Wilson and James F. Wilson, loom large on the pages of Iowa history. These men served largely in the period prior to 1900. In the period between 1890 and 1910 some of Iowa's most distinguished educators served as Curators — Samuel Calvin, Thomas H. Macbride, Benj. F. Shambaugh, Jesse Macy, and Olynthus B. Clark. Famous editors such as D. N. Richardson, George D. Perkins, Harvey Ingham, and W. W. Waymack have contributed of their time and wisdom in building a great institution.

The first woman to serve as a Curator was Miss Marion Murdock, a Unitarian preacher from Humboldt County who served from 1885-1900. Thereafter, no woman was appointed to the Board of Curators, until Governor Nate E. Kendall named Lillian Clark Cary, Mary E. Coon, Mary H. S. Johnston, and Helen S. Taylor to the Board in 1922. The adoption of Woman's Suffrage has resulted in a more widespread representation of Iowa women on the Board of Curators. In 1948, six of the eighteen members of the Board of Curators were women. In 1960

three women were serving on the Society's governing Board.

A quorum of five Curators is necessary for the transaction of business. Hence, it is important that a sufficient number of Curators live fairly close to the Society's headquarters in Iowa City. In its *Second Biennial Report* to the Governor, the Executive Committee of the State Historical Society of Iowa declared that during the previous year a quorum had attended each meeting. Interest in the Society in 1857 was so keen, the Executive Committee reported, that not only had local members attended the meetings, but in many cases members residing at a distance from Iowa City had met with the local Curators and "greatly assisted" in carrying out the objects of the Society. Since the law requires the Board of Curators to serve without compensation, the State of Iowa has been fortunate in having so many of its outstanding citizens contribute freely of their time and service to the cause of state and local history.

Financial Support

The need for generous financial support is a *sine qua non* for any institution—and state historical societies are no exceptions. It is amazing to record that, despite its small appropriation, the Society was able to begin its first quarterly publication (*The Annals of Iowa*) in 1863 and issue it under various names for eighty-six of its one hundred and three years.

In his *Biennial Report* for 1905 Secretary Frank E. Horack summarized the financial support of the first fifty years.

It can hardly be said that The State Historical Society of Iowa was, in its earlier years, liberally supported by the State. The idea seems to have prevailed that the library and collection would somehow grow by voluntary contributions, and that with little or no expense the materials of history would find their way to the storerooms of the Society. By the act of January, 1857, the sum of \$250 was appropriated as a permanent annual allowance. In 1860 this annual allowance was increased to \$500. Twenty years later [1880] it was fixed at \$1,000. In 1902 the permanent annual support of the Society was raised to \$2,500. And finally, in 1904, the permanent annual support was increased to \$7,500. In the meantime several special appropriations were voted for the benefit of the Society. The first special appropriation was made in 1868 when, in "An Act in relation to The State Historical Society," \$3,000 annually for two years was appropriated. In 1892 a second special appropriation of \$1,000 for the biennial period was voted. Again, in 1900, the Society received a special appropriation of \$2,000. The last of the special appropriations was made in 1902, and amounted to \$9,500.

The total appropriations for annual support between 1857 and 1906 was \$59,750; special appropriations totaled \$19,250—or \$79,000 for the two categories.

Homes for the Society

It was not merely appropriations that plagued the Board of Curators during its first fifty years.

During this period the Society occupied the following six homes in Iowa City:

Old Stone Capitol—1857-1862

Mechanics Academy—1862-1865

Library Room and Cabinet of the University—1865-1868

Old Stone Church on Burlington Street—1868-1882

212-214 E. Washington Street (2nd Floor)—1882-1901

Liberal Arts (Schaeffer Hall)—1901-

A home of its own had been an objective of the Society as early as 1873 when the Board of Curators asked the General Assembly for an appropriation of \$10,000 for the erection of a fire-proof building for the uses of the Society. The *Tenth Biennial Report* of November 15, 1875, declared:

Should the Sixteenth General Assembly reject our petition, our Society archives may soon share the fate of some of the Roman and Pompeian relics. The ancient edifice we occupy is rickety and crumbling and no first class earthquake or Vesuvian eruption would be necessary to entomb it. Should such a calamity befall us, the future antiquarian who should unearth them might mistake our thousands of unbound newspapers for Egyptian papyrus, and our brazen Mexican armor for a relic of the age of brass.

To put this society on a footing of average respectability as compared with similar societies of the Western States, say Wisconsin or Minnesota, an immediate appropriation of eleven thousand dollars is necessary, to be expended as follows:

The sum of at least five thousand dollars to provide a building as a permanent place of deposit and exhibition of the collections and archives of the Society.

Two thousand dollars for the binding of the large accumulation of Iowa newspapers, some of them dating back eighteen years or longer.

Two thousand dollars for the purchase of historical works, necessary for the usefulness and completeness of such a library, but which cannot be procured without money.

And two thousand dollars for two years' salary of librarian, to catalogue and put in order these documents and take general supervision of the same.

Unfortunately, the appropriation for its own home was not forthcoming. Seven years later, in 1882, the Society moved into its Washington Street quarters and in 1901 into the new Liberal Arts building. Even after this last move, the problem of space was not yet solved by the Curators and members who constituted the Society in 1907.

Membership

Who were numbered among the 154 who made up the slim membership of the Society as it observed its Fiftieth Anniversary back in 1907? Fully thirty-seven of them were Iowa Citians, half of whom were identified with the University, such as Samuel Calvin and Thomas H. Macbride, or associated with the State Historical Society—Benjamin F. Shambaugh, Frank E. Horack, John Carl Parish, Louis Pelzer, Jacob Van der Zee, Thomas Teakle, Dwight V. McCarthy, Dan E. Clark, and Ethyl E. Martin.

Among the notable names listed on the Society membership roll in 1907 were Horace Boies of

Grundy Center, William Larrabee of Clermont, Frank O. Lowden of Chicago, Grenville M. Dodge and John F. Dillon of New York City, and James W. Bollinger of Davenport. The journalism profession was represented by such men as Luther Brewer of Cedar Rapids and Phil Hoffman of Oskaloosa; the medical profession by such men as Dr. S. G. Stein of Muscatine; Dr. W. Ruml of Cedar Rapids, and Dr. Charles F. Noe of Amana. Less than a score of this historic group still live, but virtually all of those living remained loyal Life Members of the Society.

Publication Program—1907-1960

A half century ago, in 1907, the Society stood on the threshold of a spectacular new era—embracing a publication program described by the Brookings Institute as second to none among the societies of the United States in point of its contributions to Iowa history and government. The objectives of the Society, as conceived by Benj. F. Shambaugh, were cogently stated in 1908 by Frank E. Horack, then serving as Secretary of the Society. In the *Twenty-seventh Biennial Report of the Board of Curators* of the State Historical Society of Iowa to the Governor of the State, Dr. Horack records:

Responding to the progress that has been made in recent years in the application of scientific methods in nearly every sphere of human interest and activity and dominated by the spirit and standards of modern scholarship, The

State Historical Society of Iowa has come to make historical research its chief function. Indeed, in this respect The State Historical Society of Iowa is unique—its financial resources being directed largely in the channels of scientific research and critical publication.

It is a fact that in most States the principal function of the State Historical Society seems to be that of collection and exhibition, leaving historical research for the most part to individual initiative. But with The State Historical Society of Iowa historical research and publication has become the dominant activity. Through its organization and institutional activities the materials of State and local history are discovered, critically studied by specialists, compiled, edited, and published. Thus, instead of attempting to make the largest possible collection of historical materials in one place, the Society endeavors to compile, publish, and distribute the greatest amount of accurate scientific historical literature. Instead of hoarding books and manuscripts for the use of the few, the Society makes the history of the State accessible to the many.

Library

In the *Sixth Biennial Report to Governor Wm. M. Stone* dated December, 1867, the Board of Curators gave a very clear picture of the growth of the library during the first ten years.

COLLECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS, EXCLUSIVE OF LEGISLATIVE AND
OTHER DOCUMENTS, FOR EXCHANGE.

Bound volumes	1753
Unbound books and pamphlets	2952

4705

Miscellaneous books and pamphlets for exchange	3020
Total books and pamphlets on hand Dec. 1, 1867	7725
Relics and articles of historical value, with geological and mineralogical specimens	3150

The Society is also in receipt of the following newspapers and periodicals, published within the State, which are carefully filed and preserved for binding, so soon as the funds of the Society shall warrant an expenditure for that purpose.

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

<i>Adel Dallas Weekly Gazette</i>	<i>Decorah Republic</i>
<i>Albia Union</i>	<i>Des Moines Homestead</i>
<i>Anamosa Eureka</i>	<i>Des Moines State Register</i>
<i>Bedford Republican</i>	<i>Des Moines Statesman</i>
<i>Bentonsport Signal</i>	<i>Des Moines Temperance</i>
<i>Bloomfield Union Guardian</i>	<i>Platform</i>
<i>Boone Index</i>	<i>De Witt Observer</i>
<i>Burlington Hawkeye</i>	<i>Dubuque Herald</i>
<i>Cedar Falls Gazette</i>	<i>Dubuque National</i>
<i>Cedar Rapids Times</i>	<i>Democrat</i>
<i>Centreville Loyal Citizen</i>	<i>Dubuque Times</i>
<i>Charles City Intelligencer</i>	<i>Eddyville Independent</i>
<i>Clermont Leader</i>	<i>Eldora Ledger</i>
<i>Clinton Herald</i>	<i>Elkader Journal</i>
<i>Corydon Monitor</i>	<i>Fairfield Home Visitor</i>
<i>Council Bluffs Bugle</i>	<i>Fairfield Ledger</i>
<i>Council Bluffs Nonpareil</i>	<i>Fontanelle Adair County</i>
<i>Davenport Democrat</i>	<i>Register</i>
<i>Davenport Der Democrat</i>	<i>Fort Dodge North West</i>
<i>Davenport Gazette</i>	<i>Fort Madison Plaindealer</i>
<i>Decorah Lutheran</i>	<i>Glenwood Opinion</i>
<i>Watchman</i>	<i>Independence Bulletin</i>

Independence <i>Conservative</i>	Mount Pleasant <i>Home</i>
Independence <i>Guardian</i>	<i>Journal</i>
Iowa City <i>Republican</i>	Mount Vernon <i>Citizen</i>
Iowa City <i>State Press</i>	Muscatine <i>Courier</i>
Iowa Falls <i>Sentinel</i>	Muscatine <i>Journal</i>
Iuka <i>Tama County Union</i>	Nevada <i>Aegis</i>
Jefferson <i>Era</i>	New Hampton <i>Courier</i>
Keokuk <i>Constitution</i>	Osage <i>North Iowan</i>
Keokuk <i>Gate City</i>	Oskaloosa <i>Evangelist</i>
Le Claire <i>Register</i>	Oskaloosa <i>Herald</i>
Leon <i>Pioneer</i>	Ottumwa <i>Daily Mercury</i>
Lyons <i>Mirror</i>	Panora <i>Vedette</i>
Manchester <i>Union</i>	Tipton <i>Advertiser</i>
Maquoketa <i>Excelsior</i>	Toledo <i>Transcript</i>
Marion <i>Register</i>	Vinton <i>Eagle</i>
Marshalltown <i>Times</i>	Washington <i>Democrat</i>
Mason City <i>Republican</i>	Washington <i>Press</i>
McGregor <i>News</i>	Waverly <i>Phoenix</i>
Montezuma <i>Republican</i>	Webster City <i>Freeman</i>
Monticello <i>Express</i>	West Mitchell <i>Press</i>
	Wheatland <i>Advocate</i>

Des Moines *Iowa Instructor and School Journal*

It was no simple task to acquire a competent librarian during those formative years. Seven different men — John Pattee, Frederick Humphrey, D. F. Wells, Wm. Reynolds, Nathan R. Leonard, Theodore S. Parvin, C. F. Clarke—acted as Librarian during the first decade. In 1869 Silas Foster began a three-year term as Librarian. Foster was succeeded by G. Fracker in 1871 who, on January 7, 1872, penned the following letter of resignation to F. Lloyd, Corresponding Secretary:

Dr Lloyd, Dear Sir,

I find I can no longer endure the severe cold of the Historical Room——

The frequent exposure for several hours to its deadly chill has seriously affected my health and warns me to retire——

The fires seem to have but little effect, in so large & so lofty a room; and the lifting & labor is beyond my ability——

I must ask you therefore to inform the Board of this my resignation as Librarian.

Respectfully,
(Signed) G. Fracker.

Iowa City,

Jny 7, 1872[73][Accepted March 8, 1873]

Although "scientific research and critical publication" continues as the chief objectives of the State Historical Society, it should be pointed out that the Society library had been growing steadily throughout the one hundred years of its existence.

Compare the inventory of the library, taken in July, 1908, at the end of fifty years, with the totals held in 1960.

	1908	1960
Number of titles accessioned	30,000	80,000
Number of titles not accessioned	2,000	29,305 (est.)
Number of bound newspapers	1,943	10,000
Number of miscellaneous duplicates	2,904	2,500 (est.)
Number of duplicates of Iowa documents	7,104	6,000

In 1906, five years after the Society had moved from its quarters at 212-214 East Washington to the third floor of the new Liberal Arts Building, the Society already appeared bursting out of its cramped quarters. In the *Biennial Report of the Board of Curators* dated November 15, 1906, Dr. Horack called attention to a situation which had plagued the Society for half a century.

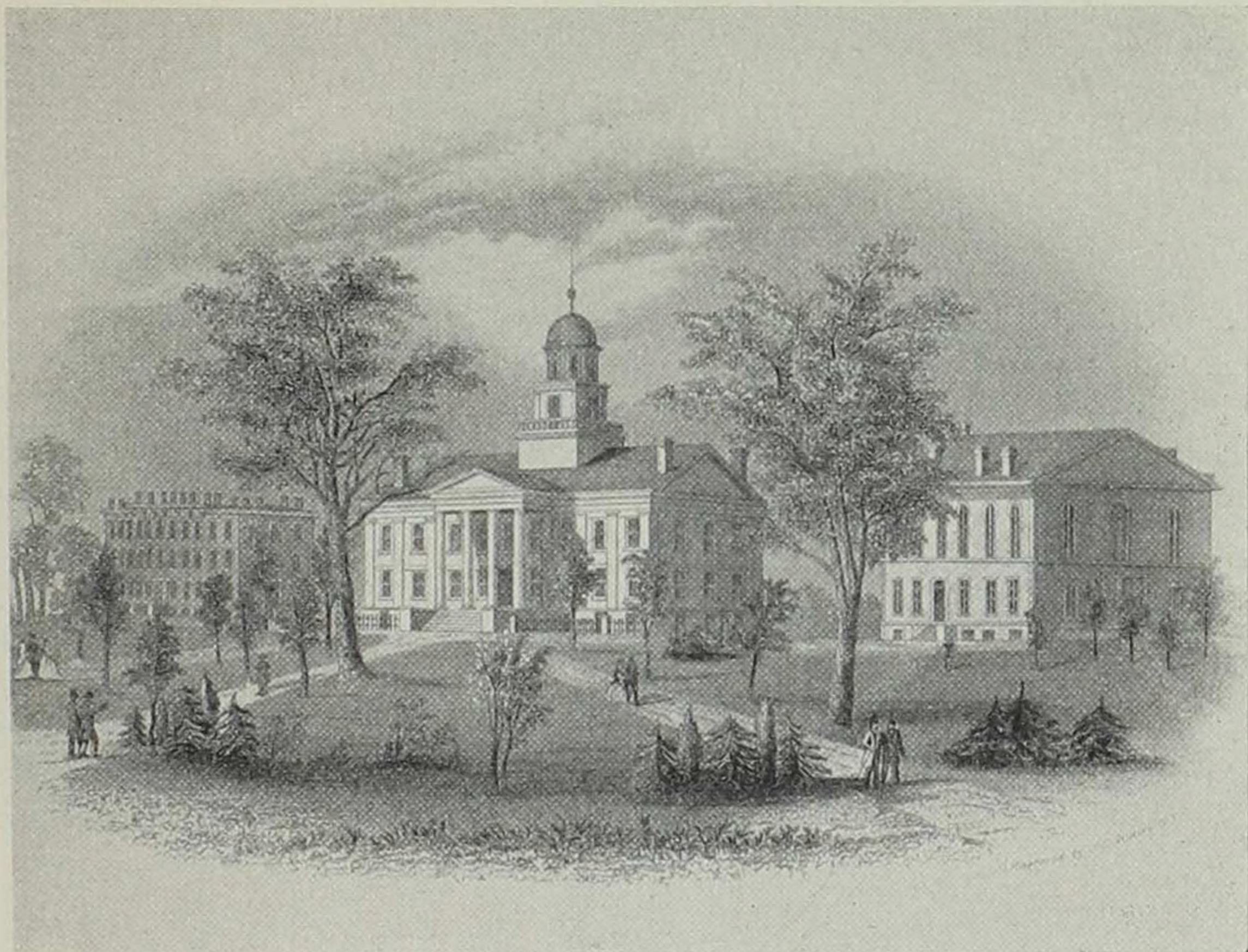
The State Historical Society of Iowa has always maintained a library of books, pamphlets, and manuscripts for the use of those who are interested in the study of Iowa history. The Library is now located on the third floor of the Hall of Liberal Arts at Iowa City. The removal to these fireproof quarters was made in September, 1901. At present the library is much crowded, but it is *hoped that additional space may be secured adjoining its present rooms so as to afford reasonable accommodations until the time has arrived for the erection of a building by the State for the use of The State Historical Society of Iowa*. It is the aim and purpose of the Society to collect and place in the library materials relating to Iowa and American history. The books and pamphlets have been accessioned and systematically arranged and classified. For the collection of such titles as should be found in an historical library the Society now employs a collector who devotes his entire time to the collection of books and pamphlets.

As the need for more space increased, the University added additional rooms until the Society library occupied approximately the south half of the third floor of Liberal Arts (now Schaeffer Hall), two rooms in the basement, and three rooms on the second floor which served Dr. Sham-

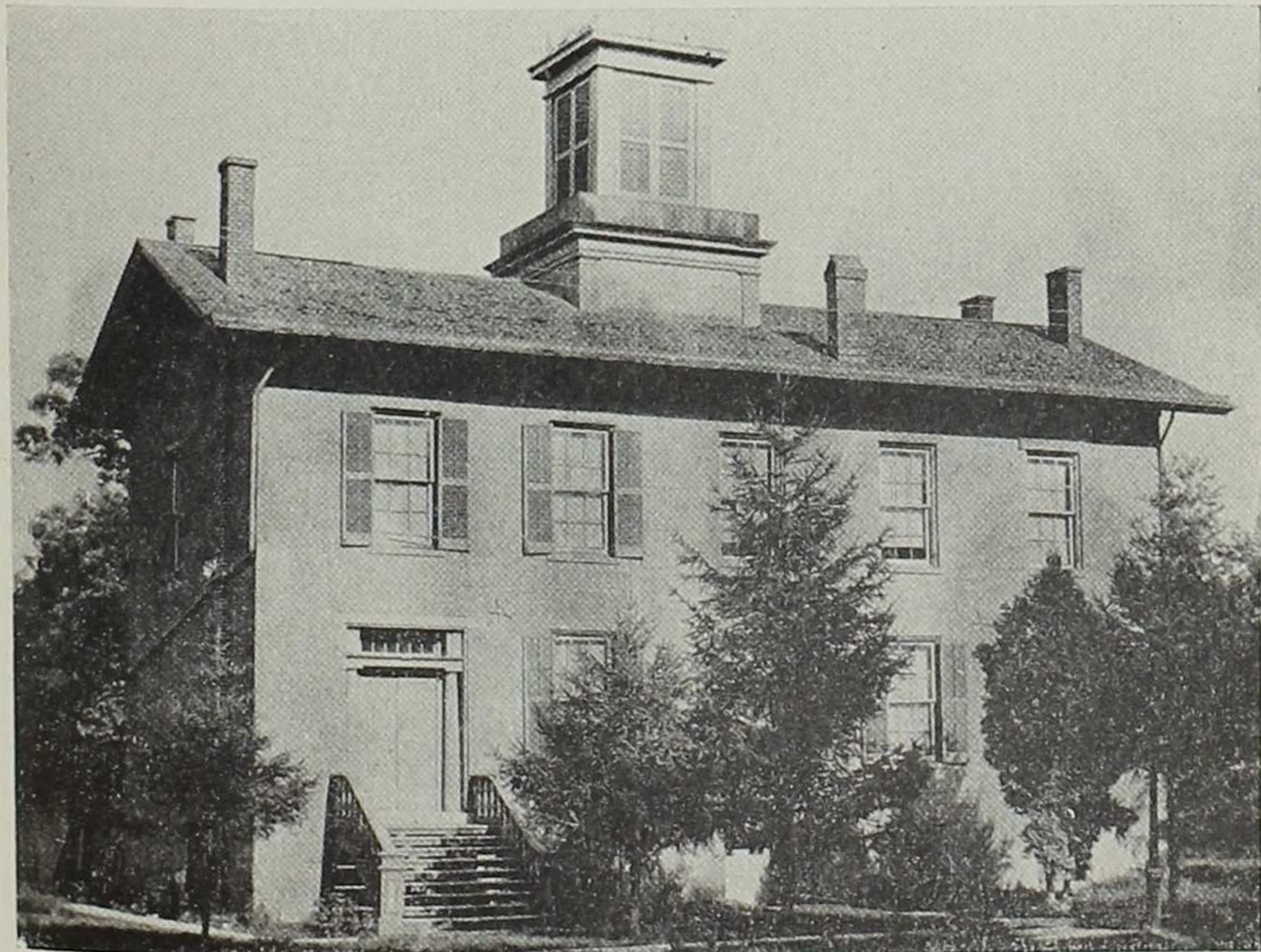
baugh as Superintendent of the State Historical Society of Iowa and head of the Department of Political Science in the University. This was the situation when Dr. Shambaugh suddenly died in the spring of 1940, after more than thirty-two years of inspirational leadership.

In the twenty years since Dr. Shambaugh died, the Society library has continued to expand at the rate of more than one thousand volumes a year, not counting newspapers, manuscripts, maps, photos, etc. In December, 1960, the books accessioned totaled 80,000, while the number of pamphlets approximated 30,000. In addition, the Society had 10,000 volumes of bound newspapers, an extensive and rapidly expanding microfilm collection, and rich holdings in manuscripts, photographs, and maps. It was this steady expansion, coupled with the dire need of the State University of Iowa for more classroom and office space, which ultimately forced the Society to seek new quarters of its own.

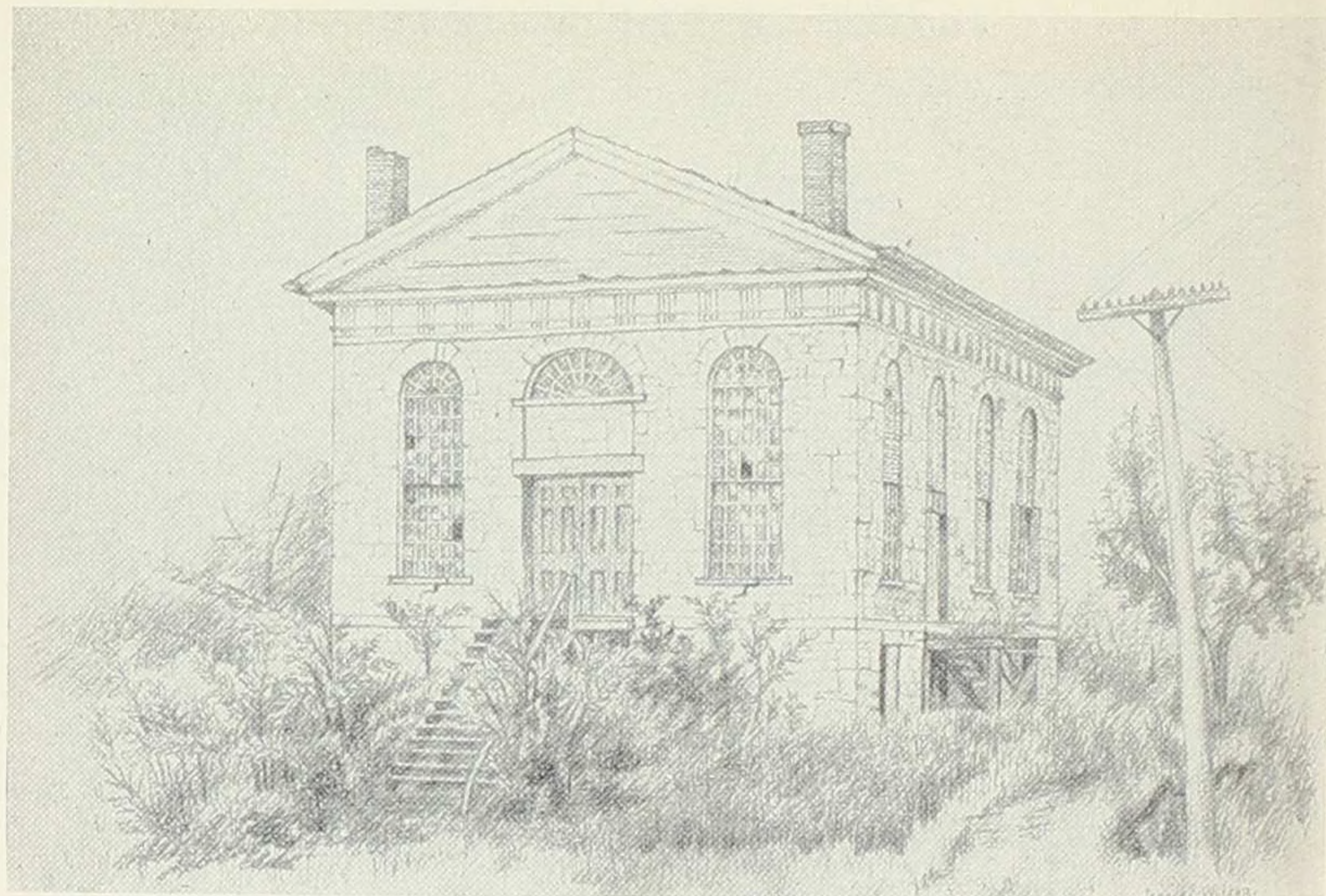
HOMES OF THE SOCIETY



Old Stone Capitol — 1857-1862
Library Room and Cabinet of the University — 1865-1868



Mechanics Academy — 1862-1865

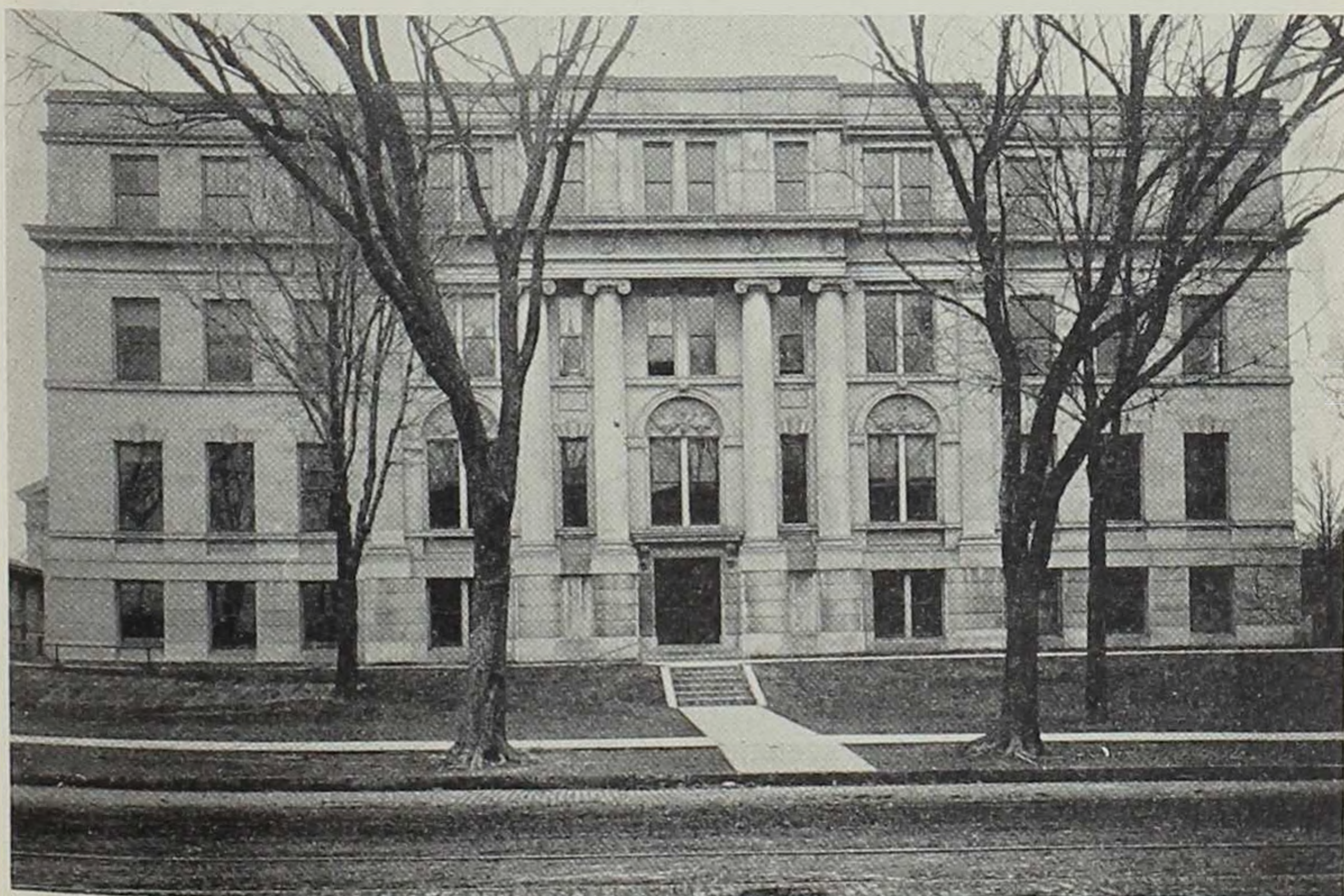
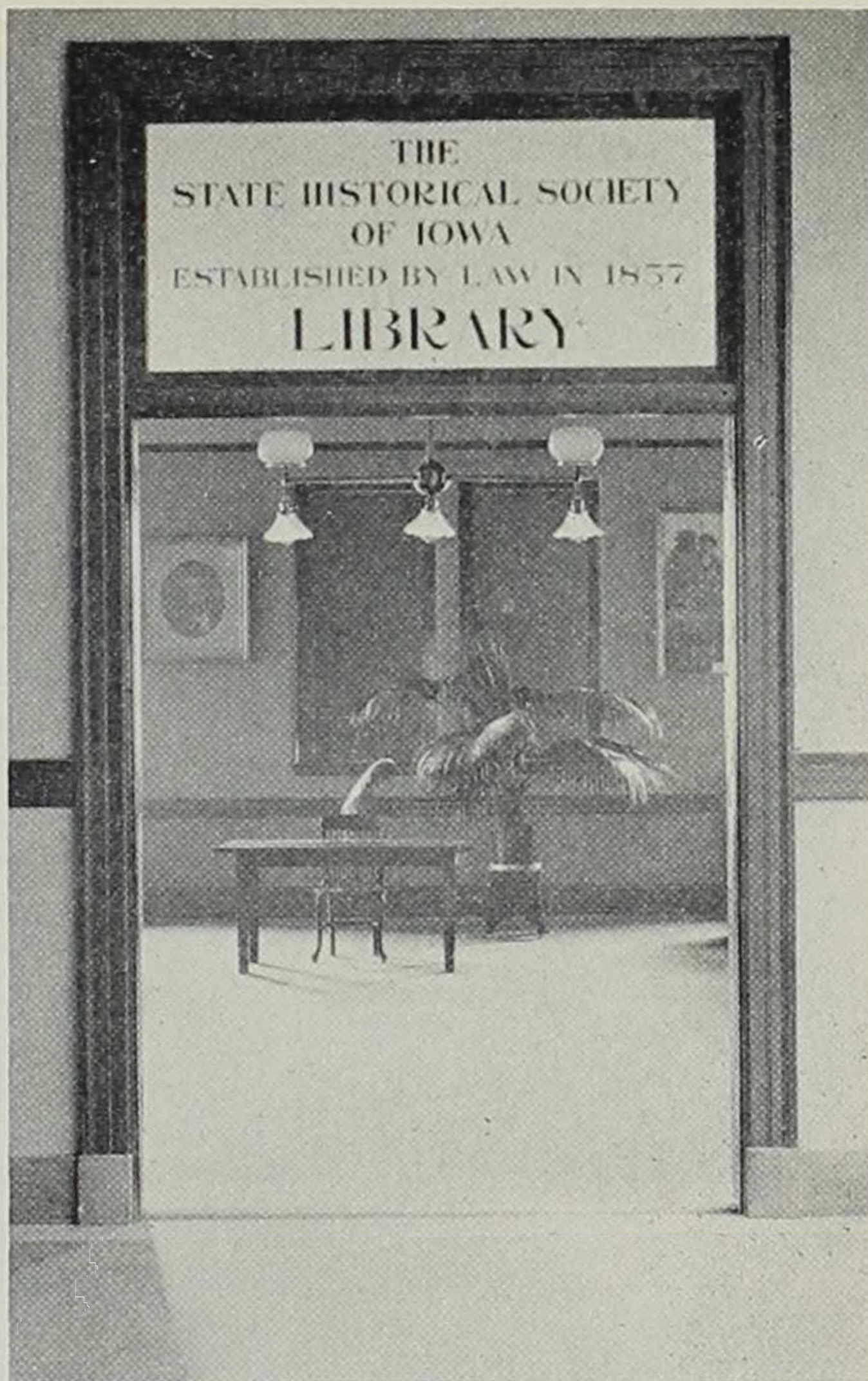


Old Stone Church — 1868-1882

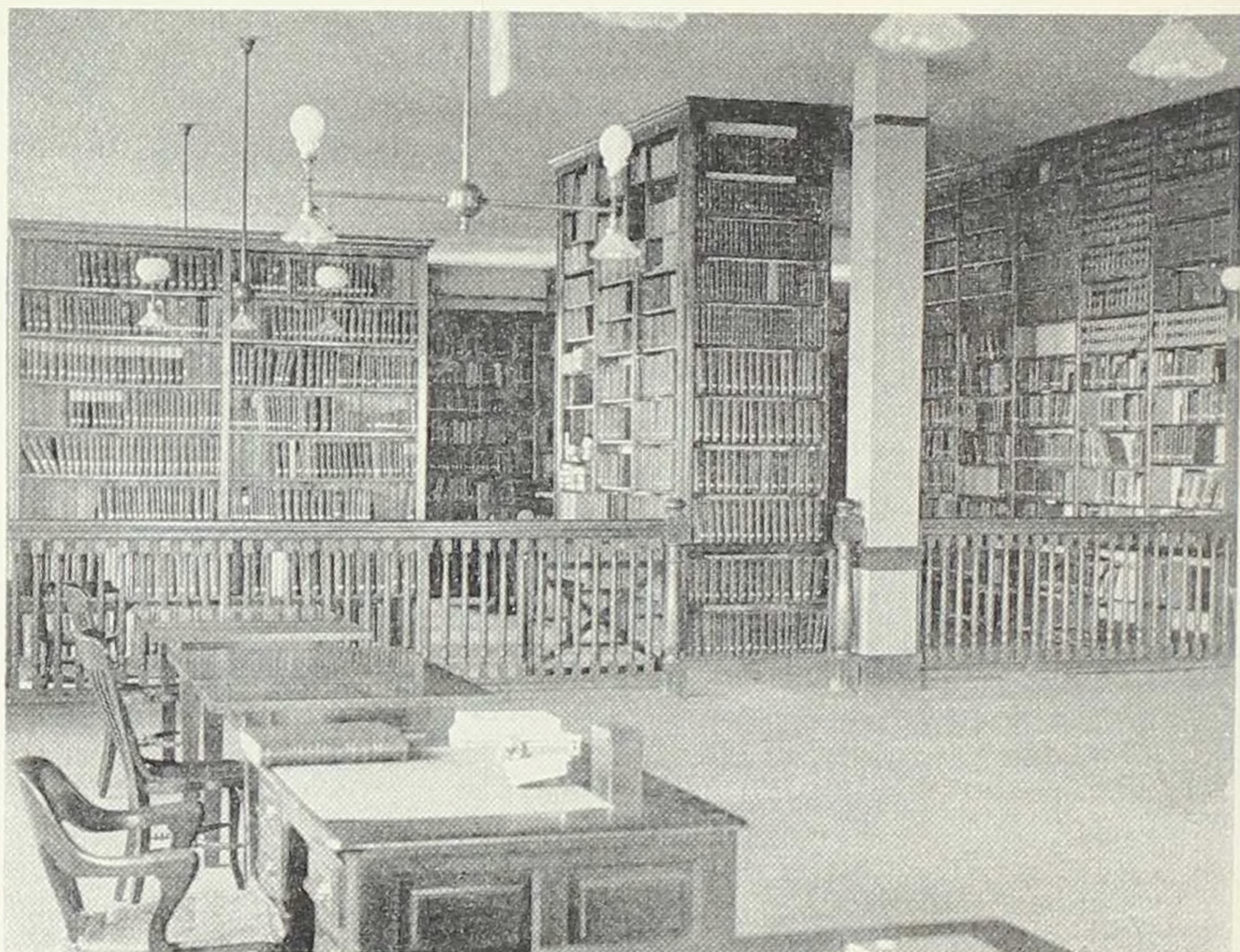


212-214 E. Washington Street (2nd Floor) — 1882-1901

Library Entrance in Schaeffer Hall



Liberal Arts — now Schaeffer Hall — 1901-1960



The Old Library in Liberal Arts About 1910



The Staff was Small — but Industrious and Efficient



Board of Curators Meets at Iowa City on February 25, 1948

Standing — left to right: H. J. Lytle, Davenport; W. Howard Smith, Cedar Rapids; Dr. L. H. Kornder, Davenport; Dean Raymond J. Hekel, Mt. Pleasant; Lawrence C. Crawford, Iowa City; Dr. William J. Petersen, Superintendent, Iowa City; O. J. Henderson, Webster City; Carl H. Mather, Tipton; Dr. Charles E. Snyder, Iowa City; William R. Hart, Iowa City. *Seated* — left to right: Helen Vanderburg, Shell Rock; Mrs. John Hammill, Britt; Anna Morrison, Grundy Center, Mrs. Lloyd Thurston, Osceola; and Margaret Jones Hinderman, Wapello.

Absent: Sam T. Morrison, Iowa City; Mrs. O. J. Kirketeg, Bedford; Henry K. Peterson, Council Bluffs; Clifford Powell, Red Oak.



On November 21, 1948, Dr. and Mrs. William J. Petersen served as host and hostess at a tea held in the University Club at the Memorial Union in Iowa City honoring Mrs. Gregory Brunk of Des Moines, newly-appointed Curator of the State Historical Society, and Dr. Mildred W. Throne, newly-appointed Associate Editor. In the receiving line with Dr. and Mrs. Petersen were Governor and Mrs. Robert D. Blue and the honored guests. One hundred and twenty-five attended the tea.



Almost two hundred members and their guests from widely scattered sections of Iowa greeted Norman B. Shaffer, newly-elected treasurer of the State Historical Society of Iowa, at a Sunday tea held in his honor May 25, 1952, at the Iowa Memorial Union.

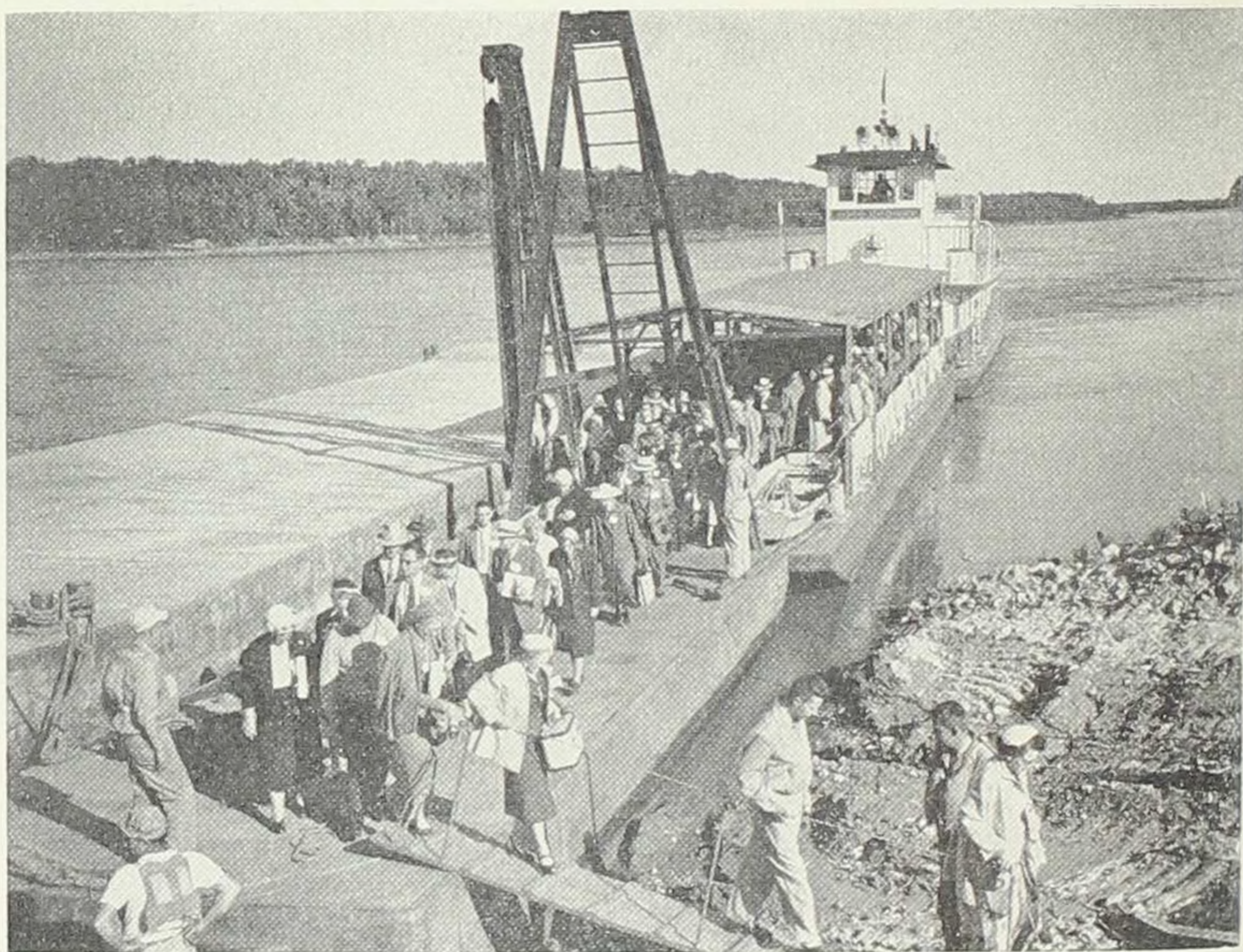


On Board the *Rob Roy III*

Top: Society curators prepare to partake.

Middle: Legislators at the Dairy Bar.

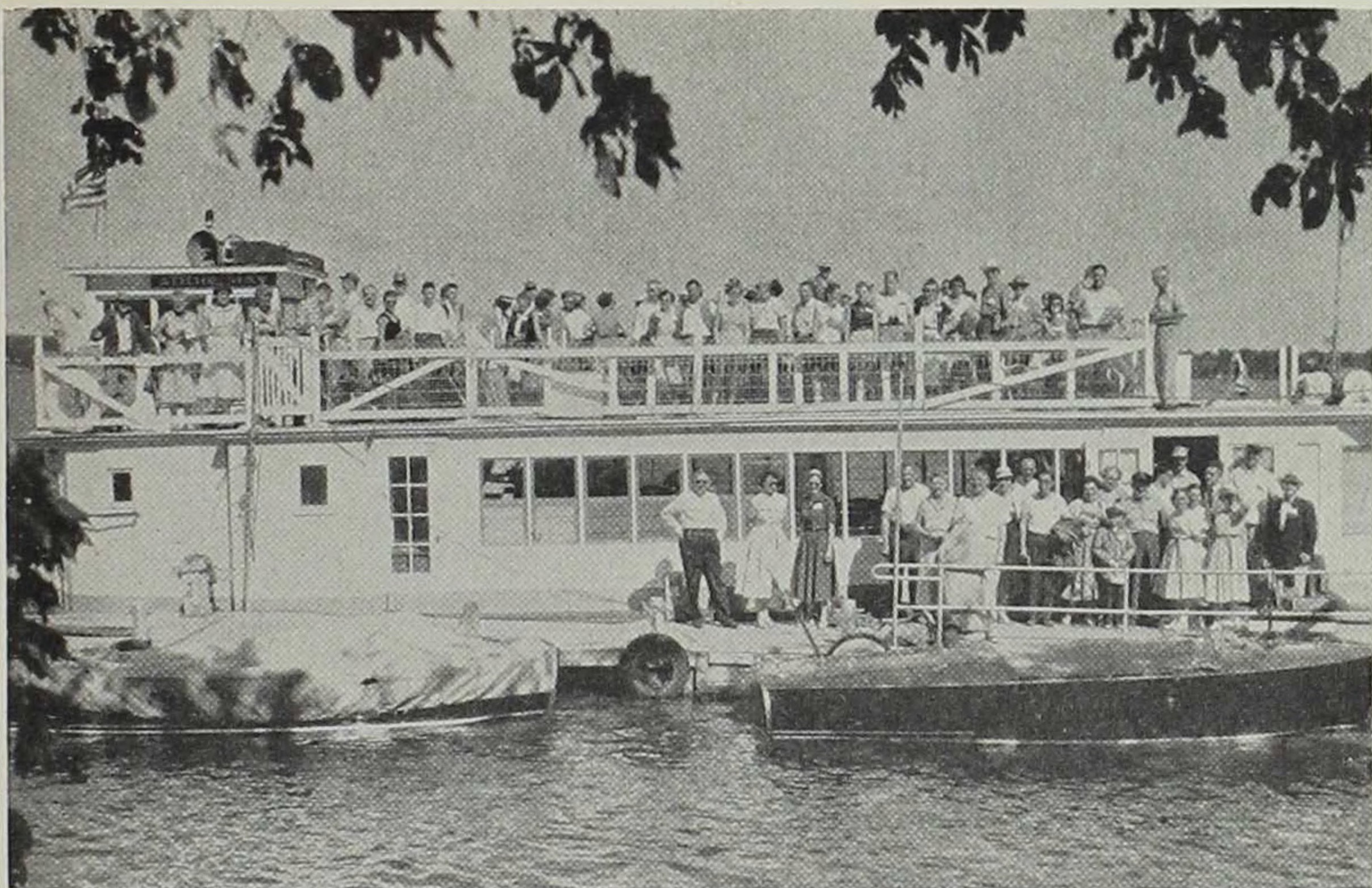
Bottom: Steamboat Bill extends Society's thanks to Commodore O. D. Collis.



Leaving towboat *John Ordway* after Missouri River Cruise



L. to r.: Fred Schwengel, Peter Stuck, Dr. Henry Moershel, Wm. Noe,
Wm. J. Petersen, Carl Mather



Hundreds of Society members have trailed Mississippi River history aboard the *Addie May* between Keokuk and Nauvoo

The American Association for State and Local History
Washington, D. C.

Award of Merit

The American Association for State and Local History is pleased
to recognize and commend the distinctive contribution of

The State Historical Society of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

For continuing its remarkable membership growth for the fourth consecutive year; for pictorializing its publications while maintaining their traditional scholarship; for increasing ten-fold the institutional memberships of Iowa schools; for increasing the use of its published materials by school children; and for sponsoring overland historical tours and steamboat excursions with ever larger membership participation.

Voted at the annual meeting of the Association in Houston, Texas on October 22, 1952



Albert B. Long
President of the Association

Ernest L. Lund
Chairman, Committee on Awards

The American Association for State and Local History voted this "Award of Merit" to the Society at Houston, Texas, on October 22, 1952.

MENU OF THE ROB ROY III

IOWA. Her affections, like the rivers of her borders, flow to an inseparable Union.
ENOCH W. EASTMAN

MORNING REFRESHER

Blue Bird Grape Juice COUNCIL BLUFFS	Blue Bird Grape Juice COUNCIL BLUFFS	Blue Bird Grape Juice COUNCIL BLUFFS
Roshek's Danish Rolls DUBUQUE	Tone's Pressure Pack Coffee DES MOINES	Tausch's Old Fashion Doughnuts DUBUQUE

NOON LUNCHEON

Rath's Ham WATERLOO	Maplecrest Turkey WELLMAN	Kalona Swiss Cheese KALONA
Brown Beauty Beans MARSHALLTOWN	Dubuque Salami, Braunschweiger, Iowa Sweet Loaf DUBUQUE	Hiland Potato Chips DAVENPORT
Bettendorf Chipped Dills, Sweet Pickles BETTENDORF	Potato Salad with Morrell Pork Sausage OTTUMWA	Risser's Sweet Gerkins KEOKUK
Crescent Egg Noodles with Rath's Canned Boned Chicken DAVENPORT	Garden Fresh Tomatoes, Carrots, Radishes, Green Onions, Parsley LAGOMARCINO-GROUPS, BURLINGTON	Wapsipinicon Honey ANAMOSA
Amana Breads SOUTH AMANA	Swaner's Home Town Cottage Cheese IOWA CITY	Crescent Cookies DAVENPORT
Country Club Ice Cream DAVENPORT	Jack Sprat Fresh Strawberry Preserves MARSHALLTOWN	Chocolate Cream Coffee CEDAR RAPIDS

AFTERNOON SNACK

Morrell Pride Ham OTTUMWA	Schwartemagen HOMESTEAD	Hiland's Korn Kuris DAVENPORT
Huginin Smoked Sturgeon CAMANCHE	Trenkle's Landjaeger DUBUQUE	Nicholas Smoked Turkey MASON CITY
L'Trio Chef's Salad SHELDON		Westphalian Style Ham Salad AMANA
Tausch's Old Salty Rye DUBUQUE		Sala-Dress CEDAR RAPIDS
Peggy Ann Fine Candies DES MOINES		Crescent Wafers & Crackers DAVENPORT
Maytag Blue Cheese NEWTON		Ucanco Pecanola Bars DAVENPORT



In all that is good, Iowa affords the best.
SIDNEY POSTER

ALL FOODS SERVED ARE IOWA RAISED OR IOWA PROCESSED.

Menu planned and arranged by Mrs. William J. Petersen.

Paper Table Service
Compliments of Carpenter Paper Co., Des Moines

Printed at cost by
Economy Advertising Co., Iowa City

Famous All-Iowa Menu

This All-Iowa Menu has received State and National recognition. It won an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History.



Legislators and Curators Tour Historic Dubuque during two-day Mississippi Cruise



Legislators Tour Historic Keokuk in 1959

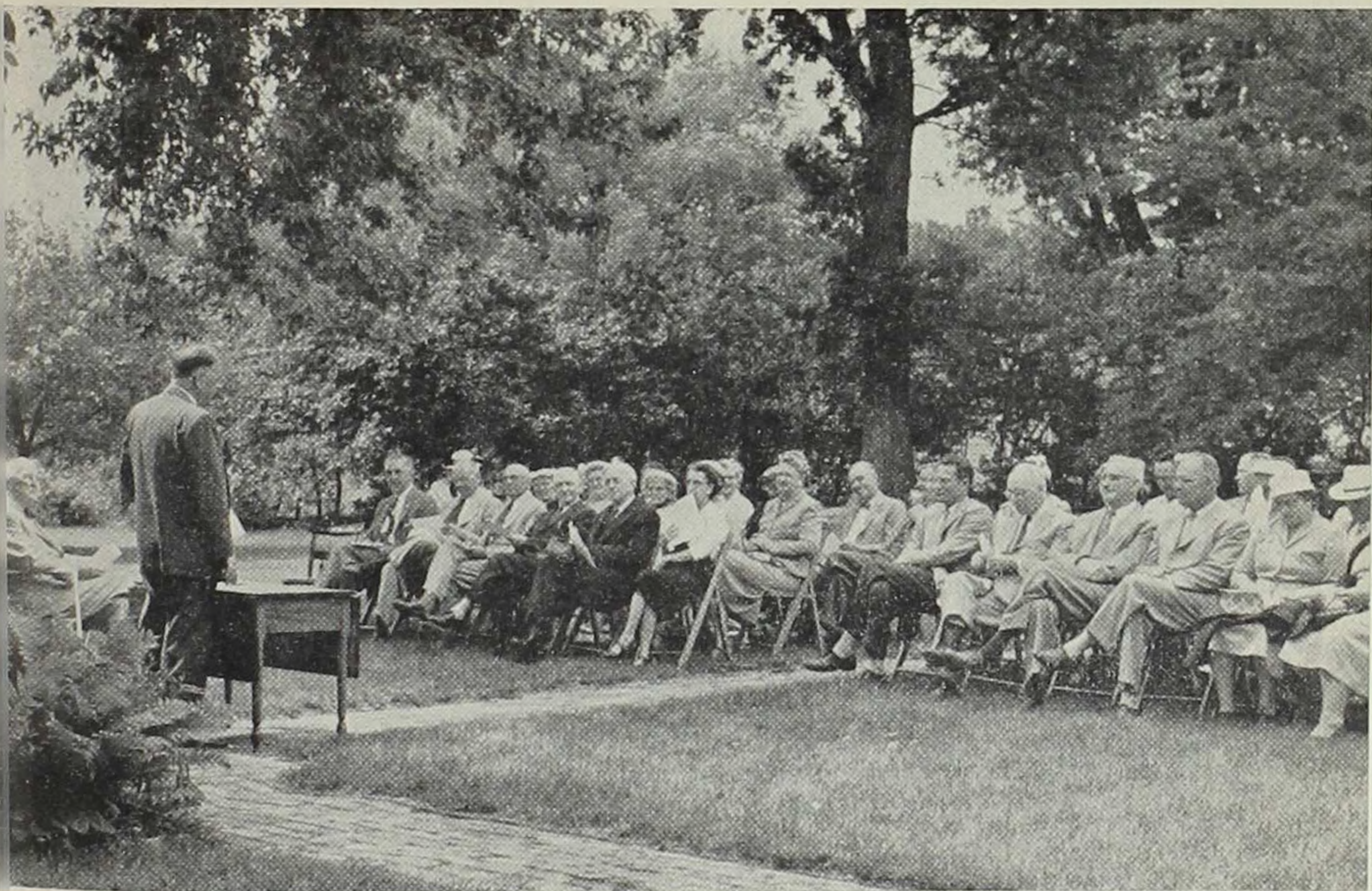


Thirteen of the Eighteen Present Curators Attend the Centennial Dinner

Elected Curators, *standing* left to right: Superintendent William J. Petersen; W. Howard Smith, Cedar Rapids; John Mohl, Davenport; and James Nesmith, Sam T. Morrison, James E. Stronks, and William R. Hart, all of Iowa City. Appointed Curators *seated*, left to right: John Sproatt, Decorah; William R. Ferguson, Glidden; Margaret Hinderman, Washington; Helen Vanderburg, Shell Rock; Martha Brunk, Des Moines; Ralph P. Shannon, Washington; and F. D. Simpson, Atlantic.



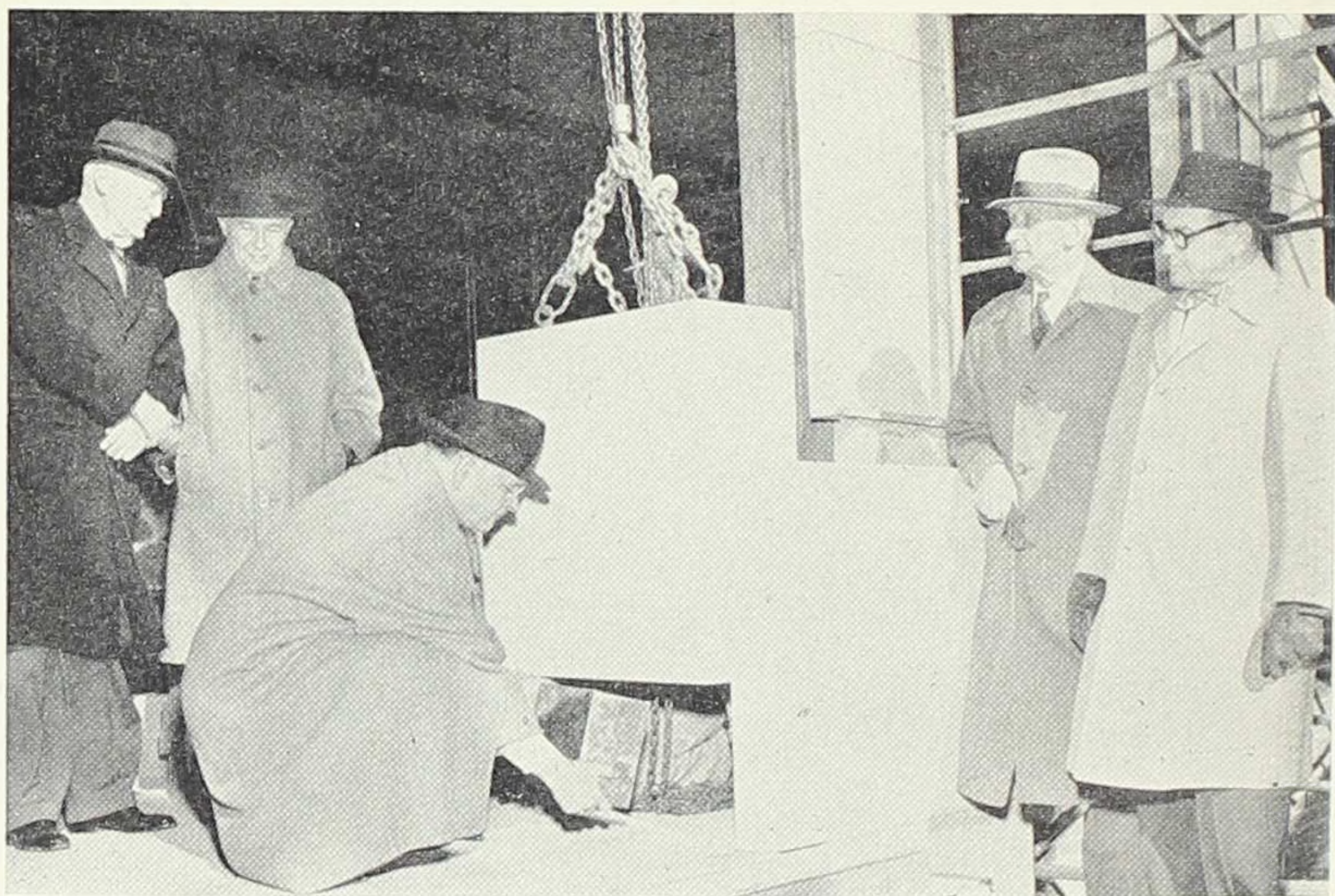
Superintendent Petersen joined Curators Helen Vanderburg, Martha Brunk, and Margaret Hinderman around the Society's Centennial Birthday Cake.



Fiftieth Biennial Meeting of Society held at Plum Grove



Society Conducts its Second Largest Tour of Amana
Members of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs From All Sections of Iowa



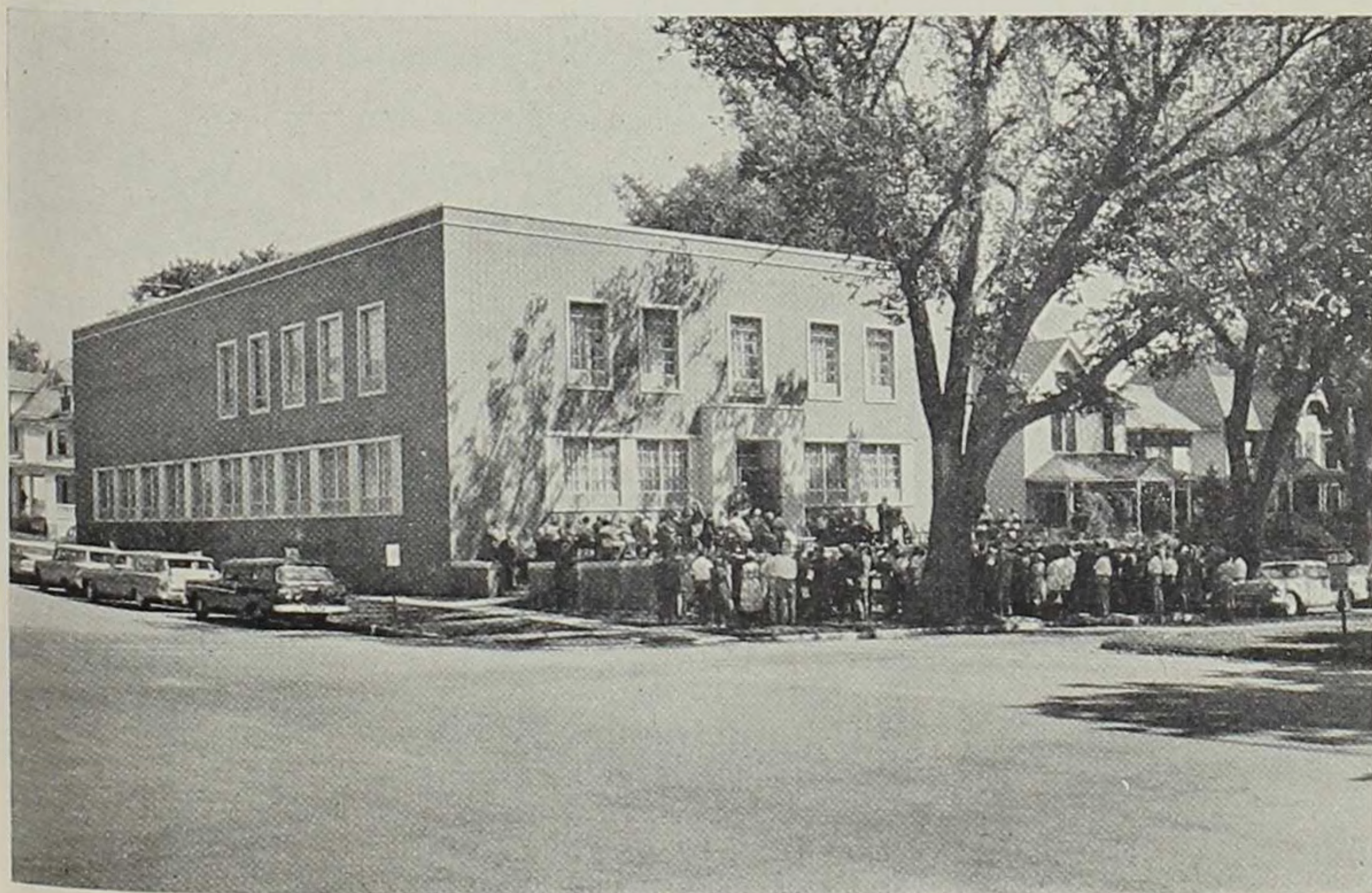
Laying the cornerstone on November 26, 1958
 Left to right: Morrison, Hancher, Petersen, Mohl, Nesmith



Eight Curators — Hart, Smith, Stronks, McKee, Nesmith, Morrison, Mohl, and Houlette — together with Architect Higgins, General Contractor Frantz, University President Virgil Hancher, and Representative Scott Swisher were among those present.



Fifty-first Biennial Meeting inspected newly-erected Centennial Building



Dedication Day



Inspecting Main Floor of Centennial Building



Basement Mezzanine Showing Daily Newspaper Files

The Centennial Building

Although the question of finding a permanent home for the Society had confronted the Board of Curators on a half dozen occasions since 1867, it was not until 1954 that the first real effort was made to interest both the General Assembly and the people of Iowa in such a dream. In June of 1954 the State University, itself badly cramped for space, suggested that the Society might like to use the Peter A. Dey home on North Clinton for its offices in exchange for the rooms it occupied in Schaeffer Hall. To house the Society's library, the University would endeavor to secure \$200,000 from the General Assembly to build a book storage place on the Dey property.

Investigation proved that structurally the Dey home was unsuitable for offices and that a library inaccessible for research would prevent the Society from performing its prescribed services to the people of Iowa. Since the Society was already hampered in the collection of material because of lack of space, the Board of Curators proposed that the Society would undertake to raise \$100,000 on its own and ask the General Assembly to match this sum with \$200,000 for their new home. Such action seemed especially appropriate because

of the approaching centennial of the institution. The new home, by unanimous agreement, would be called the Centennial Building.

Professional solicitors, it was found upon inquiry, were unwilling to solicit funds, even at three and four times the amount usually charged for hospital or church fund-raising campaigns. The Curators thereupon appointed the superintendent of the Society to secure the \$100,000.

1955

Those were anxious days for the Superintendent as he solicited legislative support in Des Moines. Fortunately, there had been a steadily increasing interest in the Society among the legislators, resulting in an 800% increase in membership since 1947 within their group. Such men as Fred Schwengel, Clark McNeal, Bill Tate, Bill Lynes, Wendell Pendleton, Jack Schroeder, and De Vere Watson, had been especially active in promoting this phenomenal membership growth.

In the closing days of the session the 56th General Assembly passed its Appropriation Bill which included acceptance of the offer to match the \$100,000 raised by the Society with a \$200,000 legislative appropriation for a new Centennial Building. Senator D. C. Nolan and Representative Scott Swisher of Johnson County played leading roles in securing the appropriation.

Seventeen Senators had placed their names on

Senate File 191 and twenty-six House members had signed their names to House File 248, the original bills asking for the \$200,000 appropriation. The names of these men deserve to be recorded in the history of the Society.

Senate File 191

House File 248

Anderson	Molison	Buck	Kosek	Sar
Boothby	Nolan	Burtch	Loss	Smith
Dewel	O'Malley	Colburn	McNeal	Swisher
Elijah	Schroeder	Darrington	Mensing	Tate
Grimstead	Van Eaton	Falvey	E. A. Miller	Vermeer
Lucas	Walker	Frommelt	Mooty	J. F. Walter
McFarlane	D. Watson	Hendrix	Novak	P. M. Walter
McManus	H. Watson	Hoth	Peterson	Voigtmann
	Weiss	Hultman	Pim	

Few legislatures had been faced with more difficult problems than the 56th General Assembly. On the one hand, the members were confronted with a large section of their constituents who favored "holding the line" and opposed raising taxes in any form. On the other hand, an equally vocal number of their constituents cried out for better roads, greater aid to schools, and more support for institutions under the Board of Education and the Board of Control. With such giant appropriations to be determined it took wisdom, courage, and leadership to see that the modest request of the Society was not shunted aside. The 56th General Assembly was well represented with men possessing these qualities and accordingly met the challenge to the delight of almost five

thousand members of the State Historical Society.

On December 8, 1955, the Board of Regents transferred to the State Historical Society of Iowa the 80 x 150-foot lot at the corner of Iowa Avenue and Gilbert Street on which were three University buildings. Two large frame houses used by University music students stood on the front of this lot facing Iowa Avenue. The University laundry was located on the rear of the lot facing Gilbert Street.

1956

The year 1955 had been a highly productive one for the State Historical Society. The General Assembly had voted \$200,000 for a Centennial Building in May and the Board of Regents had transferred an 80 x 150-foot lot to the Society in December. It only remained for the Society to raise its \$100,000. Throughout 1956 interest in the Society mounted on an ever-increasing crescendo. Steamboat trips on both the Mississippi and Missouri rivers helped focus attention on the Society's varied activities. Publications (including the William Boyd Allison book) became increasingly popular. Membership continued to grow at an amazing rate. All these forces combined to stimulate interest in the proposed Centennial Building. Before the year 1956 had come to an end the building fund had reached the \$100,000 cash available and entitled the Society

to the \$200,000 appropriated by the General Assembly. Among the first and largest contributors were the following:

Frank C. Allen	\$ 6,000		\$500
Sheaffer Pen Co.	5,000	Des Moines	
Maytag Company	5,000	Yunker Bros., Inc.	
Lee Papers & Families	5,250	Meredith Foundation	
Hanford MacNider	5,000	Pioneer Hi-Bred Corn Co.	
Dorothy Musser	5,000	James M. Pierce Corporation	
Arthur Cox Family	2,250	Iowa City	
	<hr/>	James E. Stronks	
	\$33,500	Sam T. Morrison	
Carl Weeks	1,000	Plumbers Supply	
Mrs. Mina J. Way	1,000	Iowa City <i>Press-Citizen</i>	
Cedar Rapids <i>Gazette</i>	1,000	Frank J. Zeithamel	
Waterloo <i>Courier</i>	1,000	Iowa State Bank & Trust	
Dubuque		Frank L. Thompson	
Carr, Adams & Collier	1,000	L. C. W. Clearman	
Wahlert Foundation	1,000	Richard K. Adams	
Keokuk		First National Bank	
Hubinger Foundation	1,000		
Keokuk Electro-		F. O. Block, Bettendorf	
Metals	1,000	O. D. Collis, Clinton	
Hoerner Foundation	1,000	Taft Unitarian Foundation	
	<hr/>	Charles Gilchrist, Davenport	
	9,000	W. A. Logan, Keokuk	
22 \$500 contributions	11,000	Kent-Stein Foundation,	
	<hr/>	Muscatine	
Total large contribu-		Burlington <i>Hawk-Eye Gazette</i>	
tions in 1956	\$53,500	Ralph C. McCague,	
		Marshalltown	

Hundreds of other contributions, ranging from one dollar to \$300 helped swell the total to the \$100,000 mark by the time the 57th General Assembly convened in Des Moines in 1957.

1957

On April 9, 1957, bids were opened for the re-

moval of the two frame houses but the laundry was still in use pending the completion of its new building. Meanwhile, the centennial of the State Historical Society of Iowa had been observed at a commemorative dinner in the Iowa Memorial Union at Iowa City on February 7, 1957. It was attended by more than 120 members and guests, including eighteen Curators, thirteen of whom were serving on the Board at the time. Congratulations poured in from heads of sister institutions all over the United States. Curator William R. Hart served as Master of Ceremonies and Superintendent William J. Petersen gave the address of the evening.

Dean Allin W. Dakin brought greetings from President Virgil M. Hancher on the occasion of the centennial and felicitously extended his own personal good wishes. Curator W. Howard Smith introduced the nine elected Curators, present and past, while Curator Margaret Hinderman presented the seven appointed Curators, present and past, many of whom had traveled long distances to be present for the historic occasion. The lighting of the huge Birthday Cake was a happy feature of the dinner. Dr. J. A. Swisher, former Research Associate of the Society, read some original poems. The Superintendent presented an *Award of Merit* from the American Association for State and Local History to Philip Adler of Davenport in recognition of the outstanding ser-

vice of the Lee Papers in promoting state and local history over the years, and in substantially supporting the Microfilm Room of the Centennial Building. An Award of Merit was also given the State Historical Society for publishing the *William Boyd Allison* biography.

Perhaps the most fortuitous tribute came from Dr. Paul M. Angle, Director of the Chicago Historical Society, who in a series of one-page essays that had appeared in *Publishers' Weekly* over a period of several years, had paid special tribute to the State Historical Society of Iowa on February 4, 1957, by including the Society with twenty-three great institutions in his "Doorways to American Culture." Seven of these twenty-three institutions were state historical societies, who "through their publications, have made available a vast resource of national intellectual wealth." In his tribute to the Society Dr. Angle concluded:

States older than Iowa may have larger historical literatures, but no state has had its past so thoroughly explored and so widely disseminated by its own historical society.

It was announced at the Centennial Dinner that the Society had \$105,000 in cash on hand, not counting pledges. Rising building costs were a matter of genuine concern, however, and the superintendent pointed out that once the building

was completed additional funds would be needed for furnishings and equipment. He noted six gifts alone totaled \$31,250 and urged broader participation in the venture, particularly among the 700 Life Members.

On June 24, 1957, the Society held its Biennial meeting on the grounds of the Lucas Home in Iowa City. On this historic spot those attending looked back over the period of a century and noted the tremendous strides that had been taken. The membership stood at 5,250, publications were being issued regularly, the steamboat trips remained as popular as ever, and the Society had just conducted a record-breaking tour of the Amana Colonies for the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs. This group of women, with its membership of almost 35,000, was destined to contribute a total of over \$8,000 to the Centennial Building for an Iowa Women's Heritage Room. This proved to be the second largest cash contribution made to the Centennial Building.

1958

By January, 1958, the University laundry was transferred to its new building. On March 20 bids were opened for the demolition and removal of the old laundry within thirty days. One month later, on April 17, bids were opened for the construction of the Centennial Building. Over fifty bidders were present to listen to the figures quoted

by nine bidders for the General Contract, four bidders for the Mechanical Contract, four bidders for the Electric Wiring Contract, and six who sought the Service Elevator Contract. Architect Burdette Higgins, of the firm of Tinsley, Higgins, Lighter & Lyon of Des Moines, read the bids in the presence of the superintendent and five Curators — William R. Hart, James Nesmith, and James E. Stronks of Iowa City, John Mohl of Davenport, and Ransom McKee of Muscatine. The successful bidders were:

<i>Contract</i>	<i>Successful Bidder</i>	<i>Home Address</i>	<i>Amt. Bid</i>
General	Frantz Construction Co.	Iowa City	\$215,400
Mechanical	Darragh & Associates, Inc.	Cedar Rapids	98,850
Electric	The Home Appliances, Inc.	Iowa City	22,217
Elevator	R & O Elevator	Minneapolis	16,929
			<hr/> \$353,396

Once the contracts were let, work began in earnest. On June 7, 1958, ground was broken by President Sam T. Morrison and a small group of Curators and friends, including Provost Harvey H. Davis of the University; Will J. Hayek, Treasurer of the Society; Mrs. Arthur J. Cox, Representative Scott Swisher, and former Senator LeRoy Mercer.

Once started, General Contractor Frantz fairly kept things humming. By October 16 the second floor and half the roof had been poured and bricklayers were busily engaged with their trowels. It was a bitter cold day on November 26 when a

score of hardy souls gathered to lay the cornerstone of the Centennial Building.

Fortunately the General Contractor, Mr. Frantz, had installed salamanders to take some of the chill off the interior of the building. The entire concrete superstructure had been in for some weeks and bricks were laid to the second floor. President Virgil M. Hancher, President Morrison, members of the Building Committee, and Curators William R. Hart, W. Howard Smith, James E. Stronks, Ransom McKee, and William Houlette were present at the laying of the cornerstone together with Representative Scott Swisher, LeRoy Mercer, Bruce E. Mahan, J. A. Swisher, and Frank Zeithamel.

The contents of the copper box inserted in the cornerstone included the following:

- A. Miscellaneous Records, Reports, and Data Published by the Society.
 - 1. Constitution and By-Laws of the State Historical Society.
 - 2. *Some Information* (January, 1942) — List of members, etc.
 - 3. *Some Information* (January, 1951) — Historical publications.
 - 4. Membership List by Counties and States (October, 1948).
 - 5. Membership List by Counties and States (January, 1952).
 - 6. Program for Centennial Birthday Dinner (February 7, 1957).

7. Society Steamboat Excursion (1951) — Menu of the *Rob Roy III*.
 8. *Looking Backward on Hawkeyeland*, by William J. Petersen.
 9. Biennial Reports of the State Historical Society of Iowa for the following: 1947-1949; 1951-1953; 1953-1955; 1955-1957.
- B. Representative Publications of the Society.
1. *News for Members* — October, 1954, through October, 1958.
 2. *The Palimpsest* — June, 1955; August, 1955; May, 1956; March, 1957; June, 1957.
 3. *Iowa Journal of History* — April, 1957.
 4. Books.
 - a. *A Glimpse of Iowa in 1846*, by J. B. Newhall (SHSI reprint).
 - b. *Iowa History Reference Guide* (1952), by Wm. J. Petersen.
 - c. *The Constitutions of Iowa* (1934), by Benj. F. Shambaugh.
- C. Contemporary Iowa Newspapers: *Iowa City Press-Citizen*; *Cedar Rapids Gazette*; *Des Moines Register*; *Davenport Times*; *Waterloo Courier*.

1959

As the Centennial Building neared completion excitement mounted among the Curators and friends of the Society. By mid-February the building was substantially finished on the outside, the rooms inside had been roughed in, a good deal of the electrical and plumbing equipment installed, the elevator ready to operate, and the plasterers awaiting warmer weather.

Meanwhile, the 58th General Assembly was rolling along under a full head of steam. Members of that august body were mindful of the Society's needs, for in February, 1959, both houses of the legislature approved a bill appropriating \$85,000 to furnish and equip the Centennial Building. It was truly a grand vote of confidence, a confidence resting on the fact that the Society had met its own challenge by raising substantially more than the \$100,000 promised in order to be eligible for the \$200,000 appropriated by the General Assembly in 1955. Legislators, many of whom were members of the Society, had read regular reports of the progress on the Centennial Building. By March, 1959, they could see the completed structure with bricks being washed down on the outside; by April 15 the sod had been laid around the building and all construction equipment hauled away; by May 16 it was estimated that the inside work was approximately 90% complete.

Biennial Meeting

On June 29, 1959, the 51st Biennial Meeting of the Society met in the Unitarian church across the street from the Centennial Building. After a brief business meeting and the election of curators those present crossed Iowa Avenue to inspect the progress of work in the interior of the Centennial Building.

Meanwhile, during the summer of 1959 steel

shelving was being installed in the sub-basement to store the almost 4,000 cartons of the Society's publications dating back to 1863. The gigantic task of moving these cartons, weighing an average of sixty pounds each, began on September 11. Iowa Citians, University faculty and students, and members of the Society watched for months what the Iowa City *Press-Citizen* described as the "biggest moving job to be undertaken in Iowa City this year — and one of the largest ever." It is estimated that the back publications moved into the Centennial Building weighed approximately 120 tons.

By October, 1959, the inside was fast nearing completion: the tile floors were laid, plumbing and electricity installed, and painting and air conditioning completed. The installation of steel book stacks and other equipment was under way and probably one-third of the move into the new quarters consummated. By October, too, it became apparent that, because of the rising costs, the Society would need \$19,178 to pay for the Centennial Building when completed.

A historic step was taken when the Board of Curators met in the Centennial Building for its regular monthly meeting on November 24, 1959. The members present were Hart, Mohl, Nesmith, Smith, Stronks, and Swisher. Although the book-stacks had not been erected and moving of back publications was still going on into the basement,

everyone expressed much pleasure with their new quarters.

The question before the Board was — where can it raise \$19,178? Fortunately, a way appeared when the Superintendent had an opportunity to discuss the problem briefly with members of the Budget & Financial Control Committee during a historical tour. A week later a formal request for the amount needed to complete the building was made by the president and superintendent. The request was granted without a dissenting vote.

On December 16, 1959, the Board of Curators was informed that University officials had been notified that the entire basement in Schaeffer Hall had been cleared of newspapers and back publications. This would allow the University to begin converting the area into classrooms and offices for use in the fall.

1960

The most painstaking part of the move into the Centennial Building was completed during the first four months of 1960 when 80,000 books, 30,000 pamphlets, and a vast amount of manuscripts, pictures, maps, and miscellaneous material was moved under adverse weather conditions. It took two weeks and seven truck-loads, averaging approximately 2,000 books to the truck-load, to transport 14,000 volumes out of Room 305 in

Schaeffer Hall. During the early stages the books were carried, in heavy crates (called coffins) down the eighty-six steps. Later a hoist and pulley was used to let the crates down the first two flights of stairs. Finally, the University set up an elevator outside the building which greatly facilitated moving, although, because of the very nature of the material transported, it still was slow work. By mid-April the move from the third floor of Schaeffer Hall was finally completed.

Meanwhile, the Superintendent had moved his office into the Centennial Building in mid-January. The Business Office followed over in mid-February and the Associate Editor and Library Associate in April. By May a number of outstanding historians and researchers were working in the Centennial Building including such men as William Mokray, vice president of the Boston Celtics, who was writing a history of basketball in the United States; Dr. James I. Robertson, editor of *Civil War History*, and Pulitzer Prize winner MacKinlay Kantor, deeply immersed in his forthcoming book on Spirit Lake, and emphasizing, of course, the Spirit Lake Massacre. Dick Lamb was also delving into the rich records of the Society that were destined to place Gordon Locke in the Football Hall of Fame.

Once in their new quarters both the Curators and Superintendent began to think in terms of appropriate dedication services for their new Cen-

tenial Building. Fortunately, similar historical societies around the country had been watching with ever-increasing interest the effort of the Iowa society to gain a home of its own. While attending the 18th Annual Meeting of the American Association for State and Local History in Salt Lake City in 1958, the Superintendent of the State Historical Society, sensing this growing interest, invited the American Association to hold its 20th Annual Meeting in Iowa City at the time of the dedication. This invitation was formally accepted when the American Association for State and Local History held its 19th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia in 1959. It was agreed that August 31, 1960, would be Dedication Day for the Centennial Building and that the American Association would open up its four-day session at the same time in order that all might participate in the historic event.

Once agreed upon, every effort was made to have the building in readiness. Members of the Society, as well as officers of county historical societies, were alerted to the fact that they would meet and hear directors of national, state, and local, and private historical agencies from all over the country. In this race against time it may be worth recording that the airconditioning was made available one week before the Centennial Building was dedicated and the last drapes hung twenty-four hours before the big event.

Dedication Day

Dedication day — Wednesday, August 31, 1960 — arrived, hot and sticky. Members of the American Association for State and Local History had been arriving throughout the previous day in order not to miss the two programs that had been set up for 9:30 a.m., an hour and a half before the dedication of the Centennial Building. The programs arranged were most appropriate — the subject — “New Directions and Traditional Functions in Our Local Historical Societies” was held in Conference Room No. 2 and “The Historical Society Magazine — Does It Have a Future?” was the stimulating program assigned to Conference Room No. 1. Those who arrived early were delighted to find the Centennial Building completely air-conditioned — one of the few places in Iowa City that afforded them comfort from the blistering heat outside.

The dedication of the Centennial Building took place at 11 a.m. An unfortunate conflict — State Day at the State Fair in Des Moines — prevented Governor Herschel Loveless and scores of legislators from attending the dedication services. Fully three hundred were present, however, being almost equally divided between members and

Dedication Program

THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

Centennial Building

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 1960, 11 A.M.

PRESIDING

Curator William R. Hart, President, State Historical Society of Iowa

INVOCATION

Dr. J. Raymond Chadwick, President, Iowa Wesleyan College

GREETINGS

Honorable Herschel C. Loveless, Governor of Iowa

Dr. Harvey H. Davis, Provost, State University of Iowa

Dr. Clifford L. Lord, President, American Association for State and Local History

Dr. S. K. Stevens, President, Association of Historic Sites Administrators

REMARKS

Hon. Scott Swisher, State Representative, Johnson County

Clarence W. Moody, Past President, Iowa Daily Press Association

Dr. Leslie W. Dunlap, Director, University of Iowa Libraries

INTRODUCTIONS

Distinguished Visitors: Dr. William J. Petersen, Superintendent, State Historical Society of Iowa

Curators of the Society: Curator W. Howard Smith

PRESENTATION OF KEYS TO CENTENNIAL BUILDING

Presentation by Burdette Higgins, Architect, Tinsley, Higgins, Lighter and Lyon

Acceptance by Curator Jim H. Nesmith, Chairman, Centennial Building Committee

BENEDICTION

Right Reverend Monsignor C. H. Meinberg, St. Mary's Parish

friends of the Society in Iowa and visiting dignitaries from over half the states in the Union and two Canadian provinces. Governor Loveless sent the following message to the Superintendent:

Since I can't be present personally, I do want to send my warm regards to those in attendance and to add my congratulations to our own State Historical Society on the happy occasion of your moving into the Centennial Building.

For the benefit of the visitors, I might say that we citizens of Iowa are deeply proud of our State Historical Society, which is one hundred three years old, this year. We are proud of our Society's outstanding publication and research program, and proud of its front rank among states in the presentation of Iowa's history.

We have long looked forward to the day when the State Historical Society's collection of Iowana — the largest in the country — could be housed in one appropriate building. That day has now arrived, and on behalf of the citizens of Iowa, I pay tribute to the Society, its Board and staff, and you, the Director.

Following the presentation of the keys by Architect Burdette Higgins to Curator Jim H. Nesmith, chairman of the building committee, those present entered the Centennial Building and inspected it from sub-basement to its fifth floor — or level. The number of well-wishers was so great that, although 140 reservations had been made for the Dedication luncheon, 210 actually partook of the delicious repast at the University Athletic Club and heard splendid papers by Dr.

Floyd C. Shoemaker, secretary emeritus of the State Historical Society of Missouri, and Russell W. Fridley, director of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Dr. Shoemaker, who served almost fifty years as head of the State Historical Society of Missouri, and who in 1960 became the Consultant and Secretary Emeritus of that Society, addressed the Centennial audience in part as follows:

This occasion is truly memorable and I take great pride in having been invited to a place on your program. We all are especially favored in being guests of the State Historical Society of Iowa at the dedication of its Centennial Building. . . .

Through the decades Iowa has ranked first in literacy in our nation in addition to maintaining its reputation for tall corn and its record contribution of citizens to Long Beach, California. Iowa has always stood high in education and in preservation of its history. It is indeed fitting that your Centennial Building should be a capstone of your cultural accomplishments. It will always be pointed to with pride by the citizens of this state, and generations now unborn will look upon it as proof of the patriotic care taken by their ancestors in the historical heritage of the State of Iowa. . . .

Most of us who believe in state and local history have rested our case on hope, pride, and work. You in Iowa have added more abundant work. There need not be exclusion of either foreign or state history, but if state history is to survive as a living force above an antiquarian and museum study, other states must follow the trail you are blazing in the State of Iowa. . . .

Dr. Petersen, you have proved yourself to be an able historian and scholar, a collector of historical materials, a successful popularizer of history, a fund raiser, and a public relations expert. You have measured up to the responsibilities of a difficult job and can take great pride in your highly successful career.

Citizens of Iowa, you have just pride in the contributions and accomplishments of your State Historical Society. Your Centennial Building is a challenge to your own people and to the people of all the states in the American nation. I hope the challenge will be met in the fine spirit you have presented it. Your Centennial Building will be a lasting *Memorial* to your great pride in Iowa and I also believe it will be a *Monument* to your future contributions to the history and culture of your great state.

The second speaker at the noon luncheon was Russell W. Fridley, director of the Minnesota Historical Society, who spoke in part as follows:

The story of the State Historical Society of Iowa — like that of similar organizations largely supported by public funds — reflects the same initial hopes, the small beginnings, the minute first budget — in this instance only \$250 — the continuing endeavor to grow and expand in influence, the constant experimentation that met with occasional success and frequent failure, the periods of neglect and stagnation, and the all too infrequent periods of strong leadership that made possible those rare leaps forward — one of which we observe today. . . .

The Centennial Building is the first home the Iowa Society has owned. This fact in itself is likely to affect the future character of the institution. The growth of the Society in its second century will doubtless be accompanied by new opportunities and challenges. Its basic purposes — the collection, preservation, and dissemination of

Iowa's history — will remain unchanged, but the means it chooses to achieve these ends are certain to differ from those employed during its first century. It is obvious, I think, that the historical society of 1960 must respond with imagination and innovation to the problems presented by an aging nation and a rapidly changing world.

The publications programs of historical societies offer one of the best and most neglected means of explaining an institution's purposes, reaching various age and interest groups, and disseminating and interpreting that which is meaningful in state and local history. But printing is expensive. This brings us to one of the major dilemmas of the historical society of 1960: how much scholarly activity can such an institution afford? How much popularizing should it do? . . .

MacKinlay Kantor delivered a powerful address at the evening dinner that held the audience spellbound. His brilliant, soul-searching speech — "The Historical Novelist's Obligation to History" — together with those quoted in part above, will be published in full by the State Historical Society of Iowa. Mr. Kantor's address closed a day of dedication, not only for the Centennial Building but also for the cause of state and local history.

DOORWAYS TO CULTURE

Some Publications of the Society

Periodicals

- Annals of Iowa* (First Series) (1863-1874). 12 Vols.
Iowa Historical Record (1885-1902). 18 Vols.
Iowa Journal of History and Politics (1902-1960). 58 Vols.
The Palimpsest (1920-1960). 41 Vols.
Iowa and War (1918-1920). 2 Vols.

Biography (19)

- John C. Parish, *Robert Lucas* (1907)
Charles N. Gregory, *Samuel Freeman Miller* (1907)
Louis Pelzer, *Augustus Caesar Dodge* (1908)
Harvey Reid, *Thomas Cox* (1909)
John C. Parish, *John Chambers* (1909)
Louis Pelzer, *Henry Dodge* (1911)
John C. Parish, *George Wallace Jones* (1912)
Johnson Brigham, *James Harlan* (1913)
Dan E. Clark, *Samuel J. Kirkwood* (1917)
Fred Emory Haynes, *James Baird Weaver* (1919)
John Ely Briggs, *William Peters Hepburn* (1919)
Jacob A. Swisher, *Leonard Fletcher Parker* (1927)
Charles E. Payne, *Josiah Bushnell Grinnell* (1938)
Jacob A. Swisher, *Robert Gordon Cousins* (1939)
Jack T. Johnson, *Peter Anthony Dey* (1939)
Luella M. Wright, *Peter Melendy* (1943)
Edward Younger, *John A. Kasson* (1955)
Leland Sage, *William Boyd Allison* (1956)
Thomas R. Ross, *Jonathan P. Dolliver* (1958)

Iowa Centennial History. 7 Vols.

- Cyrenus Cole, *Iowa — Through the Years* (1940)
Geo. F. Parker, *Iowa — Pioneer Foundation* (1940). 2 Vols.
J. A. Swisher, *Iowa — Land of Many Mills* (1940)
Wm. J. Petersen, *Iowa — The Rivers of Her Valleys* (1941)
Roscoe Lokken, *Iowa — Public Land Disposal* (1942)
J. A. Swisher, *Iowa — In Times of War* (1943)

Rare Iowana (reprints)

- Life of Black Hawk* (Autobiography) (1932)
A. M. Lea, *Notes on the Wisconsin Territory* (1935)
John Plumbe, Jr., *Sketches of Iowa and Wisconsin* (1948)
Isaac Galland, *Galland's Iowa Emigrant* (1950)
John B. Newhall, *A Glimpse of Iowa in 1846* (1957)

Miscellaneous

- Irving B. Richman, *Ioway to Iowa* (1931)
Bertha Shambaugh, *Amana* (1908) (1932)
Benj. F. Shambaugh, *Constitutions of Iowa* (1934)
Benj. F. Shambaugh, *The Old Stone Capitol Remembers* (1939)
Cyrenus Cole, *I Remember, I Remember* (1936)
Cyrenus Cole, *I Am a Man — The Indian Black Hawk* (1938)
Wm. J. Petersen, *Steamboating on the Upper Mississippi* (1937)
Melvin Gingerich, *The Mennonites in Iowa* (1939)
Jacob Van der Zee, *The Hollanders of Iowa* (1912)
Louis T. Jones, *The Quakers of Iowa* (1914)
Jacob Van der Zee, *The British in Iowa* (1922)
Thomas Teakle, *The Spirit Lake Massacre* (1918)
Thomas H. Macbride, *In Cabins and Sod-Houses* (1928)
D. G. McCarty, *Territorial Governors of Old Northwest* (1910)
E. D. Ross, *Iowa Agriculture* (1951)
William J. Petersen, *Iowa History Reference Guide* (1952)
John Nollen, *Grinnell College* (1953)
Melvin Scholl, *Arnewood: The Story of an Iowa Dairyman* (1954)

Iowa and War

- Bruce E. Mahan, *Old Fort Crawford and the Frontier* (1926)
Marcus L. Hansen, *Old Fort Snelling* (1917)
Henry H. Wright, *History of the Sixth Iowa Infantry* (1923)
John H. Taber, *The Story of the 168th Infantry* (1925). 2 Vols.
J. A. Swisher, *The American Legion in Iowa, 1919-1929* (1929)
Louis Pelzer, *Marches of the Dragoons* (1917)
J. W. Rich, *The Battle of Shiloh* (1911)

Government and Politics

- Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*. 7 Vols.
Iowa Applied History Series (6 Vols.) (1912-1930)
John E. Brindley, *History of Taxation in Iowa* (1911). 2 Vols.
John E. Brindley, *History of Road Legislation in Iowa* (1912)
E. H. Downey, *History of Labor Legislation in Iowa* (1910)
Clarence R. Aurner, *History of Education in Iowa* (6 Vols.)
Dan E. Clark, *History of Senatorial Elections in Iowa* (1912)
F. E. Haynes, *Third Party Movements* (1916)
E. H. Downey, *History of Work Accident Indemnity* (1912)
Howard H. Preston, *History of Banking in Iowa* (1922)
Ivan L. Pollock, *History of Economic Legislation in Iowa* (1918)
Geo. F. Robeson, *Government of Special Charter Cities* (1923)
R. A. Gallaher, *Legal and Political Status of Women* (1918)
C. R. Aurner, *History of Township Government in Iowa* (1914)





MacKINLAY KANTOR, Speaker
Dedication Dinner — Jefferson Hotel



WILLIAM R. HART, Presiding
Dedication Luncheon — University Athletic Club