

The
Palimpsest

VOLUME 55 NUMBER 2

MARCH / APRIL 1974



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CONTENTS

The Mesquakie Indian Settlement in 1905 <i>by L. Edward Purcell</i>	34
The Ward-Mesquakie Photograph Collection	56

Cover: This large portrait of Chief Push-e-to-ne-qua is part of the Ward Collection. It is a photograph which has been hand colored in pastels. There exists a printed version in black and white in a 1900 publication on the tribe. The portrait has been preserved in its original gilt frame. The photographs which illustrate the following article are from the Duren Ward-Mesquakie Photograph Collection of the State Historical Society.



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.

THE MESQUAKIE INDIAN SETTLEMENT IN 1905

by

L. Edward Purcell

In the summer of 1905, Duren J. H. Ward, an Iowa City minister and lecturer, spent two months at the Mesquakie Indian Settlement in Tama County. During that time he attempted to record the history and culture of the tribe. He was sponsored by the State Historical Society of Iowa which wished to learn more about the Mesquakies, sometimes mistakenly called the Fox, or the Sauk and Fox. These Indians had lived in Iowa since at least the last decades of the eighteenth century. When Ward visited them 125 years later, they still kept many of the ways of their forebears—living on their own land, disputing and discussing, working and loving.

The Mesquakie story was unusual. By the turn of the twentieth century, most Indian tribes in the United States had been removed from their native places and herded onto government-controlled reservations. The Mesquakies barely escaped such a fate.

The tribe had lived since the 1600s in the Green Bay area of what was to become the state of Wisconsin. During the early eighteenth century, they fought a long series of wars in Wisconsin with the French. Resisting the encroachment of the white fur traders, the Mesquakies—never numerous—were at last defeated by the combined forces of the French and their Indian allies. By the late 1700s, only a handful of Mesquakies had survived the killing. Gathering with their cousins, the Sauk, the remnants of the Mesquakies abandoned the forests and lakes for the prairies along the Father of Waters. While white Americans disputed with the British the right of the colonies to be free and independent, the Mesquakies migrated down the Mississippi in search of the same goals. When, in 1803, events in the far-away courts of Europe handed political control of their new home to the United States, the Mesquakies were concerned with little but summer planting, winter hunts, and warring upon the Sioux and the Osage.

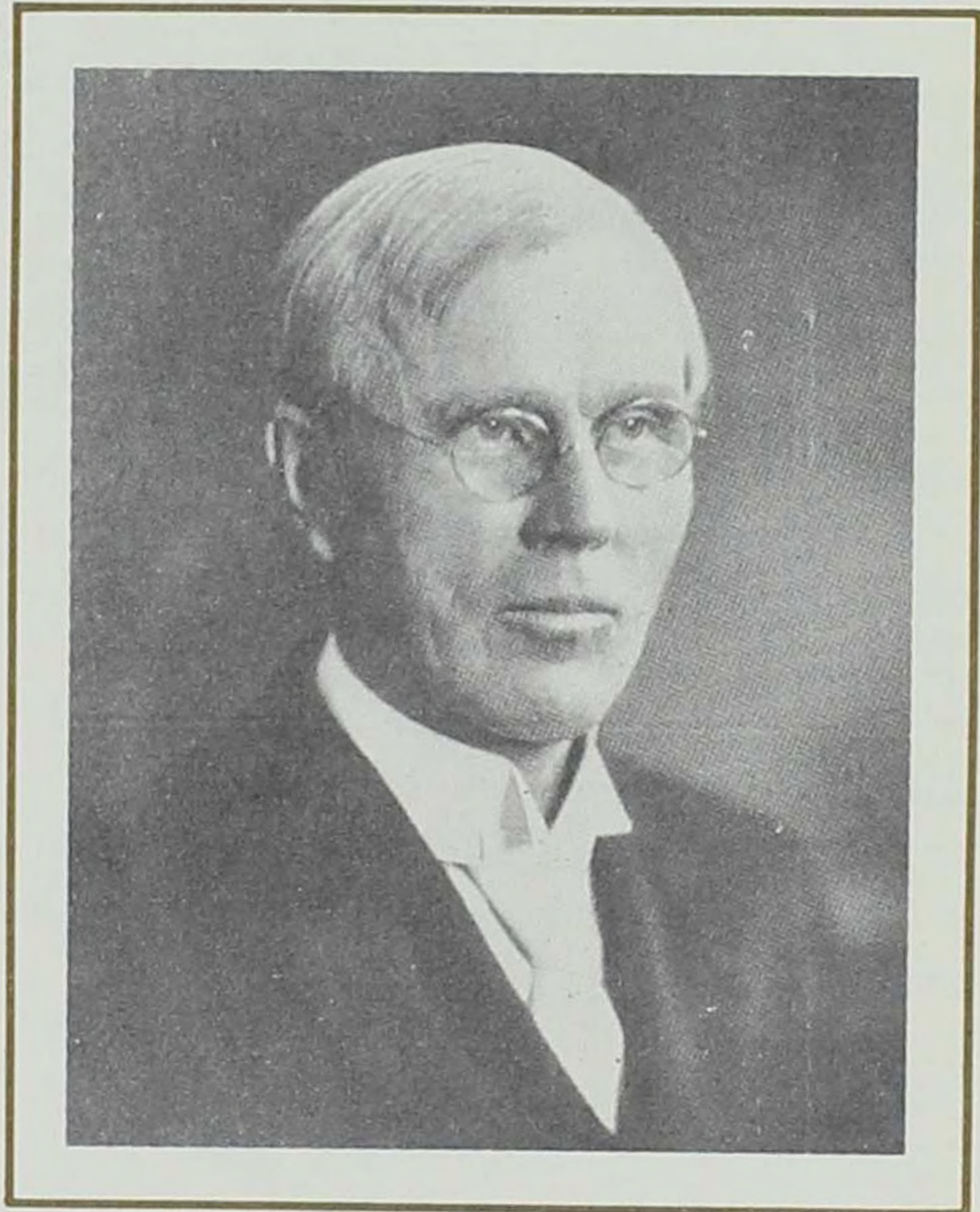
The Mesquakies signed their first treaty with the United States in 1804. This touching of the quill by several Sauks and Mesquakies (all of whom were none the better for drinking brandy) set a precedent. The U.S. Government by this treaty established formal relations with a tribe it called the "Sauk and Fox," an idea which persists to the present day. Although closely related by language, custom, and common war-making, the Mes-

quakies and the Sauks thought of themselves as two distinct tribes.

The Mesquakies considered themselves at peace with the United States, although many Sauks fought with Tecumseh at Tippecanoe and with the British in the War of 1812. The Sauks harbored a band of discontents lead by Black Hawk. Black Hawk's anti-American belligerence and the fumbling of white politicians and militia lead to the disastrous Black Hawk War in 1832. The repercussions of the War jolted both tribes and led to their removal from Iowa. The punitive treaty fixed on the Sauks after the War took Mesquakie land as well. A further series of treaties in the 1830s and 1840s took more land, and Iowa soon became the white man's domain.

In 1847, the Mesquakies were removed with the Sauks to a reservation in Kansas. While many small groups remained behind, a large contingent of the tribe took up new homes along the Osage River. The new setting was far from congenial, and soon the Mesquakies planned a return to the lush environs of Iowa. The plan became a reality in 1856 when the General Assembly of the State of Iowa, sitting in special session in Iowa City, passed a law allowing the Mesquakies to live and buy land in the state. Governor James Grimes acted as trustee for the tribe in signing the deed to the first eighty acres of bottom land purchased along the Iowa River in Tama County.

The gathering of the tribe in Iowa, which had begun even before the legisla-



Duren James Henderson Ward, reprinted from a 1922 photo.

tors acted, continued during the next several years. By 1867, several hundred Mesquakies lived on their own Settlement. Surviving difficult years when the Federal Government refused to pay the annuities due from the original sale of the Iowa prairie, the Mesquakies eventually won the right to remain in Iowa.

Remarkably, the Mesquakies enjoyed the long-term support and protection of the state government. Governor Grimes' successors in office seemed to regard seriously the trust placed upon them for the well-being of the tribe. At the behest of state officials the Federal Government agreed to pay the tribe their annuities in Iowa. When the money was finally

and reluctantly paid, it was used to purchase more land. Whenever troubles threatened, the Mesquakies usually turned first to the Great Father in Des Moines.

Despite the fact that corn fields and livestock were rapidly occupying open land, the Mesquakies continued throughout most of the 1800s to follow their traditional cycle of summer farming and winter hunting. Roaming far from the Settlement, family groups hunted the disappearing game which provided food and clothing. They camped in the fields of the early white settlers and occasionally begged a hand-out. There was a remarkable tolerance for the Mesquakies among the growing white population of the state. Even during the panic years of the so-called Spirit Lake Massacre and the Great Sioux Uprising, the Mesquakies were left in peace. By 1905 and Duren Ward's visit, the tribe was firmly rooted.

Prompted by Ward's interest in anthropology and sociology, the Historical Society undertook a systematic study of the history of the tribe. While many in the state knew of the Mesquakies and their background, little formal attention had been paid to them.

Ward was an ideal choice for the assignment and, indeed, probably suggested the project. Born in Canada, educated at Hillsdale College and at Harvard University, Ward spent several years of study in Germany and held a Ph.D. from Leipzig University. His career ranged from the classroom, to the lecture hall, to the pulpit. He had been called to the ministry

of the Iowa City Unitarian Church in 1902. Moving easily among the intellectuals of the University town, Ward was instrumental in forming the Iowa Anthropological Association. The key members of the Historical Society's Board of Curators were members both of his congregation and the Association. They were also, to a man, professors at The University of Iowa, which at the time housed the Historical Society.

Ward had undertaken several archaeological field trips under the auspices of the Society in 1904. When one of his trips took him along the Iowa River valley into Iowa County, he probably first encountered the Mesquakies. This had been native ground of the tribe for several generations, and the Indians' friendship with the German religious community in the Amanas was long-standing. At about the time the tribe purchased its first parcel of land, the Community of True Inspiration, as the Amana colonists called themselves, was founded fifty miles further down river. The Mesquakies traded game and pelts for medical care and the wonderful woolen fabrics woven by the religious colonists.

After a brief visit to the Settlement in 1904, Ward began to plan a full-scale expedition for the summer of the next year. The Curators of the Society appro-

Me-skwa-pu-swa (Joseph Tesson), the interpreter for the tribe and a member of the tribal council. Although he was one of the most "progressive," white-oriented Mesquakies, Tesson put on the costume of the tribe for this formal portrait taken August 14, 1905.





Members of the Mesquakie tribal council in 1905; seated (l. to r.): Ha-na-wo-wa-ta (James Onawat), Push-e-to-ne-qua, Na-sa-pi-pya-ta; standing: Cha-ka-ta-ko-si (C. H. Chuck) and Pa-wa-shi-ka (James Poweshiek).

priated \$200 for the project, and Benjamin Shambaugh, Chairman of the Board's Executive Committee, solicited letters of introduction for Ward from Iowa Governor A. B. Cummins. In the meantime, President George MacLean of the University appointed Ward Lecturer in Anthropology. Ward chose a student, Leroy Elliott, to assist him during the summer. Elliott, also a member of Ward's church, proved to be invaluable. Following a preliminary visit early in June, Ward and Elliott moved into a frame house on the Settlement on July 7. There followed two months of observation, research, and discussion with tribal members.

For the Mesquakies, 1905 was a relatively peaceful year. The struggle for recognition by the U.S. Office of Indian Affairs had been won, although as late as the 1880s officials in Washington continued to insist the tribe belonged in Oklahoma, where the Sauks had been moved in 1869. The Settlement comprised 2,998 acres by 1905, bought in twenty-six different land purchases over the previous fifty years. Ward set Elliott to the task of ferreting this information out of the county land records in the Tama County Court House in Toledo, and the assistant drew up a table of purchases which detailed the growth of the Settle-

ment. He learned that the tribe had paid \$85,635 — an average price of \$28.50 per acre — for its land. (The Settlement would grow to its present size of approximately 3,300 acres within the next few years.) The question of the permanence of the Mesquakies' home seemed at rest.

However placid the summer of 1905, the memories of recent events — often bitter memories — were fresh in the minds of the tribe. When he spoke to tribal leaders, Ward found evidence of the political and economic problems which had occupied much of the Mesquakies' energies.

A good deal of credit must be given Ward for the manner in which he set about collecting information. The recording of interviews was less than common in Ward's day, but he saw the value of a precise written record of orally transmitted history. He hired a local stenographer and also engaged two interpreters, Me-skwa-pu-swa (Joe Tesson, the official U.S. Government man) and Pyepa-ha (Jim Peters). Ward then sought out tribal spokesmen and had their statements interpreted and recorded on the spot. The typed transcriptions of these statements form the bulk of the Ward Mesquakie Manuscripts Collection now held by State Historical Society. Ward was an early practitioner of what is known today as oral history.

One of Ward's first formal interviews was with Push-e-to-ne-qua, the recognized chief. As head of the tribal council, Push-e-to-ne-qua had been the center of a long-standing political dispute among the Mesquakies. Shortly after the last hereditary chief, Ma-mi-nwa-ni-kwa, had died in 1882, a break in the chiefly line occurred. The next heir, Mu-kwa-pu-shi-to, was

passed over by the tribal council in favor of Push-e-to-ne-qua. The new chief was the adopted son of Poweshiek, the leader who had sold the last parcel of Mesquakie land in 1842 and led his tribe into Kansas exile. Despite the fact that Push-e-to-ne-qua had assumed leadership, a faction among the tribe supported Mu-kwa-pu-shi-to as the true chief by birthright. Push-e-to-ne-qua consolidated his position by a slick maneuver in 1896 when he persuaded the US. Indian Agent, Horace Rebok, to lobby for federal recognition of Push-e-to-ne-qua's status. Rebok

Note on Sources

Unfortunately, there is no one, comprehensive, published account of Mesquakie history. William T. Hagen, *The Sac and Fox Indians* (Norman, Okla.: University of Okla., 1958) is concerned mostly with the Sac. There are several specialized articles which have been published in the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* and the *Annals of Iowa* (third series), many of which have been helpful, most notably: Ruth Gallaher "Indian Agents in Iowa," *IJHP*, XIV (1916), 359-97 and Edgar Harlan, "An Original Study of Mesquakie (Fox) Life," *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 19 (1933-35), 115-25, 221-34, 352-62; 20 (1935-37), 123-39, 510-26. The most useful brief anthropological account is Nancy F. Joffre, "The Fox of Iowa," in Ralph Linton (ed.), *Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes* (NY: D. Appleton-Century, 1940), 249-331. I have drawn heavily on unpublished material, primarily the Duren Ward Mesquakie Manuscripts of the State Historical Society of Iowa. Also useful were the Archives of the Governor's Office — Miscellaneous Correspondence (Indian Affairs), held by the Iowa Department of History and Archives. The Governors' correspondence throws much light on the history of the tribe from the 1840s until the early twentieth century. The A. B. Cummins Papers in the Department of History and Archives were also consulted. Much of the specific material on the summer of 1905 was drawn from several Tama County newspapers, amplified by the recollections of some Mesquakie tribal members, notably Harvey Lasley. J. R. Caldwell, *A History of Tama County Iowa*, Vol. I (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1910) gives much information on the school controversy from the perspective of one of the participants, as does Horace M. Rebok's *The Last of the Mus-qua-kies and the Indian Congress* (Dayton, Ohio: Funk Publishers, 1900) and Rebok, *et. al.*, *History of the Indian Rights Association of Iowa and the Founding of the Indian Training School* (Toledo, Iowa: circa 1900). The Archives of The University of Iowa were also helpful in supplying correspondence between Ward and President MacLean.



and J. R. Caldwell, a local jurist, secured for Push-e-to-ne-qua recognition as the Mesquakie chief and an additional personal annuity of \$600 per year.

Push-e-to-ne-qua was an astute politician, and he knew when and how to cultivate the whites who surrounded the Settlement. When Rebok gave up the office of agent in favor of William Malin in 1902, Push-e-to-ne-qua continued his policy of friendship with the new official. Although he could neither speak nor read English fluently, the chief was well informed about local white politics. As Judge Caldwell put it: "He mingles freely with the whites of the surrounding country, and judiciously courts the friendship and favor of influential men of the neighboring towns."

The chief was aided by the tribal interpreter, Joe Tesson. (Many Mesquakies were beginning to adopt English names, especially if they had frequent contacts with whites.) Tesson was half French and had traveled extensively. He had served in the Nebraska volunteer cavalry on the Devil's Lake Expedition in 1862 and lived previously in both Nebraska and New Mexico. He had been the official interpreter of the tribe since the 1880s. He sat on the tribal council and served as the chief's aide in dealing with whites.

Ward met the chief and Tesson on July 17 for dinner and discussion at the Clifton House in Tama. Elliott and W. S. Stoops, a former teacher on the Settlement, joined the party. Push-e-to-ne-qua, speaking through Tesson, informed Ward of the



Benjamin Shambaugh, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Board of Curators in 1905, later Superintendent of the Society.

background of the tribe and the political dispute. He told Ward that the Mesquakies desired harmony, but that there could be no forcing of the issue, since: "The Meskwaki [Ward's spelling] never yields to coercion. Only fair play and open recognition can settle their disputes or change their public opinion." Push-e-to-ne-qua explained that the opposition party was strong and stubborn. The new pretender to the chieftainship was Ta-ta-pasha, Mu-kwa-pu-shi-to having died in a recent small-pox epidemic.

Ward met again with the chief and with most of the tribal council on July 20. Benjamin Shambaugh traveled from Iowa City to join the discussion. Both men spoke at length on the mission of the Historical Society and how they wished to honor the tribe. Shambaugh's speech

Mu-kwa-pu-shi-to, the claimant to the chieftainship, passed over by the tribal council in favor of Push-e-to-ne-qua.

must have been paternal if not patronizing. In an earlier letter to Governor Cummins he had suggested that the Governor not mention that Ward was on a scientific inquiry, "as that might scare the Indians," and the Governor should include his official seal to impress their "Red Brethren."

One of the major issues Ward discovered in the tribal dispute was education. The conservative faction of the tribe, which backed the dispossessed chief, was against any cooperation with white man's ways, since they believed this would lead to the loss of Mesquakie identity. The tribe had long resisted enumeration and earlier had refused to enroll with the agent even though it meant the loss of annuity payments. The same attitude held for education.

Rebok, while he was agent, had formed the local Indian Rights Association, a group of whites devoted to the cause of Indian "welfare." The major goal of the group was to educate Indian children in white-run schools and thus equip them

to live in the white world. It was to this end that Rebok lobbied for a new state law which would relinquish Iowa's official responsibility for the Mesquakies to the Federal Government. The return of responsibility to the Indian Office in Washington would allow Rebok to receive Federal funds to build an Indian training school at Toledo, Iowa. The agent was successful, and in 1896, the Iowa General Assembly voted to turn trusteeship and responsibility for the tribe over to the U.S. Department of the Interior. Even though \$35,000 was appropriated to build the school in 1899, the official transfer did not occur until 1908. In that year, the Secretary of the Interior assumed the role of trustee for the tribal lands, the position originally held by the governor of the state.

The building of a school was one thing, but getting the Mesquakies to attend proved to be another. Rebok, Malin, and A. G. Nellis (the superintendent of the Toledo Indian Training School) met ser-



The Toledo Indian Training School, founded by Horace Rebok. Built at government expense, the building was used as a sanatorium after the failure of the school to attract Mesquakie children.



Ma-ta-wi-kwa, the old war leader, shown in an 1894 portrait. He had been active in leading Mesquakie war parties against the plains tribes during the period of Kansas residence. He was a staunch supporter of the old way of life before his death in 1896.



ious resistance. While their motives may have been pure and worthy, the group failed utterly to understand that few Mesquakies were interested in becoming white. The older members of the tribe, especially those like Ma-ta-wi-kwa, the last war chief who had led parties against the Comanche and Pawnee during the Kansas interlude, were committed to preserving the traditional Mesquakie way of life. Realizing the resistance of the elders, Rebok made an attempt to capture the children. The local court appointed Malin the guardian of several Mesquakie children who the Indian Rights group claimed were orphans or unattached to a family. As their guardian, Malin compelled them to attend the school.

This plan did produce students for the school, but was upset when a sixteen year-old girl, Li-li-ya-pu-ka-chi, ran away from the classroom and sought refuge in the Mesquakie village. Malin brought her back by force, but was served with a writ of *habeas corpus* from the Federal court at Dubuque. A local Tama attorney, John W. Lamb, filed a suit on behalf of the girl. The decision of the court held that neither Rebok or Malin had any right to compel attendance at the school. Rebok's strategy had back-fired, since the court's decision was based on the fact that the state of Iowa no longer had jurisdiction. Iowa had relinquished authority in 1896 at Rebok's prodding. Since the state had no power, the guardianships made by a state court were void.

Several more suits were brought by

Li-li-ya-pu-ka-chi, the woman who, as a sixteen year-old girl, fled the Toledo School and became the focus of a court battle over compulsory attendance.

the conservative faction of the tribe with the assistance of Attorney Lamb. Even the pretender to the chieftainship attempted to have his place restored by the court, unsuccessfully, however. The upshot of all this was that the Mesquakie children fled the Toledo school, leaving Rebok and his cohorts with a building, but no pupils.

Following his interview with Push-e-to-ne-qua, Ward also contacted the dissident faction and held a long conference with about a dozen of the conservatives at the wikiup of Ta-ta-pa-sha, Push-e-to-ne-qua's rival. Ward asked those present to recall for him the history of the tribe's return to Iowa. He recorded their remembrances and listed the groups which were living in Iowa when the main body of the tribe came back. He also found that some of the rival faction based their claim to power on the original purchase of land.

Several speakers pointed out that it was the old chief, Ma-mi-nwa-ni-kwa, who had instigated the purchase of the Settlement land. Therefore, they reasoned, the heirs of the old chief should still control the land and the tribe. As one put it: "Ma-mi-nwa-ni-kwa bought this land. He was the head, the main Chief. This is the reason why Ma-mi-nwa-ni-kwa's grandson is now the controller of this land. Ta-ta-pa-sha is the Chief or controller. That is all there is to it. That is the fact."

This division of the tribe was a prominent part of Mesquakie political life, and it was typical of the history of the tribe. There had always been disputation among the Mesquakies. Earlier splits had been pro or anti-French, pro or anti-American, pro or anti-British, pro or anti-Black Hawk.



Small grain harvest on the Settlement, circa 1905.

When compared with most other American Indian tribes, the Mesquakies were all conservatives, even the more white-oriented Indians such as Push-e-to-ne-qua. Despite their internal bickerings, the tribe kept the Indian way. The Mesquakies were able to do so because of their tribal land. The possession of a home, which they had purchased, gave the Mesquakie people a concrete symbol of pride and security. This firm hold on their identity allowed the tribe to resist the influences of white culture to a degree unusual among American tribes at the time. Even though many of their white neighbors deplored their "savagism," there was a grudging respect for the Mesquakies. Attachment to

the land was something that white Iowans not only understood, but valued highly.

Relationships with white farmers were generally cordial. The Mesquakies were not too interested in farming themselves, for the most part limiting their production to truck gardening. Mesquakie men did, however, hire out to white farmers. For example, a Mesquakie assisted W. B. Cooper during the summer of 1905 as a hay hand. On occasion, there was conflict with white farmers, especially when the packs of Mesquakie dogs bothered local livestock.

Ward found that the economic status of the tribe was relatively stable. The men of the tribe were beginning to find oc-

casual work in the white economy, and the women continued the routine of domestic tasks which had occupied their mothers and grandmothers and great-grandmothers.

Even though the U.S. Government had made prolonged efforts to turn the tribe to farming, the statistics for land cultivation show that the Settlement was primarily a home and not an exploitable resource in the eyes of the Indians. Only 560 acres of land were planted in crops such as field corn or wheat. About two-fifths of the total were in oats, which probably went as feed for the 315 horses and ponies of the settlement. There were, however, over fifty acres of gardens. Indian corn, beans, squash, and potatoes, the vegetables which had been staples of the Mesquakie summer-time diet for generations, were grown under the care of the women. The Mesquakies also raised cattle, swine, and chickens.

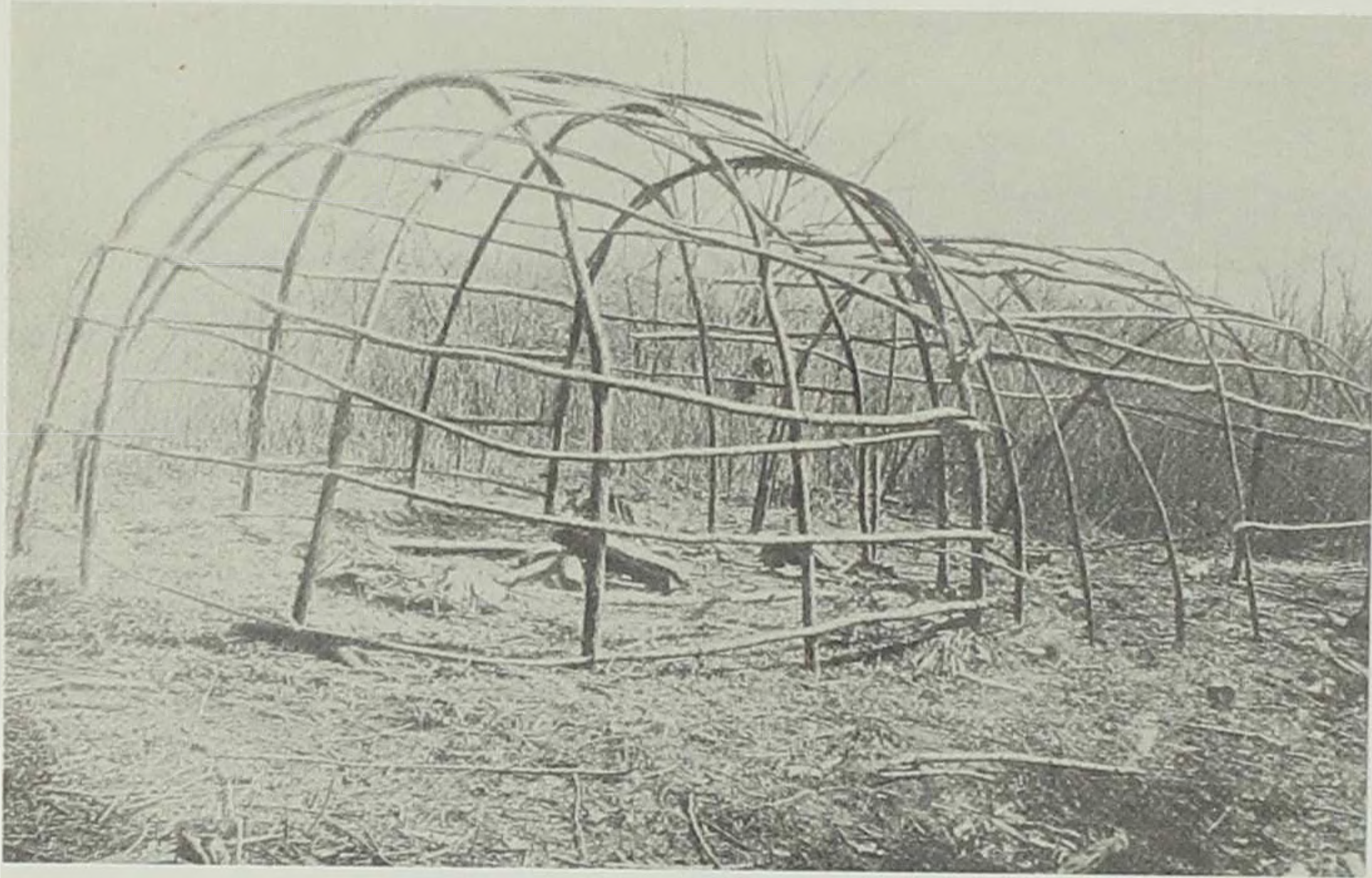
There was an adequate supply of farm wagons and buggies on the Settlement and all the necessary equipment to handle farming. There was one cooking stove or heater for every ten people on the Settlement, and nearly the same ratio of sewing machines. Ward also noted the lone telephone and single typewriter.

For the most part, the tribe in 1905 was able to operate at a low level of cash income. The land still supplied most needs. Of course, the big game which had once supplied meat was scarce. Small game such as rabbit and squirrel supplemented the domestic cattle and chickens. In years to come the Mesquakies would be forced to buy more and more of their food supply, but as late as Ward's visit they were relatively self-sufficient.

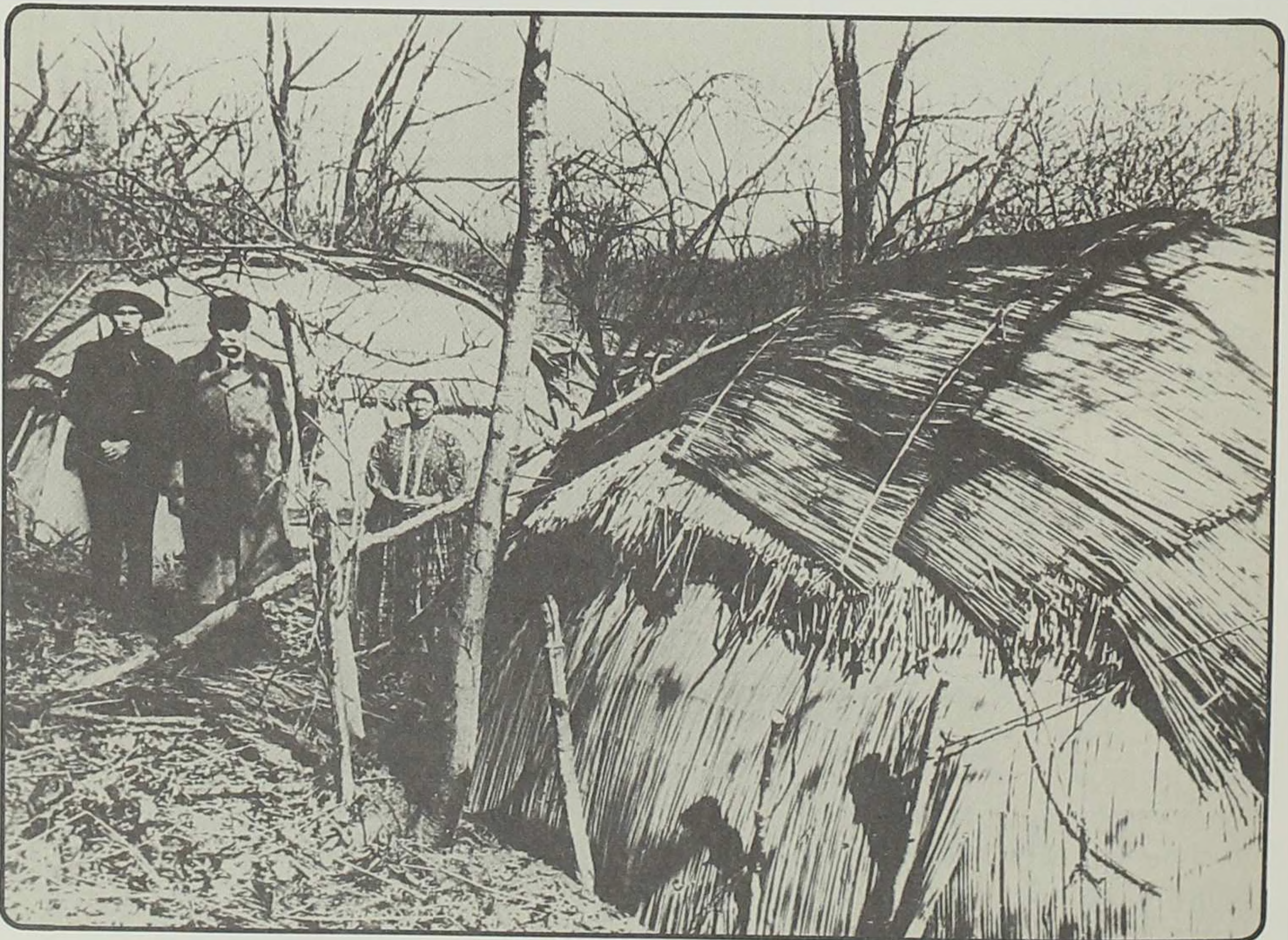
Housing on the Settlement in 1905 was still predominantly the traditional wikiup. Ward counted sixty-five of the bark or rush-covered structures and estimated about six people to each home. The most "primitive" houses were built on a framework of saplings which were sunk butt-first into the ground and then bent to form an oval structure. About half of these were covered with bark, the rest constructed of rush matting. Usually from twelve to twenty-five feet in width, the wikiups could be as long as forty feet or as short as fifteen.

The traditional wikiup appeared crude to Ward, but it was a time-tested and practical form of shelter. All of the materials for such a home were readily available from the natural vegetation of the river bottom. The rush-covered wikiups in particular afforded a snug winter home. The rushes held natural air pockets which provided insulation from the severe Iowa winters, especially if overlapped in several layers. A small hole was provided at the center of the roof for ventilation of smoke from the central cooking and heating fire. In cold weather, dirt was thrown up around the base of the wikiup to seal it from drafts. Low platforms around the walls provided sleeping and storage areas. Some Mesquakies altered the design to a wikiup with board sides and rush-matting gable roofs.

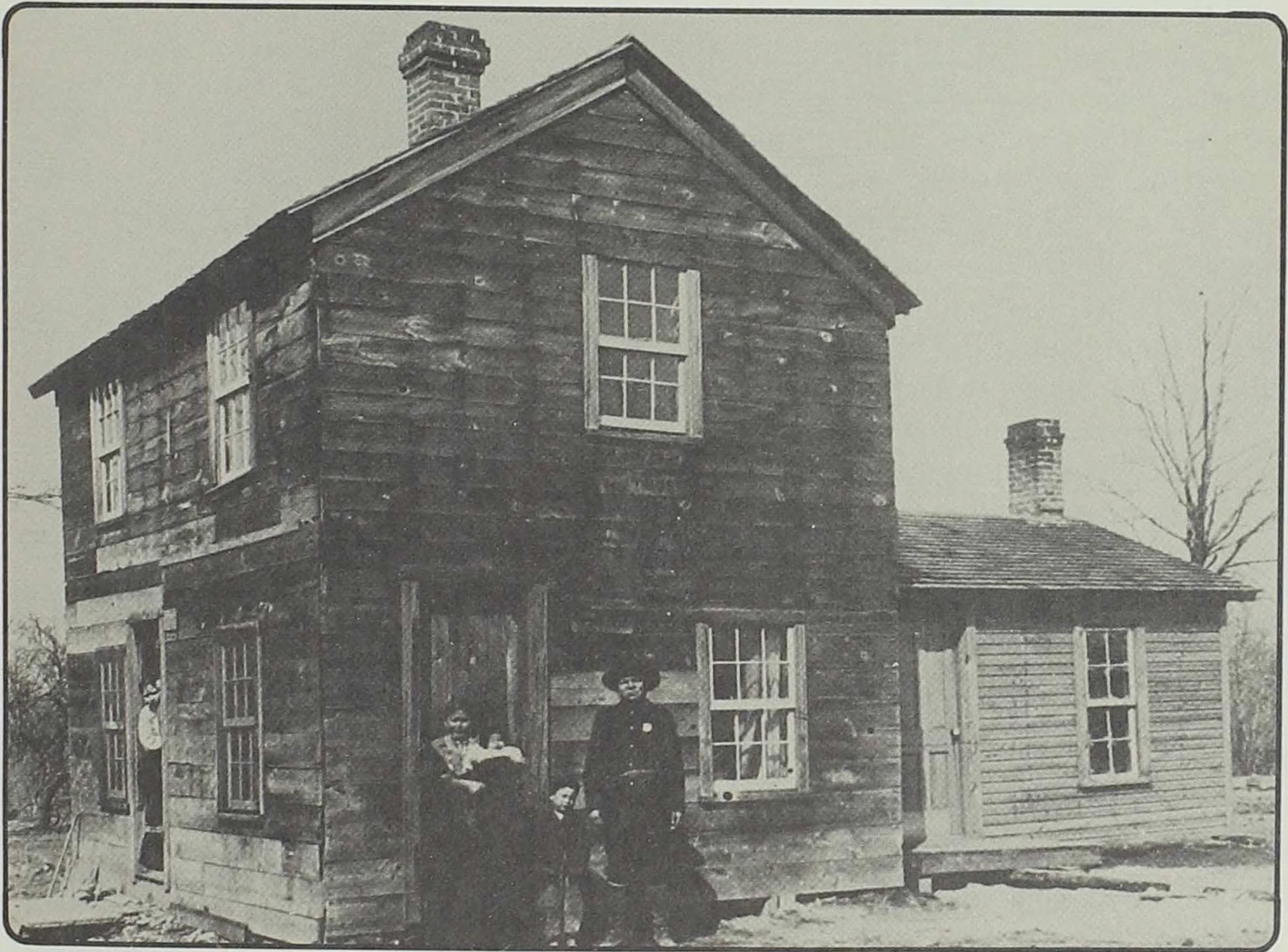
In addition to the traditional wikiups, there were about fifteen clapboard frame houses. These were small, generally two or three rooms, and had shingled roofs. The frame houses only recently had been introduced to the Settlement, the first being built by a Pottawattomi who had married into the Mesquakie tribe.



The frame of a wikiup, ready for covering with bark or rush mats.



Agent William Malin on a visit to the Settlement. The wikiups pictured here are covered with the typical rush matting.



One of the early frame houses on the Settlement, belonging to James Poweshiek, the U.S. Policeman on the Settlement in 1905. One of his daughters peeks from the side entrance.



A summer shade which provided relief from the sun and usually was built adjacent to a wikiup. In the background to the left is a gable-roofed wikiup.

In the summer, additional frame structures were built adjacent to the wikiups which were covered with cut brush and boughs. These summer shades provided relief from the sun and were a place of work and leisure, especially for the women of the tribe.

Until a few years before Ward's investigation, the homes of the Mesquakies were grouped in village fashion according to time-honored custom. However, the smallpox epidemic which swept the Settlement in 1901 altered this plan. Medical authorities quarantined the Settlement for six months and burned all the dwellings and clothes. For protection from a recurrence of disease, the homes were rebuilt in a scattered fashion. Most were strung out along the floodplain of the Iowa river or tucked under the protecting bluff line. The contours of the land and the heavy timber provided natural protection from the elements.

During his visit, Ward learned little about the tribal religion, which seems strange for a man of his theological and philosophical interests. The Mesquakies were reluctant to discuss the details of religion, generally regarding such matters as private. The tribe practiced a religion which was uniquely Mesquakie, but shared basic beliefs with other tribes. Religion was not a formal undertaking, rituals and ceremonies being important, but not frequent. Religion pervaded the daily life of a Mesquakie. As one white historian put it: "If St. Paul could visit the Mesquakies in their Iowa home, he would probably observe that in all things they are too religious."

Both the social and religious organization of the tribe revolved around the

clan system. Each member of the tribe became at birth a member of a particular clan. The clan was a social and political unit, but also was responsible for certain religious ceremonies and traditions. When a clan member died, another person was adopted into the clan within a year, which resulted in social and kinship patterns which were confusing to whites.

Missionaries had been singularly unsuccessful at Christianizing the tribe. The first attempts were by the French in the seventeenth century. Throughout the last half of the nineteenth century, several church groups had tried to convert the Indians of the Settlement, but with little success. The conservatism of the tribe and attachment to the traditions of Mesquakie culture formed a barrier to missionary efforts.

The Presbyterians were the most persistent group to attempt the Christianization of the Mesquakies. As of 1905 they had a permanent mission on the Settlement staffed by two women, the Misses Campbell and Taylor. During the summer, Miss Campbell's nieces from Pennsylvania visited the Settlement on what must have been an interesting vacation. The two missionaries could boast of little "progress" in winning converts. The following year, the United Presbyterian Board of Iowa sent a full-time, ordained missionary and built new quarters for the church; results, however, were the same.

The Presbyterian ladies faced competition in July of 1905 from a group of visiting Winnebagos. A local Toledo paper called the visitors "revivalists." The Winnebagos brought with them ceremonies, dances, and songs which were probably part of a pan-Indian religious movement.



Seated in the chairs are the two Presbyterian missionaries, Miss Campbell and Miss Taylor. The two women on the left are probably Miss Campbell's nieces from Pennsylvania.

They were joined by Chippewas and Kansas Pottawattomis. The Mesquakies were similar in culture to these tribes and there had been extensive inter-marriage among them.

The mid-summer festivities coincided with a traditional religious festival of the Mesquakies. When the early-maturing Indian corn came to harvest, the tribe held a several-day observance which was basically religious, but had some of the trappings of a holiday. In earlier years, this festival had marked the end of the summer growing season and the time when the village broke up for the winter hunt. By 1905, the festival had begun to attract the interest of local whites, since the native dancing and singing offered attractions of color and sound.

Chief Push-e-to-ne-qua, quick to see the potential of the festival as a source of cash income for the tribe, established a policy of charging interested whites a small admission fee. In 1905, the white visitors paid 10¢ each to witness the dancing and singing. Young people from the surrounding towns attended the dancing in excursion groups. The presence of the visiting tribesmen must have added a fillip of inspiration in 1905. *The Tama Herald* reported old-timers agreed "the dances of the past week have surpassed anything they had ever seen before." The mid-summer festival continued through the years and was formally organized in the 1920s as the now well-known Pow-Wow.

In general, the social contacts of the Mesquakies with the local white communi-

ties were friendly. This was especially true of the smaller Tama County towns such as Montour or Townsend. There was some antipathy towards the tribe in the larger cities of Tama and Toledo — although there was friendship as well.

The smaller and perhaps more informal communities welcomed the presence of the Indians. Just prior to Ward's arrival, the town of Montour included the Settlement people in their Fourth of July celebration. The traditional parade was followed by baseball between the Mesquakie team and the men of Ferguson. The Mesquakies were adept at many white sports, including the national pastime. It is recorded that on that day the Indians prevailed over the palefaces by the score of sixteen to ten. The festivities also included racing. Mesquakies took the honors in the fat man's gallop and the sack race, and Jim Bear placed second in the hundred yard dash.

The course of events in the summer of 1905 ran smoothly, an almost dull interlude compared to earlier years when the excitement of the school controversy or the small-pox epidemic had claimed attention. Young Bear, the chief's son, found a pearl in the mussel beds of the Iowa River; a child drowned while playing on the riverbank; the annual government payments were made, giving each Mesquakie \$24.36 for the year. Perhaps the most interesting event occurred when a band of Sioux traveling with a Wild West Show was housed and fed on the Settlement. As the summer began to fade into autumn, Ward prepared to conclude his visit and compile his observations.

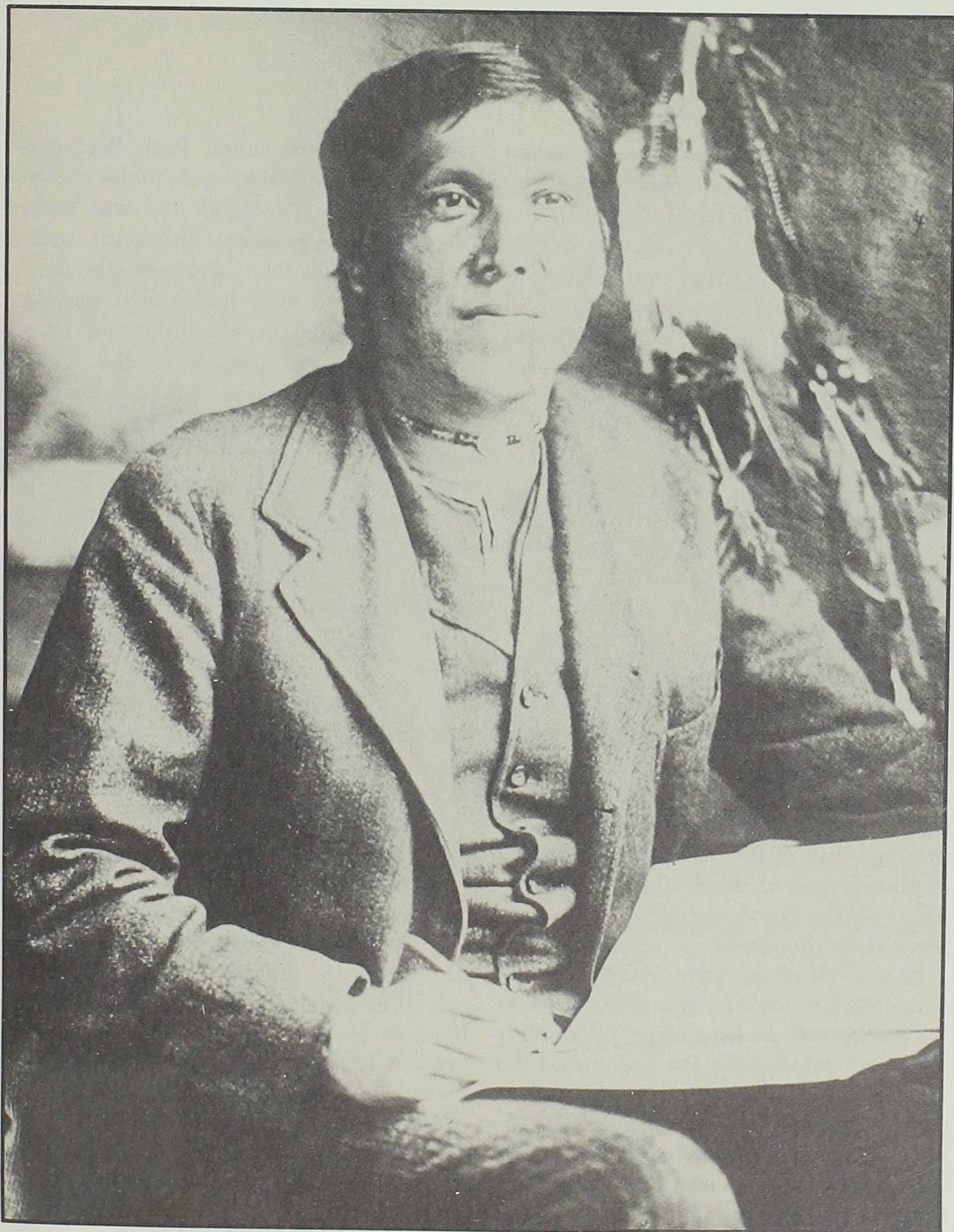
The results of Ward's stay were impressive. He not only met with many individ-

ual Mesquakies but also collected and compiled extensive information. One of the results was the systematic table of land purchases which was compiled from the county records. Using the table, Ward had Leroy Elliott draw a map of "Meskwakia," Ward's term for the Settlement. It was probably the first such map.

Working with the tribal council, Chief Push-e-to-ne-qua, Agent Malin, the Presbyterian missionaries, and many Mesquakie heads-of-household, Ward put together a complete census of the tribe. This list showed every member as of the summer of 1905, their birthdates, family relationships, and in some cases biographical information. While the list may have smoothed over many of the nuances of Mesquakie kinship, it was a major achievement.

Ward also enlisted the help of several of his University of Iowa colleagues, notably George T. Flom, a trained linguist and Professor of Scandinavian Languages at The University of Iowa. Flom joined Ward for a few days during the summer and accompanied him during two subsequent fall visits. Together they drew up notes on the Mesquakie language and compiled a word list. The Mesquakies had long been able to write their language in a system of notation which probably had been learned from the French. The writing was a form of verbal transcription which recorded the sounds of the spoken tongue, and changed as rapidly as did the spoken language.

In order to preserve history from the Indian point of view, Ward requested the secretary of the tribal council, Cha-ka-to-ko-si, or C. H. Chuck as he was known to whites, to write a manuscript history of



Cha-ka-ta-ko-si (C. H. Chuck), the tribal secretary during the time of Ward's visit. He holds on his lap the manuscript history he prepared for Ward.

the tribe. The result was a twenty-seven page document written in the Mesquakie syllabary. After their return to Iowa City, Ward and Flom published the manuscript. Unfortunately, they neglected to have it translated. Although the manuscript is still in the collection of the State Historical Society, it is now virtually impossible to translate. The spoken language has changed so much in the past sixty-nine years that few present-day members of the tribe can decipher Cha-ka-ta-ko-si's meaning. Those who have examined the document believe that the tribal secretary did not take the assignment too seriously. There is even a suggestion that he was pulling Ward's leg.

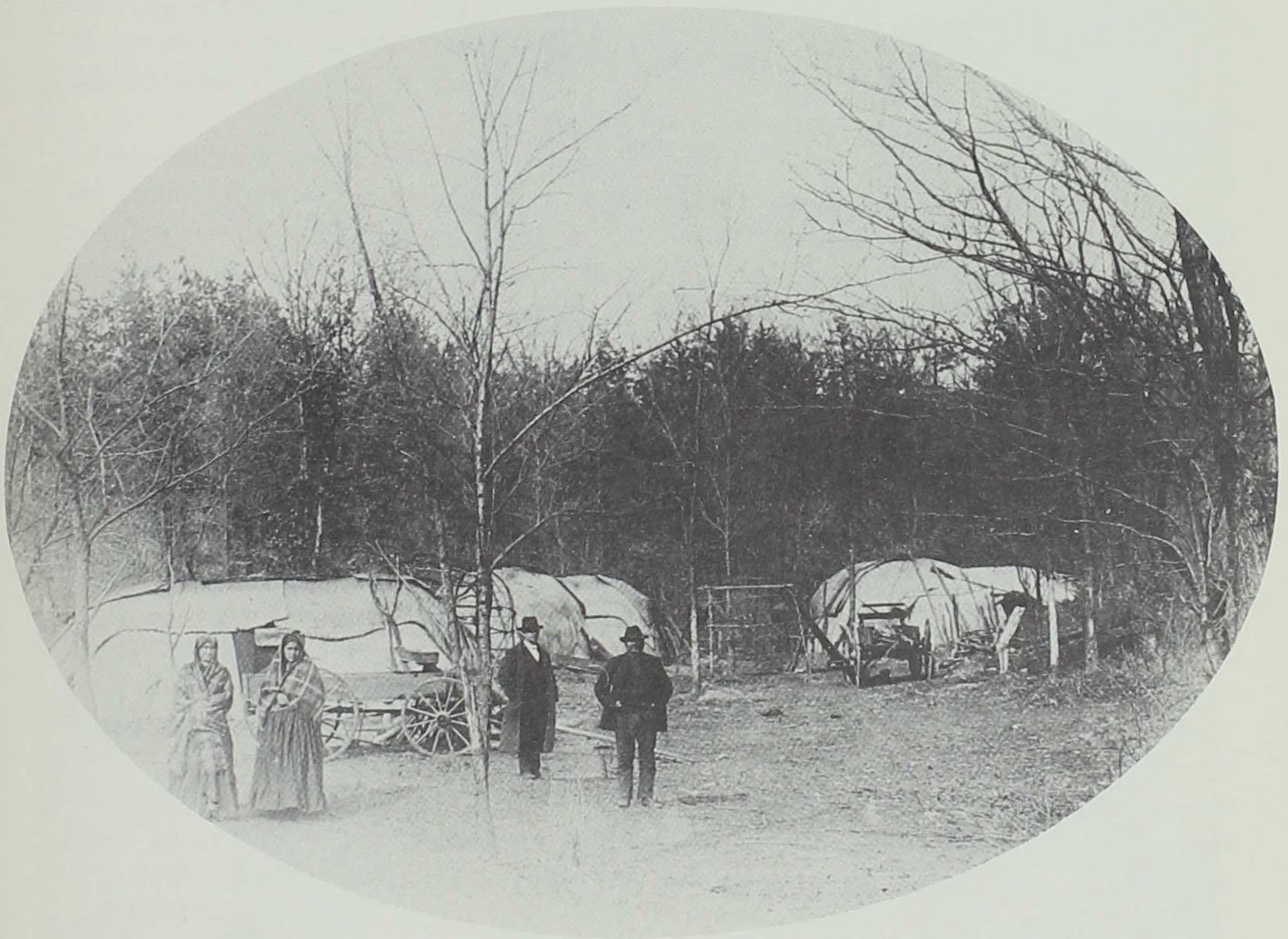
On a more tangible level, Ward collected several artifacts. A model wikiup, a child's bow and arrow set, a wooden ladle, and antler utensils were packed up and removed to the State Historical Society where they still remain. The most striking result of the visit was a collection of photographs of the Settlement and the tribe which Ward commissioned or in some cases borrowed.

In the fall of the year, Ward and several others made two follow-up trips to the Settlement. In November, he presented his official report to the Curators of the Historical Society and prepared to close the books on the investigation. The Society sponsored, in conjunction with the Anthropological Association, a two-day program of lectures and presentations on the Mesquakies in February 1906. Ward lectured on the tribe and illustrated his

talk with lantern slides. Both Benjamin Shambaugh and Professor Flom contributed papers. The final day was highlighted by the presence of several members of the tribe who answered questions.

Ward was soon to leave Iowa, moving in 1906 to Colorado where he took up a new position as minister of the Unity Church in Ft. Collins. He also became Instructor of Physics at the State Agricultural College. Eventually, he settled in Denver where he concentrated his efforts on writing and publishing. He founded his own company, the Up the Divide Publishing Company, and continued to write on philosophical topics into the 1920s.

As for the Mesquakies, they continued to live quietly on their land. They belied the widely expressed opinion that American Indians would either become like white men or become extinct. As the twentieth century moved on, they continued to battle with the Federal Government over annuities and education. As Iowa's economy matured, more and more Mesquakies began to work in factories or related industrial enterprises. The political disputes of the tribe did not die with old chief Push-e-to-ne-qua in 1919, but continue to be issues of concern. The tribe grew in numbers, and although some have moved to cities, the majority of the Mesquakies still live on the Settlement. Despite the changes since the visit of Duren Ward in 1905, the Mesquakies remain an enclave of authentic Indian culture, a proud people. □



This picture, labeled by Ward "Agent on a visit," shows wikiups, farm wagons, and the heavily wooded land typical of the Settlement. The two women are wrapped in shawls which were probably made of Amana wool.

THE WARD-MESQUAKIE PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

There are over one hundred photographs of the Mesquakie people and the Settlement in the collection of the State Historical Society. They were obtained by Duren Ward during his 1905 visit. The Ward Photograph Collection is an appealing and informative record of the tribe.

Ward commissioned J. S. Moore, a well-known Toledo, Iowa photographer, to take portraits of several of the tribal leaders on August 14, 1905. Ward also borrowed a number of photographs from Ha-she-tana-kwa-twa (George Morgan), who had been tribal secretary for eighteen years prior to Ward's visit. Other photographs were borrowed from John W. Lamb, the successful Tama attorney who had argued the Mesquakie school case in Federal court. In addition, it is likely that Ward and his assistant, Leroy Elliott, themselves took pictures on the Settlement. Oddly, none of the members of the Historical Society expedition appears in the photographs.

When Ward returned to Iowa City in the fall of 1905, he submitted his report to the Society's Board of Curators and asked that the photographs be preserved. The Board approved funds for this purpose. In order to illustrate the lectures he planned to give on the tribe, Ward had Lucy M. Cavanaugh of Iowa City make one hundred lantern slides from the photographs.

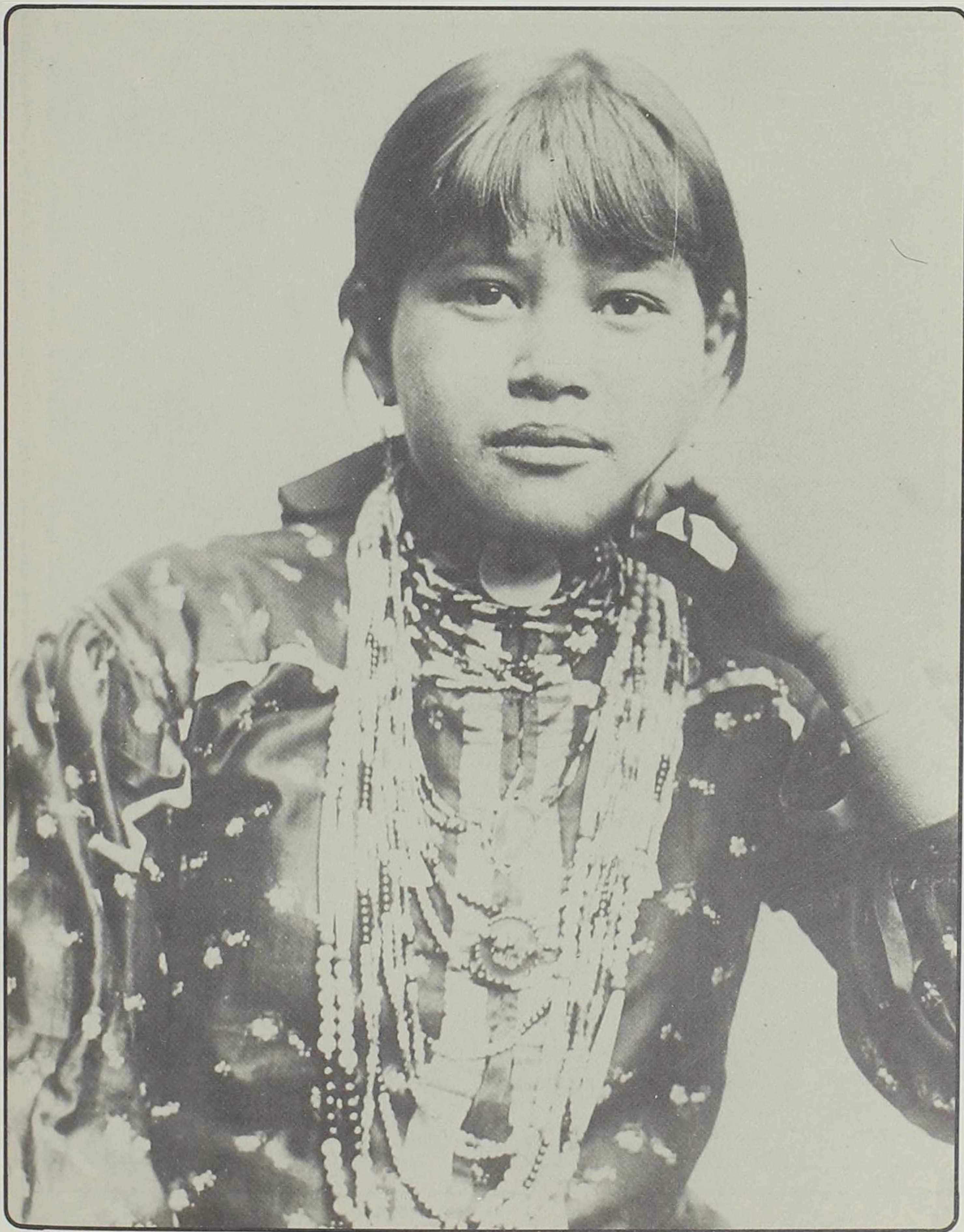
In addition to the slides, the Society turned the negatives of the Moore portraits over to T. W. Townsend, a local photographer, for printing. Townsend printed 11 x 14 inch, mounted versions of the portraits, which were preserved in a large album in the collection of the Society.

When the lantern slides were uncovered in 1973, the portraits in the album were correlated with the slides. It was evident that the slides had been made from the original portraits. Other prints were discovered in the photographic files of the Society which corresponded to the remainder of the slides. Several pictures which were never copied as slides were also discovered. Thus the Ward collection is made up of several kinds of photographic processes: small paper prints, large portraits, and glass slides.

Henry Winokur, a student at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa, undertook the restoration and copying of the slides as part of a college credit course. He copied the slides and then, working with the Society staff, recopied pictures from the original prints where necessary. The result was a collection of exhibit prints. These prints are now available for circulation as a traveling exhibit. The first showing was at the Mesquakie Settlement in January 1974.

Following are a few examples of the Collection.

L.E.P.



Ko-ta-to, born in 1890, the second eldest child of Harry Waseskuk, and possessed of a winsome smile.



The James Pa-wa-shi-ka (Poweshiek) Family, who were favorite subjects for the photographer's camera. In 1905, James Poweshiek was the U.S. Policeman. He served on the tribal council for many years and was instrumental in organizing the modern Mesquakie Pow-Wow.



Ka-si-no-ska-ka, born in 1894, the son of George Morgan.



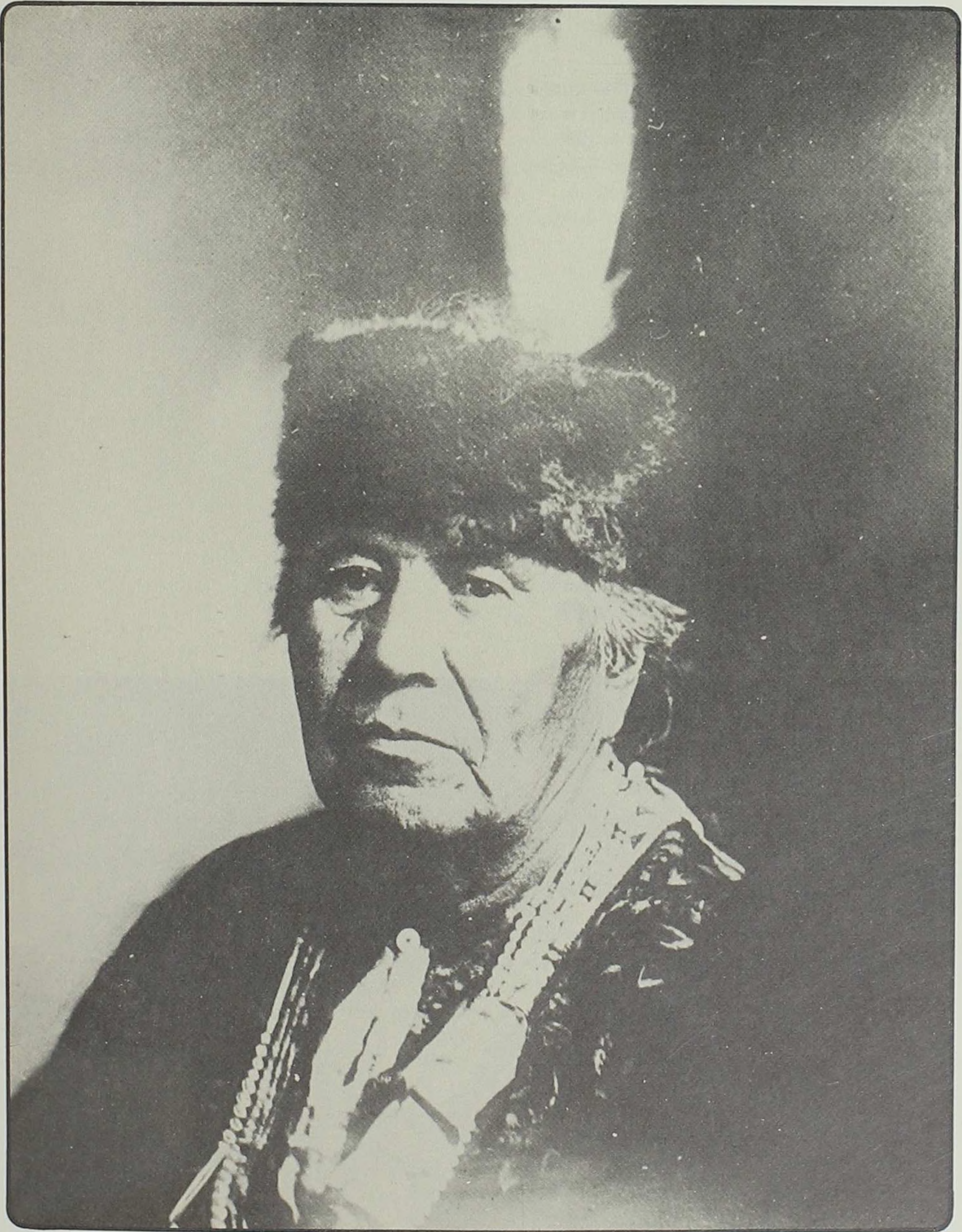
A Mesquakie baby in a cradle board. Children were placed in cradle boards soon after birth.



Ma-ka-ta-wa-kwa-twa (Black Cloud).



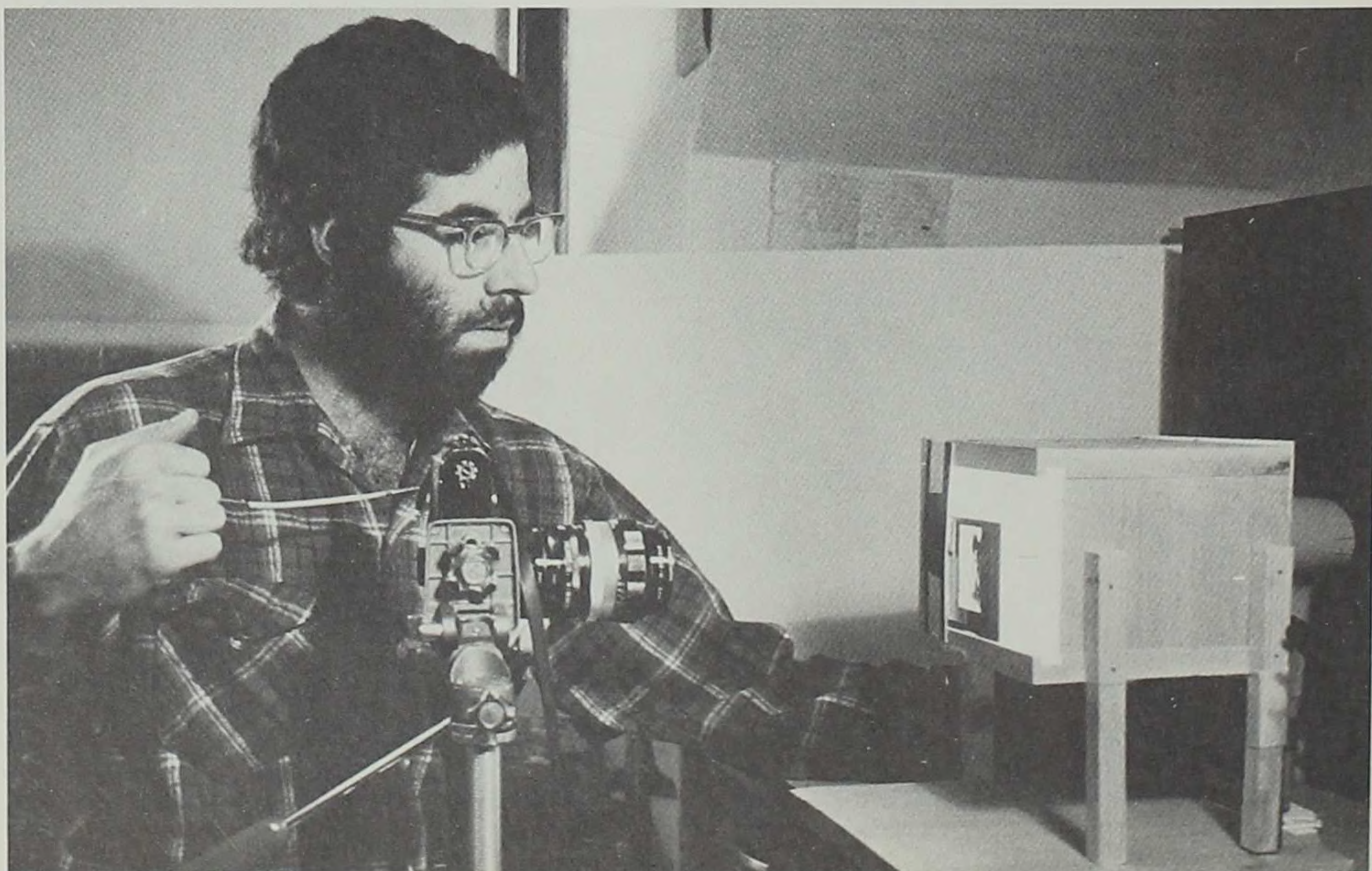
Ha-she-ta-na-kwa-twa (George Morgan) and family. Morgan had been tribal secretary prior to Ward's visit, and it was from him that Ward borrowed many of the photographs which now form the Ward Collection.



Ha-ma-kwa (Beaver).

L. EDWARD PURCELL is editor of *The Palimpsest*. A native of Bedford, Iowa, he graduated from Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa in 1966 and was Director of Alumni Affairs at Simpson from 1966 to 1968. In 1971, he received an M.A. in history from The University of Iowa, where he is now a Ph.D. candidate.

HENRY WINOKUR, shown below copying one of the lantern slides from the Ward Collection, is a student at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa. His home is Bethesda, Maryland, but he would like to remain in Iowa, working with historic photographs, after graduation from Cornell this spring.



The State Historical Society encourages submission of articles on the history of Iowa and the surrounding region which may be of interest to the general reading public. The originality and significance of an article, as well as the quality of an author's research and writing, will determine acceptance for publication. A brief biographical sketch should be submitted. All manuscripts must be double-spaced on at least medium weight paper. Ordinarily, the text of an article should not exceed twenty-five to thirty pages. As far as possible, citations should be worked into the body of the text. In this and other matters of form THE MLA STYLE SHEET is the standard guide. Black and white and colored illustrations are an integral part of THE PALIMPSEST. Any photographic illustrations should accompany the manuscript, preferably five-by-seven or eight-by-ten glossy prints, unmarked on either side. Inquiries and correspondence should be sent to: Editor, State Historical Society of Iowa, Centennial Building, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.



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