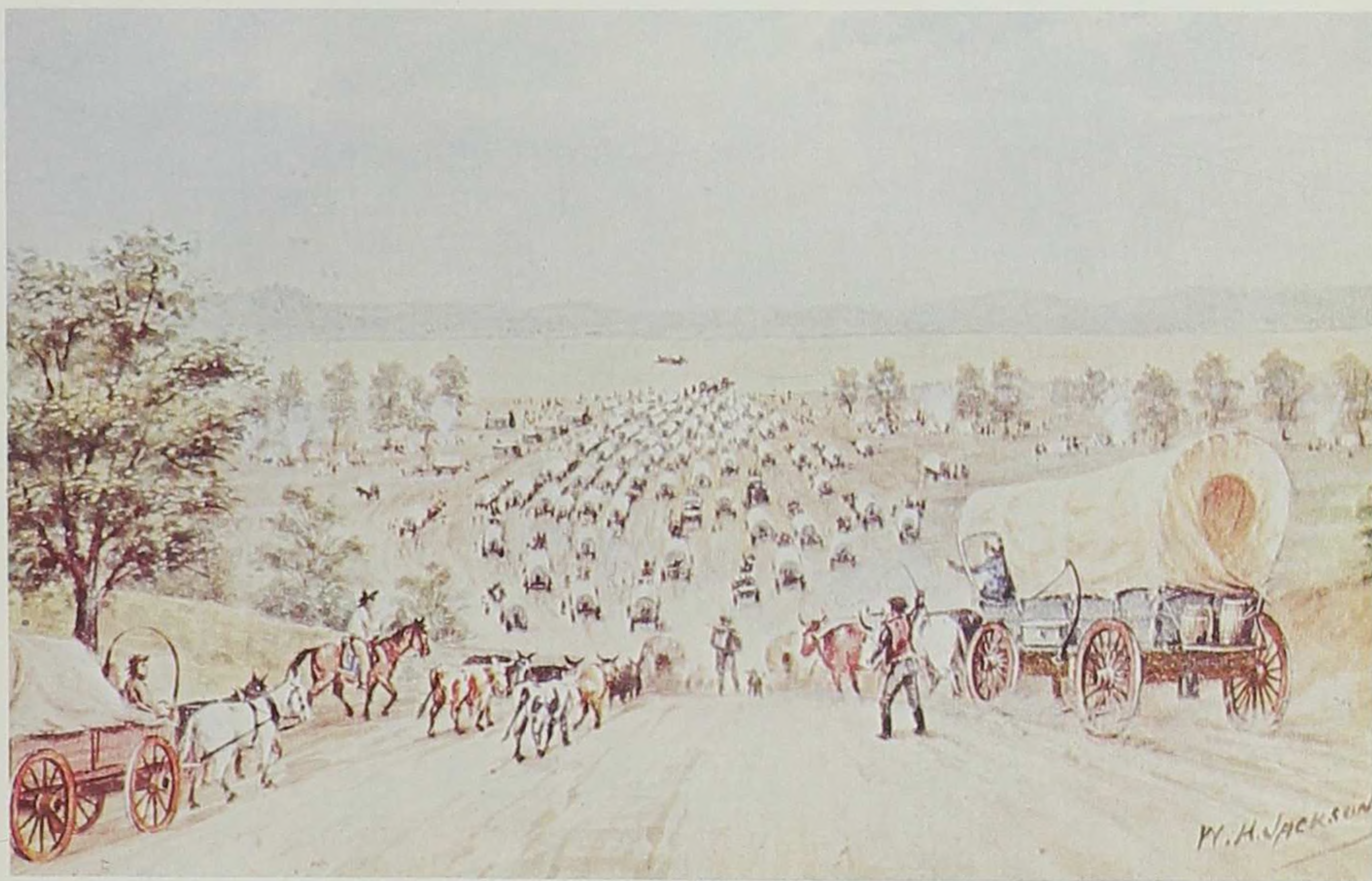


The Palimpsest

VOLUME 55

NUMBER 1

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 1974



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L. Edward Purcell, Editor

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Cover: *The Missouri River crossing at Kaneshville, see story on p. 2. (From the book, The Old West Speaks by Howard R. Driggs, illustrated by William Henry Jackson. © 1956 by Prentice-Hall, Inc. Published by Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.)*



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.

ACROSS IOWA IN 'FORTY-NINE

by
Theo. C. Ressler

It is hard to imagine, in light of the one hundred and twenty-five years which have passed, how exciting the first news of the gold strike in California must have been to the people of Iowa. Few young men were immune to the call of adventure and many Iowans were stricken with gold fever from the first notice. Jacob Y. Stover, twenty-five years old and living with his parents on a farm in Johnson County, reacted in what must have been a typical way. Writing his account some forty years later, he recalled the experience vividly:

It was in November, 1848—I remember the time of day—that I first heard of the gold fields of California. I came in from gathering corn to dinner. Mother told me there had been a peddler there that day who had told her that there had been wonderful gold mines found in California. We were sitting at the dinner table when she was telling it. I said, "I am going."

"How are you going to go two or three thousand miles? It takes money to go there, to go to New York and around the Horn; but," she said, "some say you can cross over the plains."

"That is the way I am going."

Stover joined a group of fellow gold-seekers which was organizing in the state

capital, Iowa City. This Iowa City group, later called the "Sacramento Mining Company," set out in the spring of 1849 to seek fortune in the gold hills of California. Hundreds of thousands of others were doing the same all across the eastern half of the continent. This is the story of how the group formed, and how it covered the first leg of the trip, across Iowa to the "jumping-off place" on the Missouri River. While it did not have the rugged challenges of the journey across the plains or the mountains, the Iowa trip was nevertheless a major undertaking.

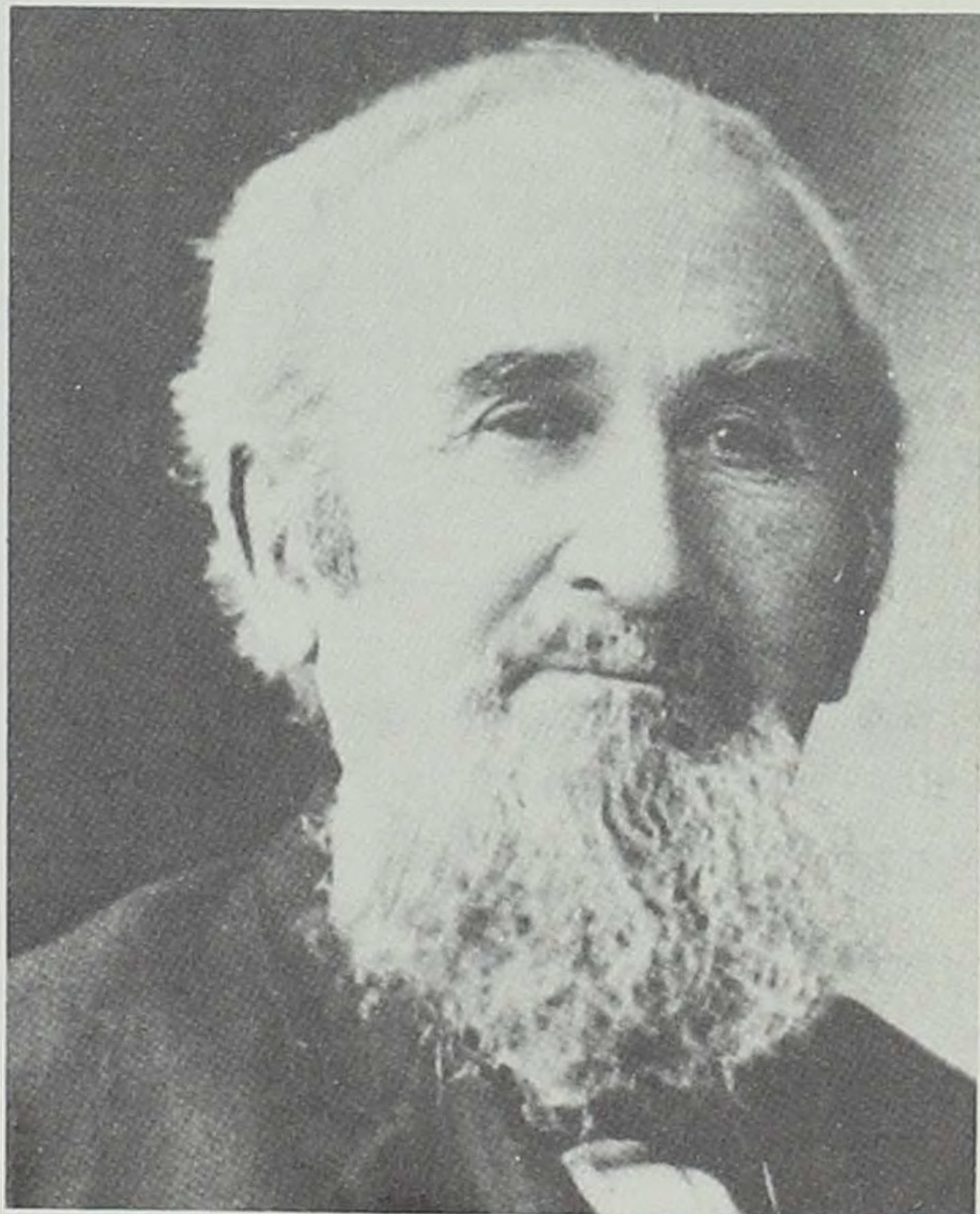
The first problem facing the "Argonauts" as they were called, was the matter of organization. Even though some undertook the trip west on their own, most Forty-niners banded together for economy and mutual assistance. Anticipation of the dangers which might lie ahead on the overland journey to California prompted the gold-seekers to place emphasis on organization into large companies. The chief hazard of the trip was supposed to be the possibility of Indian attack. Despite the fact that this threat seldom materialized, the Argonauts wanted to be prepared, and so sought safety in numbers.

Generally speaking, Forty-niner expeditions were formed in units recruited from one locality. Within a small area, communication between prospective members was a relatively simple matter, facilitating the scheduling of meetings and announcing the final notices of starting plans. Were it not for Iowa City's peculiar

status as capital of the state of Iowa, the Johnson County group might have been composed exclusively of local friends and associates. However, when the expedition was being planned, the Second General Assembly was in session, and meeting at Iowa City. It was natural, then, that at least some of the visiting legislators should attend the capital city's meetings.

On January 13, 1849, the Iowa City company was formally organized when a group of twenty-nine prospective companions signed a statement of intent, or "compact," as they called it. It appears that this document was the outcome of several previous meetings. Among the legislators, John J. Selman, President of the Senate, and Loring Wheeler, senator from Clinton and Scott counties, joined the group, thus proving that even politicians were not immune to the California fever. The group also elected officers, a common practice among such companies. Dr. William McCormick was to be president, C. C. Catlett was secretary, and A. H. Palmer was to fulfill the duties of corresponding secretary. G. W. Hess had previously been appointed along with Catlett and Palmer to draw up a set of rules. The articles of the compact were a bit vague, but did reflect the fraternal spirit of the trail:

We the undersigned, for the purpose of forming an association to emigrate to California, early in the ensuing spring, do hereby agree and solemnly pledge ourselves to, and with each other mutually to start, proceed, and emigrate thither together, at such time and by such route



Jacob Y. Stover

as may be deemed expedient, and also to aid, protect and defend each other to the utmost of our abilities, in the enjoyment of life, liberty and security in the privileges and possessions of each respectively, under any circumstances, both on the route to and after arrival in California; to the faithful performance of which compact, according to its letter and spirit, we do hereby severally pledge to each other our sacred honor.

Despite the high ideals of the compact, there is considerable doubt that even the original twenty-nine signers made the trip. Since more than a century has passed, it is unlikely that anyone will ever know the complete roster of the final group, but evidence suggests that many who agreed to the compact defected before the group

got underway. It is doubtful, for example, that John J. Selman made the journey.

On a more practical note, the agreement called for the recruitment of a company to total one hundred persons. To reach the goal it was decided to issue invitations to neighboring communities urging the formation of an all-Iowa company. Notices appeared in several newspapers, and personal solicitation was probably used by the plan's supporters to bring their friends into the Iowa City organization. The attempt to recruit other Iowa communities under the all-Iowa plan met with only limited success. Evidence suggests that the Johnson County company was supplemented by recruits

from other counties further east, namely, Cedar, Clinton, Jackson, and Jones.

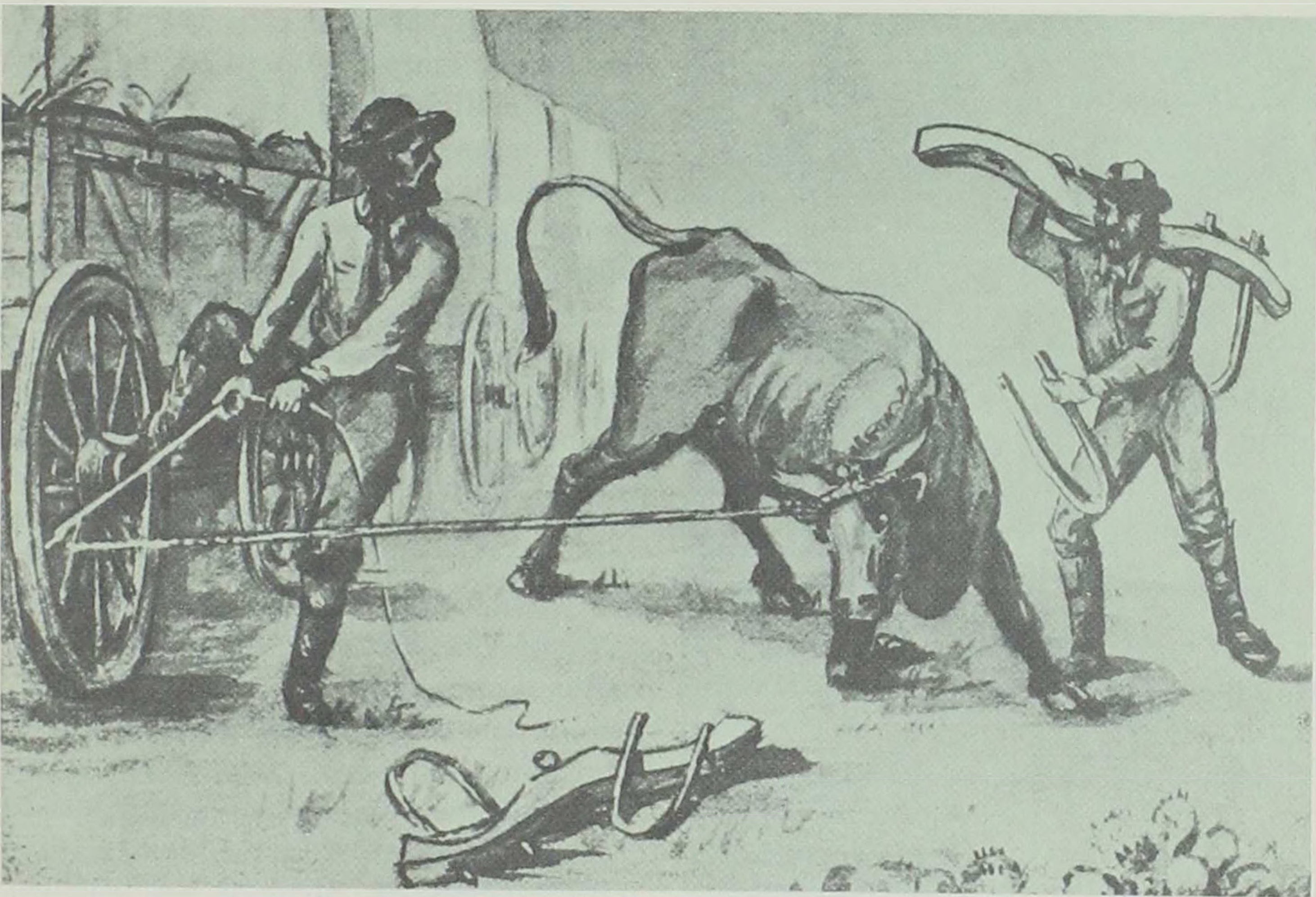
The final figure was probably short of the stated goal of one hundred. C. C. Catlett recorded in a letter that after the first defections the group consisted of "29 wagons, 72 men, four ladies and three children." Unfortunately, all we can say is that the group was somewhat cosmopolitan in makeup, representing different areas and people from many walks of life, and that it reached its greatest size at the Missouri River crossing. Several accounts by members survive, notably those of Stover, Catlett, Abraham Owen, J. J. Ressler, Aylett Cotton, and others. It is from these that we can follow the group west.

The Iowa City company was careful to organize the outfitting and equipping of the train. A report was drawn up and endorsed which specified the requirements of the trip, both as to quantity and quality. Included were recommendations on teams, wagons, food provisions, arms and ammunition, tools, cooking utensils, tents, and bedding. The estimated cost of the suggested outfit was \$300. Thus equipped, the company expected to cover 2100 miles in 140 days, at an average of fifteen miles per day.

The most important items on the list were the draft animals. Other equipment could be discarded or easily replaced if it was inappropriate, but the teams were crucial to the success of the expedition. Of the three choices of animals, oxen, horses, or mules, the Iowa City company chose the former. The report stated:

The teams of said expedition shall consist, as per resolution, of oxen and cows, which are required to be in good condition, and sound, not under four nor over

This article is part of a longer work on the Iowa City Company and relies on several reminiscent narratives of the 1849 experience. The narrative of Jacob Y. Stover, entitled "History of the Sacramento Mining Company of 1849 by One of its Number Jacob Y. Stover," is perhaps the most complete and is used by permission of S. Emma Stover. Portions of the Stover material were published in John Walton Caughey (ed.), "The Jacob Y. Stover Narrative," *Pacific Historical Review*, 6 (1937), 166-181. The story according to John Jacob Ressler comes from two manuscript sources: "John Jacob Ressler's Trip to California in 1849," a compilation by Ressler's daughter Cora Ressler Smith, made on information from her father in 1900; and "A 49-er John Jacob Ressler," a manuscript based on notes made by Sarah Von Stein from a conversation with Ressler on August 25, 1903. Abraham Owen's reminiscence is found in M. Etta Cartwright Coxe, "Hon. A. Owen, Reminiscences of His Early Life and Pioneer Days," *North English (Iowa) Record* (December 3, 1903), and in biographical and autobiographical materials of Abraham Owen assembled by his granddaughter, Sena Ellen Owen, and loaned to the author by Ada Owen Rathjen. Aylett R. Cotton dictated his story in 1903 as "Across the Plains to California in 1849," which correlates with Cotton's letter published in the Ft. Des Moines *Iowa Star* (July 26, 1849). All of these accounts are reproduced in my limited publication work, "Trails Divided" (1964), a copy of which is in the State Historical Society Library. An indispensable source for newspaper accounts is Fred Lorch, "Iowa and the California Gold Rush of 1849," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, 30, 3 (July 1932), 307-376. Chauncey Swan's letters to his wife Mary were published in Mildred Throne (ed.), "Letters of a Forty-Niner," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, 47, 1 (January 1949), 63-77. Also useful is Catherine M. Haun's account, "A Woman's Trip Across the Plains in 1849," which was dictated to her daughter and used by permission of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Reconstruction of the Iowa route was aided by William J. Petersen's "The Mormon Trail of 1846," *The Palimpsest*, 37, 11 (November 1956), 513-527.

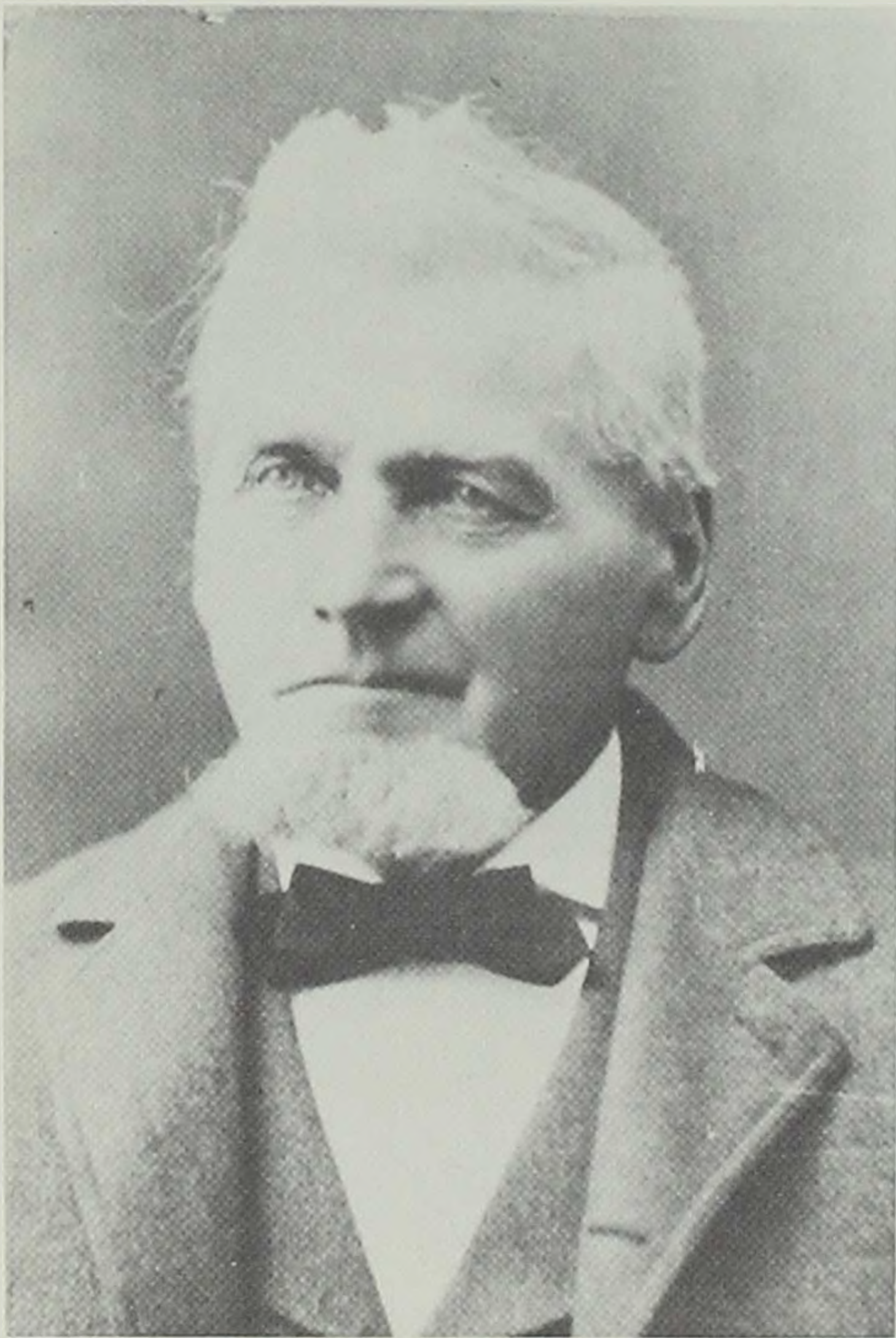


Yoking up the oxen (William H. Jackson sketch).

seven years old. Each team shall be provided with at least one extra yoke, a full set of bows, rings, staples, and staple keys, and one full set shoes fitted, add nails for shoeing.

Although some Forty-niners in general favored mules as draft animals, the consensus of opinion was in favor of oxen. The general term which applied to both sexes of the bovine family of domesticated animals in question was "cattle." The young offspring were calves—females were heifers until after producing and rearing their first offspring, after which they were known as cows. Since only a proportionately small number of males was needed for reproduction, most bulls were castrated at an early age to make them more docile, also to make their meat more tasteful. Males so treated were

called "steers" when raised primarily for food. When kept longer to serve as beasts of burden, they were known as "oxen," especially after they attained maximum size. Both oxen and cows were used to draw wagons across the plains. However, cows performed another service as well—that of supplying milk for those traveling in the wagon trains. To produce butter and buttermilk the travelers hung a pail of milk on the wagon. The jostling it got on the rough trail supplied the "churning." Because of their role as milk producers and because of their smaller size the cows were often spared the yoke and were led or herded along behind the wagons to be used only when needed to fill the ranks when oxen died or had to be slaughtered for food.



John Jacob Ressler

While oxen were the primary draft animals of the Iowa City expedition, there were a number of horses included in the train. Horses gave added mobility to their owners and served better for scouting and hunting purposes. Abraham Owen's account mentioned two saddle horses along with the cows and oxen as the property of four partners, Owen, Ressler, Hess, and Snider. The men on horseback served as scouts, locating grass and water and likely places for camping, spotting the best trail when a choice occurred, and keeping a lookout for the possibility of Indian ambush.

There were few "lone wolves" when it came to outfitting for the trip across the plains in 1849. The estimate that \$300

was necessary to put an Argonaut "in business" assumed that he would form a partnership with others to share the cost of a wagon, draft animals, and provisions. The number of partners in a joint ownership arrangement could normally be from two to four, or the number that traveled with one wagon. Joint action, but not ownership, was extended to the next larger unit, the mess. Members of a mess had regularly assigned chores for making and breaking camp, and messmates had their meals together. Thus when Ressler spoke of "Joe Clement, our cook," he no doubt meant that Clement cooked for his mess and not for the whole train.

Stover mentioned that his partner was John Craig, and, "We had two yoke of oxen." The two also owned a pony which Craig lost during a buffalo hunt. Loring Wheeler had two partners, his brother-in-law, Alvin C. Harrison, and a Mr. Loomis. Aylett R. Cotton and Daniel Chessman Oakes of DeWitt were partners. Together they owned three yoke of oxen and various other items. They not only journeyed together on the way to California; they returned home to Iowa together as well. Chauncey Swan, Moore, and Sam McFadden were partners early in the journey, jointly owning a wagon and some oxen. Later on they split up in disagreement and with bitter feeling.

Abraham Owen listed four partners, himself, Ressler, Hess, and Snider. The references to Ressler occur so frequently that it appears there was a close friendship between the two. Ressler's account agrees in part with Owen's. However, he indicated a partnership of three to start the trip, himself, Charlie Pratt, and Fredrican (or Fredrickson).

Partnership arrangements among Forty-niners were born of necessity. Whereas many like the Swan, Moore, McFadden combination broke up because of contention, others were David and Jonathan affairs which not only lasted the journey but throughout life itself. J. J. Ressler remarked in later life to his son, Henry Ressler, "Abe Owen and Henry Walker are two of the best friends I ever had." In fact there was an unintentional carry-over of the relationship to succeeding generations occurring in the town of Williamsburg, Iowa, one hundred fourteen years later. Ressler's grandson and Owen's granddaughter attended the same church. Henry Walker's great, great grandson and Ressler's great, great grandsons played cowboys and Indians together, while the older brothers of these same boys belonged to the same Boy Scout troop and camped out together, all unmindful of the fact that their adventurous ancestors played the games for real.

The Iowa City Forty-niners were faced with a choice of two routes from Iowa City to Kaneshville (Council Bluffs), the jumping off place for the trip across the plains. The northern route passed through Fort Des Moines on a line of march roughly corresponding to present Highway 6. The alternate route headed southwest, crossing the Des Moines River at Eddyville. Further west it joined the old Mormon Trail of 1846. Finally, at modern-day Lewis, Iowa, the northern and southern trails met.

Had there been as many recruits for the expedition from southern Iowa as had been hoped for and predicted, the Eddyville road might well have been chosen. The editor of the *Iowa Sentinel* at Fair-



Loring Wheeler

field had predicted in the February 2, 1849 issue that the Iowa City train would pass through Fairfield. He also recommended that the gold-seekers in that area join it. However, the Jefferson County gold-seekers in the Fairfield area left earlier, joining up with another band at Traders Point in the Council Bluffs area. Their departure left no reason for the Iowa City people to go this lengthier southern route. The choice was then made. The Iowa City Forty-niners and their recruits from Eastern Iowa traveled the route through Fort Des Moines.

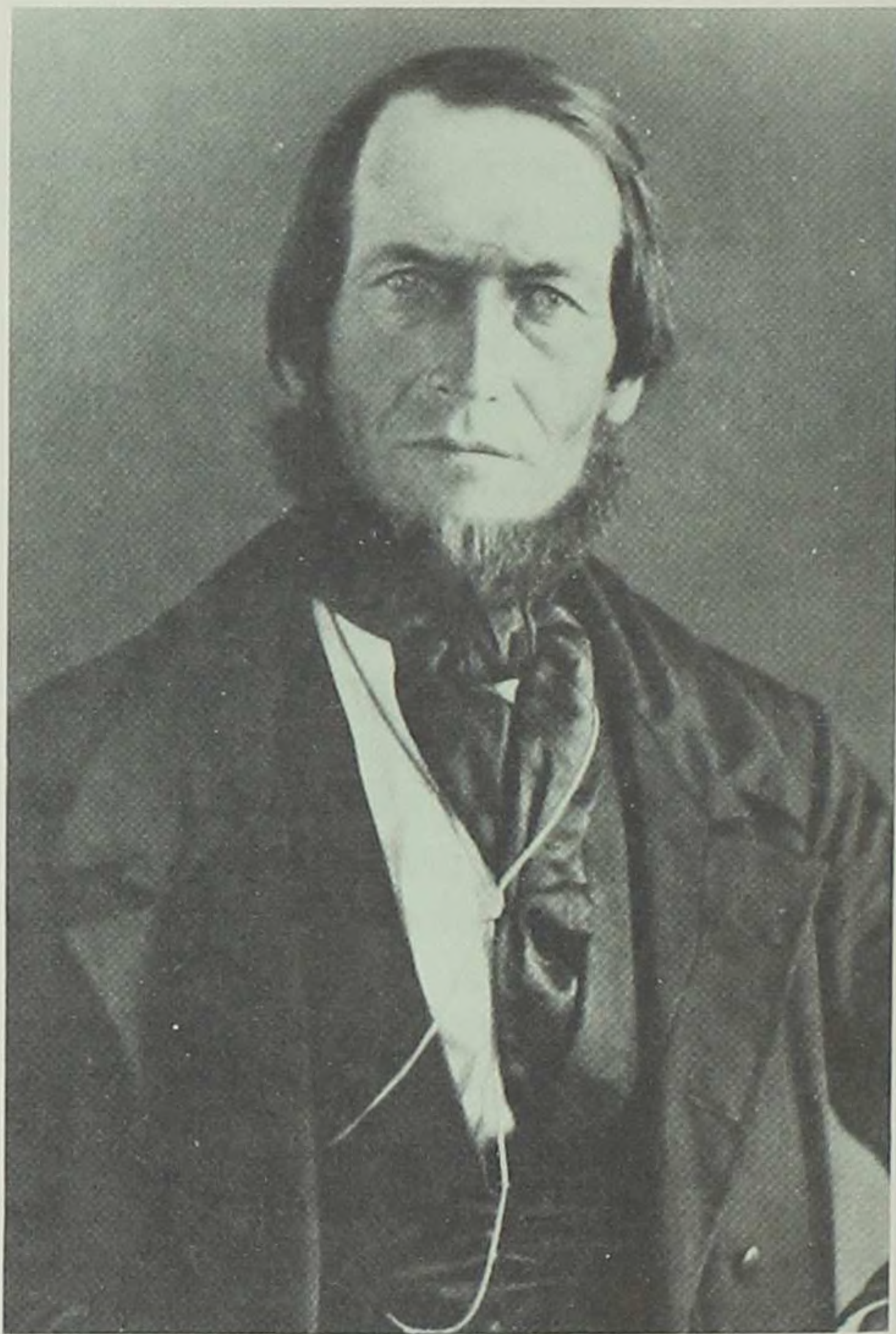
The date set for the start from Iowa City was April 1. Actually the starting date (or dates) came four or five weeks later. We have two dates from which to choose. John Jacob Ressler said April 30; Jacob Y. Stover said May 6. Since both men wrote or dictated their accounts nearly a half century later, the discrep-

ancy in dates is understandable.

Two bits of circumstantial evidence tend to support Stover's May 6 date. First, it is reasonably certain from contemporary 1849 references that the company was re-organized at Traders Point on the Missouri River about June 1. Figuring ox team travel at fifteen miles per day, a May 6 start would have allowed ample time for covering the 266 miles of distance between that point and the starting place at Iowa City. Also favoring the later starting date is the fact that the contingent from DeWitt in Clinton County left home on April 29, hardly in time for reaching Iowa City the next day.

There is also a distinct possibility that both Ressler and Stover were correct on their own starting dates, since part of the expedition may have become impatient and started earlier, traveling more leisurely to allow the late-comers to overtake them later. Evidence of two starting dates is explained by another discrepancy. Ressler placed the first night's encampment at Ike Dennis' place near Coralville, which is about three miles from Iowa City. Stover said ten miles was covered the first day, the stopping point being on Clear Creek. Ressler stated that on the third night out camp was made at Bear Creek, about thirty miles from the first camping place, so the indication is that normal progress of fifteen miles per day was made. Stover said that after the first day his train traveled an average of twenty-five miles per day. This seems a little fast for oxen, unless longer than usual hours were traveled to make up for lost time. If Stover did start later than Ressler, he caught up to him; for they both recorded the same incidents later.

The question of timing the start of the



Chauncey Swan

journey was very important and a mistimed departure could have dire consequences on the trail. A late start would mean less grass for the draft animals due to over-grazing by animals of those that had gone on ahead. Streams and springs in desert country would be dried up as summer progressed. Then there was the possibility of the travelers being stranded in the mountain passes from early snows, a fate which overtook the much publicized Donner party of 1846. Finally, late-comers to the gold fields could not expect pick and choice of the diggings. Why then should an expedition so thoroughly planned bog down on the matter of starting?

Contradictory as it may seem, the very

thoroughness of the plans laid down at Iowa City may have been the cause for delay. It was hoped that the Iowa City group would be the nucleus for an all-Iowa company. Despite invitations and urgings, neighboring communities were slow to respond. Loring Wheeler of DeWitt definitely stayed in line with the all-Iowa plan. However, the seventy-five miles of distance between DeWitt and Iowa City was certainly no unifying factor. From another account there is evidence that Clinton County had a late spring, no doubt helping to explain the late start from that area. Six days of travel, April 29 to May 5, was probably sufficient to get the Clinton County people to Iowa City where they could recruit themselves and their animals, meet their new traveling companions, and make a new start on June 6, which in 1849 came on a Sunday.

The question, "How did the Iowa City gold-seekers get to Des Moines in 1849?" could be answered, "They followed Highway 6." In terms of railroads the answer would be, "They followed the Rock Island." In 1849, they would have said to anyone inquiring (as did the Fort Des Moines *Iowa Star*), "Follow the wagon tracks. They'll take you to the Trading House, Marengo, Snook's Grove, Newton and Fort Des Moines."

Many of the details of the route are missing. The all-encompassing, "we went . . ." appears to be the standard description used by reminiscent Forty-niners to include travel over wide stretches of territory when all but the high spots of the journey had faded from their memories. In addition, no 1849 newspaper described the departure of any Iowa company. This negative aspect was well phrased by Fred

W. Lorch when he made his investigation based on newspaper writings:

"Not a single instance was discovered, for example, where an editor narrated the events of the stirring day when the local company departed, or depicted the dramatic moment when the long whips cracked and the ox teams and the covered wagons began the long march to the Pacific." (pp. 328-329).

Whatever the circumstance, the start of Ressler's party must have been a slow one, for the train made it only as far as Ike Dennis' place near Coralville, three miles distant, for the first night's camp. The next stop mentioned was at Bear Creek, where the travelers reported rain and that, "some of the boys stole a hog



Abraham Owen



A well-equipped gold-seeker setting off for the fields with arms, digging tools, and bed-roll. Mules sometimes substituted for horses as trail animals (painting by Albertis Browere, Knoedler Galleries, New York).

and butchered it." Here Ressler's plain statement of fact is verified by Abe Owen's elaboration of the incident:

Then they reached a piece of timber known as "Snooks Grove." Snooks had been living there quite a while, with no neighbors, and had accumulated quite a bunch of hogs. Some of the boys had been drinking, and were shooting recklessly at a target when one of them accidentally shot a hog. Abe, not wishing to see it go to waste, dressed it and divided it among the travelers. One of the bunch who received his share gladly was one preacher whom they all called Elder Briar. Owen then went to Snooks home to tell him that some of the boys had been drinking and had accidentally shot one of his hogs. That they would pay for the hog if he would name the price. Snooks, a very nice man said, "Oh, that is nothing. I don't want anything for the hog. I would only get \$1.50 per hundred for it anyway by hauling it clear to Iowa City—forty miles distance."

The next event worth remembering was the crossing of the Skunk River, the main branch of which met the trail probably in the vicinity of present-day Colfax. Until this time the streams to be crossed after ferrying the Iowa River at Iowa City were of such minor size that they were probably forded. This may not have always been easy, however, since at this season of the year spring rains often swelled even the smaller streams. Also, Iowa mud was no doubt a problem, adding to the difficulty of pulling the loaded wagons. At the Skunk River the need for ferrying presented itself, as Stover related:

"We had some trouble at Skunk River.

We cut dry cottonwood logs and made a raft, stretched ropes across the river, ran the wagons across and swam our oxen over."

Chauncey Swan had a good word for the next major crossing the "Rackoon forks" (junction of the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers). He suggested in the letter to his wife that the site at Fort Des Moines might have been a better choice for the state capital than Iowa City. (His opinion became fact eight years later.) His reference has special significance in view of the fact that it was he who as one of three commissioners was most instrumental in the selection of Iowa City as the site for the first capital of the Territory of Iowa. This plus the fact that he helped plan the town and supervise the early construction of the Old Stone Capitol later earned him the title, "Father of Iowa City."

Of the Iowa City Argonauts who left memoirs, Jacob Y. Stover gave most mention of Fort Des Moines and the ferrying of the Des Moines River at its junction with the Raccoon.

"The next stream was at Fort Des Moines. When we got there we found a flat boat, crossed the Des Moines River. Landed right below the old fort. There were some log cabins with split timber some twelve feet high set in the ground around the houses—that was the size of Fort Des Moines."

Leaving Fort Des Moines, the company embarked on Clark's Road, a known pathway to Council Bluffs. The track was named for Dr. H. M. Clark of Andrew

who, with others, operated a ferry at St. Francis. The road struck west across the prairie. A member of the Hawk-eye company described the road as follows:

After crossing the North river at Brown's ford, the road runs on a fine divide between Middle river and Cedar Creek to Marvin's Grove,—water and timber plenty; thence to Tucker's Grove on Middle river, half a mile from the divide, without slough, timber in sight on each side of the road, to Allen's Grove, at the Badger, bottom or ridge to suit the traveler; to East Nodaway, ridge road; to West Nodaway, ridge; Campbell's Grove, stream bridged—this is a delightful spot—high land to Nishnabotony. In fact, all concur in saying that this is the best ground for a road in the state, and the only good road for all northern emigrants . . . it is fifty miles nearer than any other to the Missouri river, and much the best. Good teams can easily make the distance in six days, as most of us have done.

At the present town of Lewis, in Cass County, Iowa, Clark's Road joined with the Mormon Trail of 1846 and was identical to it, at least until the Traders Point-Kanesville Fork.

Two questions present themselves: (1) Did the Iowa City company take Clark's Road to Council Bluffs; and (2) Where is Clark's Road in terms of modern names of roads and towns? Reasoning from the sources, the tentative answers seem to be: (1) that the Iowa City ox train *did* travel Clark's Road, and (2) that the expedition traveled southwest from Fort Des Moines to present-day Winterset, then proceeded west, parallel to present Highway 92, through present-day Lewis and (probably) Oakland.

There is support for the assumption that the train followed Clark's Road in Ressler's comment, "We took the old Mormon Trail to Council Bluffs." In addition, he mentioned that Stover killed an elk near the headwaters of the Grand River. This would place the party near Clark's Road, since Grand River (some times shown as "Thompson River") rises near Greenfield. The notion that it was Clark's route is reinforced by Aylett R. Cotton's remark that "Mr. Clark who controlled the territory" gave Col. Wheeler's train an early preference in crossing on his ferry, thus indicating a prior understanding or acquaintance. Cotton also mentioned that the road followed was marked with elk horns enscribed "C.B." for Council Bluffs. This fits with Clark's tendency to advertise his ferry. The clinching argument is that none of the travelers mentioned any places along possible alternate routes. If they had gone on the route through Pisgah, as did Lyman Mitchell who preceeded them, they would have discussed identifiable places.

It is certain that many in the train were not impressed with the countryside. As Chauncey Swan put it, "from Desmoines to council bluff is a barran waste and can never be improved."

Determining the modern counterpart of Clark's Road is probably more difficult than following the original trail in 1849, for the Iowa City company had the benefit of guides and maps. Besides, they had the tracks of those who had gone before and the marked elk horns to assure them they were headed aright.

After the ferrying of the Des Moines River below the junction with Raccoon, the Iowa City party followed the latter in a westerly direction upstream on the south side. This fact is verified by an *Iowa Star* reporter who stated: "We accompanied the Iowa City boys a few miles 'up'Coon' and left them in a merry mood, satisfied with the route they had taken, and confident of being among the first at their journey's end."

Just how far "up'Coon" the Forty-niners traveled and how they got south to modern Highway 92 is questionable. A map study of Polk and Madison counties reveals that the distances expressed in the two paragraphs of verbal description are compatible with those revealed on modern maps. Following "up'Coon" on the south side for eight miles would have brought the travelers to the vicinity of the convergence of Polk, Warren, Madison, and Dallas counties. By leaving the Raccoon here and traveling in a southwesterly direction into Madison County for four miles they would have hit Badger Creek. Continuing south and perhaps a little west, they would have hit North River. The seven miles to Happy Grove would have put them somewhere in the neighborhood of present-day Patterson, perhaps a couple of miles west. The next six miles to Marvin's Grove would appear to bring our travelers to present-day Winterset, a total distance of thirty-one miles.

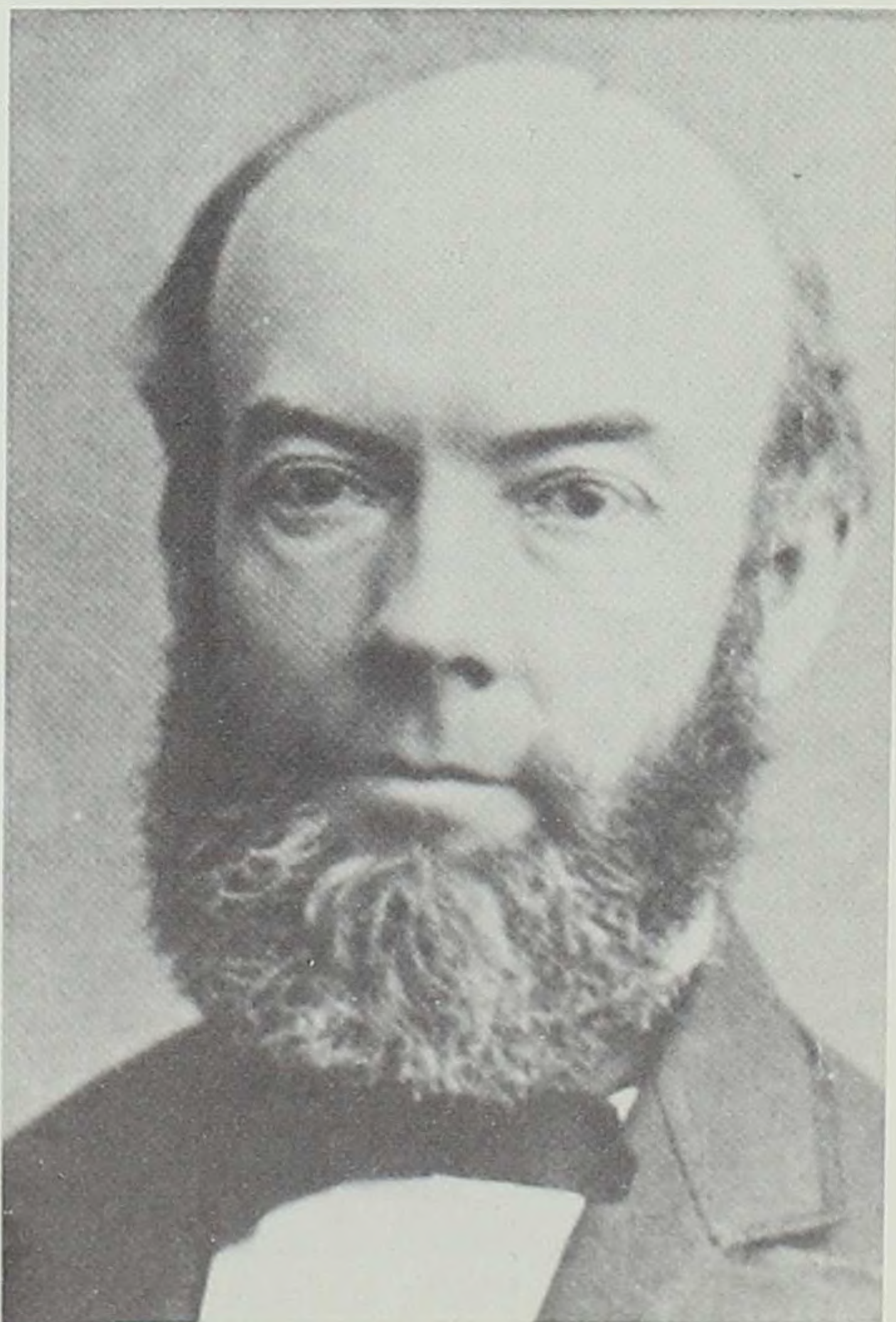
The "barran waste" between Fort Des Moines and Council Bluffs was but for one incident devoid of any happenings worth fifty years' remembrance by the

reminiscing Forty-niners. Ressler elaborated on the story in his account dictated to his daughter:

"In a grove near the headwaters of the Grand River an elk was killed by Jake Stover and Doc. Downer. I dragged it in with a yoke of oxen, and we divided the meat."

Jacob Y. Stover, who even in his old age had a sense for the dramatic, stated it this way:

We had some fun going up a hollow. In a small pack of old grass, up jumps an elk four or five rods to our right. I stopped



Aylett Cotton

my team and hallooed "Carlo." As usual he was on hand and away they went. Dr. Downer and I had a pony and he, as it happened, was close by. He put after them while all the rest of us hallooed our best. I was satisfied the last I saw of the elk and dog that he would get him, so I ran as tight as I could to the tope of the bluff. I saw Carlo had the elk down. Dr. Downer was cutting its throat. We dressed it and we had beef for supper for the whole train.

Whether Carlo brought down the elk single-handed or whether Jake Stover had previously wounded him with a gun shot, as might be inferred from Ressler's description, is impossible to say, but Stover's "brag dog," Carlo, was a real hero, as both his wolf hunting and elk hunting exploits attest. His loss during the ferrying of "Big Muddy" was no doubt regretted by the whole company.

When the Iowa company reached the Missouri River, they were in the vicinity of Kaneshville, or modern day Council Bluffs. However, there is considerable confusion over this area since many place names of 1849 refer to different spots than the name is now associated with. The original Council Bluffs was drawn by some cartographers in the 1840s where present-day Omaha stands. The name also may have referred to a council place dating from the 1804 Lewis and Clark expedition. To complicate matters in 1849 several places were known as "Council Bluffs." The Indian agency south of present day Bellevue received and sent mail with the Council Bluffs address. The sub-agency across the river (Traders Point or

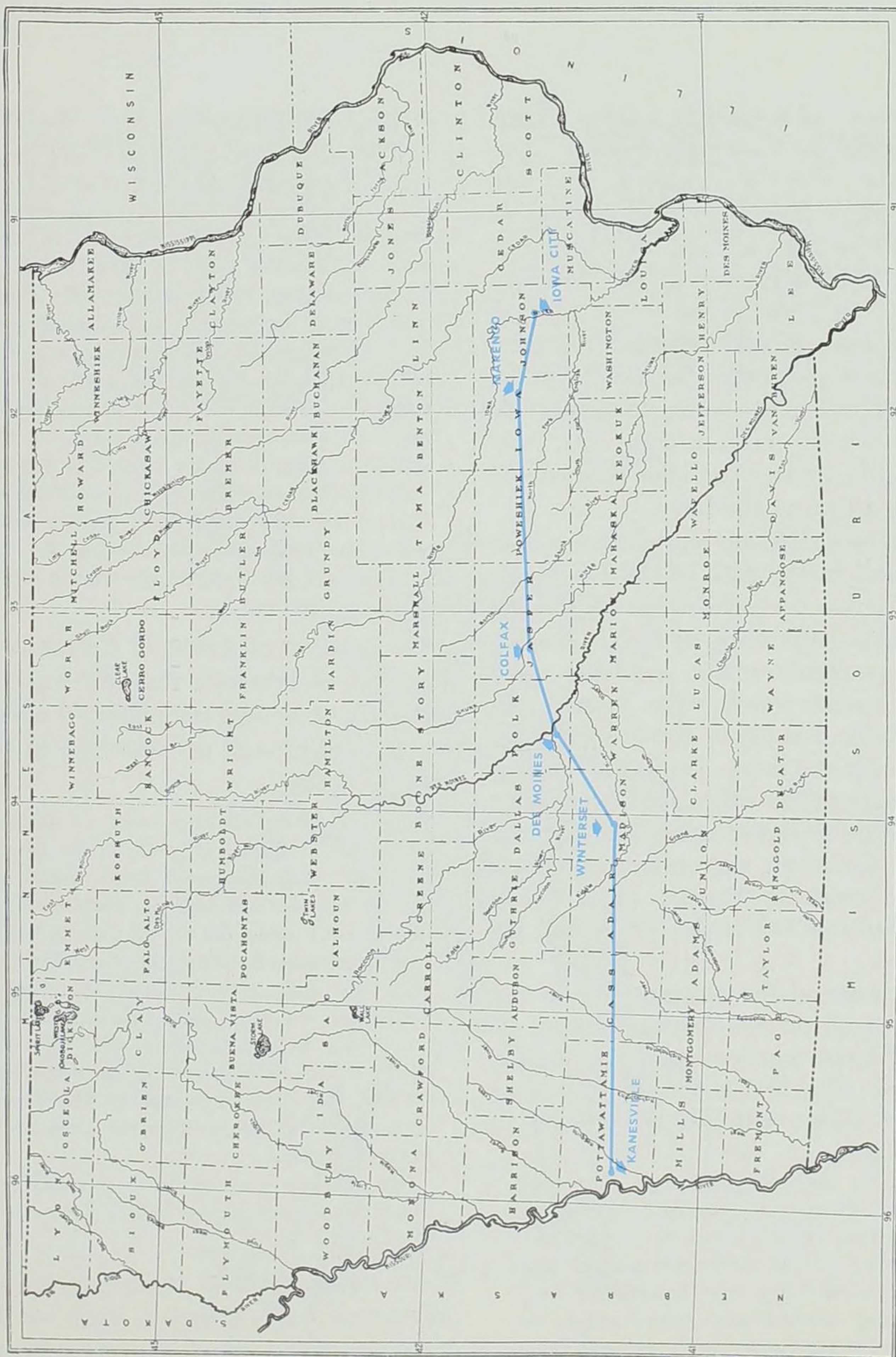
St. Francis) also was called by some Council Bluffs. Indeed the entire region from the Platte to Ft. Atkinson was sometimes referred to by the general term.

In 1849, "Omaha" referred only to the Indian tribe which inhabited the area. The site of modern Bellevue was known as the Presbyterian Mission which served the Omahas, and earlier the Pawnees. As mentioned, Traders Point and St. Francis were the same place on the Iowa side of the Missouri. Also in the vicinity was Winter Quarters, a stopping point on the Mormon Trail where the followers of Brigham Young spent the winter of 1846-47.

Present day Council Bluffs was first known as Miller's Hollow (the "Holler") which was the site of the homes of several Mormons who had decided to forego the rigors of the trail west. Miller's Hollow eventually came to be known as Kaneshville until the name was officially changed to Council Bluffs in 1853.

Whether the Iowa City Argonauts and their companions from Clinton and other counties followed the right fork of the road to Kaneshville or the left fork to Traders Point and later made a tour to Kaneshville we do not know. But that they went to Kaneshville by one manner or another would appear to be a certainty. In the first place, they no doubt had time on their hands while waiting their turn at the ferry. Kaneshville was the outfitting place where you bought the things you forgot to bring from home but needed for the journey across the plains. As in all frontier towns, and in spite of all the Mor-

ROUTE OF THE IOWA CITY '49ers



mon elders' admonishing against them, there existed in Kanesville certain "dens of iniquity" where men with a thirst and a gambling instinct could find expression. And who would pass up the chance to at least steal a glance at the Mormon maidens, some of whom were sure to be seen on the streets? Whether you went as an active participant or simply as an interested onlooker, going to Kanesville must have been more inviting to a foot-loose and fancy free bachelor than simply awaiting a turn at the ferry.

The Missouri River represented a major obstacle in the path of the Forty-niners. It was too deep and wide for fording or for make-shift rafts, so the Argonauts were dependent on the available commercial ferries which were located not at Kanesville, but either about eight miles downstream at Traders Point (St. Francis) or upstream twelve miles at Winter Quarters. The party representing Johnson and Clinton Counties and points between chose to cross at Traders Point, using the facilities of Dr. H. M. Clark and his associates.

While some of the primary sources say nothing at all of the ferrying process itself, we have two accounts that tell it quite well. The first is that of Catherine Margaret Haun, wife of the Henry P. Horn (Haun):

On May 26th we started to cross the Missouri River and our first real work affronted us. The wheels of the wagons had to be taken off and the bodies carried onto the flat-boats. They were then piled with goods and covered with heavy canvas or rubber sheets to protect the provisions from

water. Sometimes two or three small wagons were taken at the same time.

The flat-boats were attached by a pulley to a rope stretched across the river to prevent its being carried down stream, and even so, row as best the men could, it landed very far down the opposite shore and had to be towed up stream to the landing before the load could be taken off. Ropes were tied to the horns of the oxen and around the necks of the mules and horses to assist them in stemming the current as they swam the river. The women and children sat tailor fashion on the bottom of the raft. Much time and strength was thus consumed and owing to the great size of our caravan we were a week in getting across . . .

The account of Aylett R. Cotton corresponds so closely with that of Mrs. Haun that one cannot help but believe that there was some degree of collaboration in their writing:

. . . it occupied one week in getting across the wagons, etc., of 48 ox teams and one wagon of a mule team owned by Loring Wheeler and Alvin G. Harrison. The wheels were taken off the wagons in loading the same on the flat boat. The Missouri was very high, the flat boat was rowed across, but would go quite a distance down the River before reaching the Western shore, it was then towed up on the West side of the River by oxen to the place of landing and returned to the Iowa side for another load.

The animals were made to swim across the River, ropes being fastened to each of them.

When the Iowa City Argonauts successfully crossed the Missouri, they left the relatively safe confines of Iowa and pre-

pared to move out onto the plains. The crossing marked their departure from the organized United States. The Great Plains and the California coast were not part of the country in any normal sense of the phrase. Not until their return home to Iowa would they be in the safe world of politics, taxes, and post offices. The future would hold many surprises for the

brave band, including hardship, death, and for some the pot of gold in California. The trails divided many times as the party moved further west, until there was almost nothing left of the original idea of a company. Whatever their fortunes, the trip across Iowa had been their first step in the great adventure of 'forty-nine. □



The "typical" Argonaut, armed to the teeth and ready to make his fortune.

THE IOWA STATE PSYCHOPATHIC HOSPITAL (part two)

by

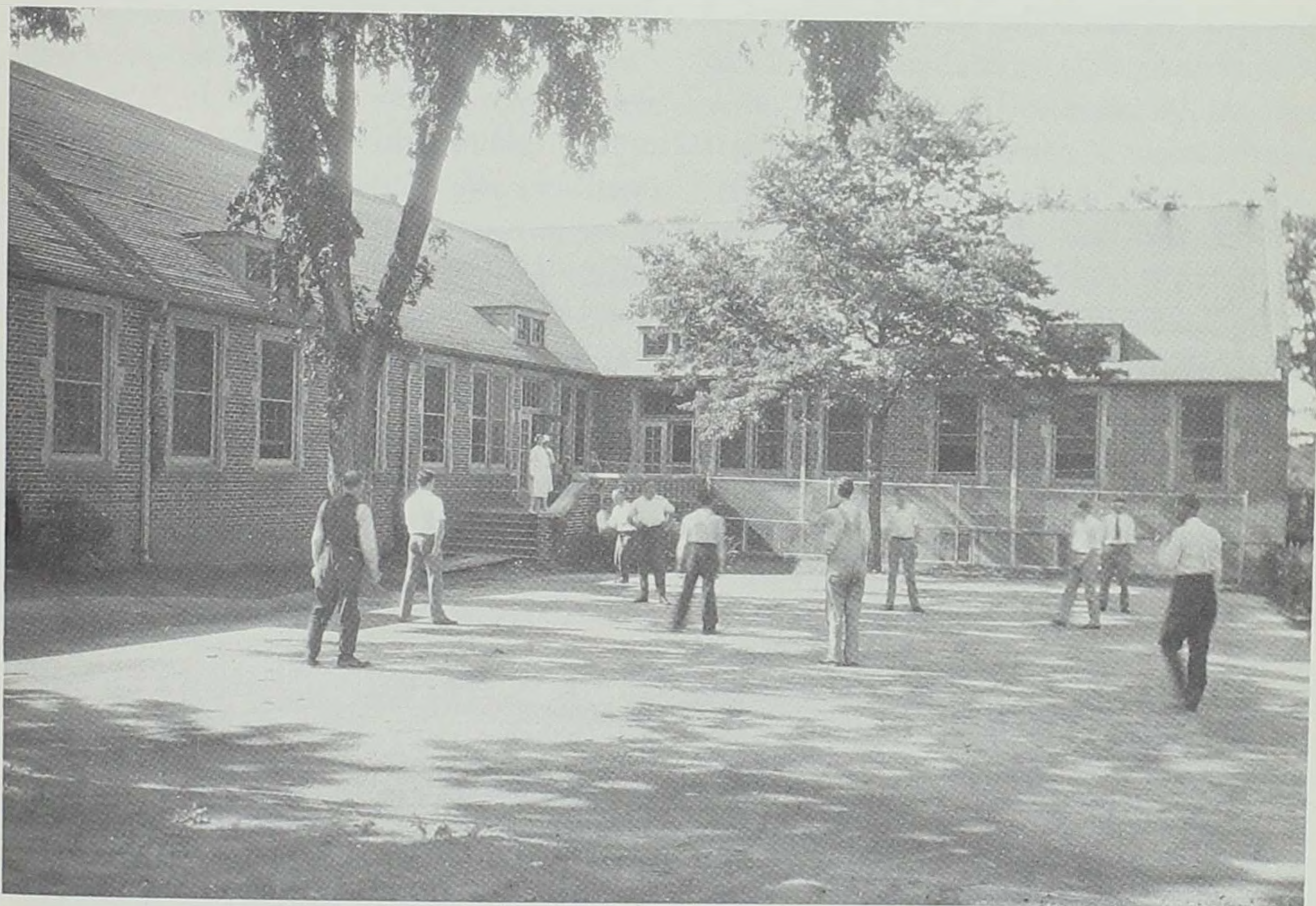
Paul E. Huston

In 1920, when the Psychopathic Hospital was built, psychiatric treatment took place almost entirely in mental hospitals. In Iowa, there were four state institutions, at Mount Pleasant, Independence, Clarinda, and Cherokee which received patients from their respective quadrants of the state. Three private mental hospitals existed, one in Council Bluffs, the others in Des Moines and Dubuque. By law the Psychopathic Hospital drew its patients from a large community, the whole state of Iowa. Yet almost from the beginning the Hospital was involved with individual local communities.

The first major involvement was the Mobile Mental Hygiene Clinic. This unit grew out of an experimental clinic in January of 1925 in Green County, where Dr. Orton examined a seventh grade, sixteen year-old boy who could hardly read. Because of this striking disability the boy was admitted to the Hospital where, after intensive study, Dr. Orton came to believe that through the study of cerebral physiology he had a scientific approach to "congenital word blindness." He organized a

laboratory unit at the Hospital to study reading difficulties, stuttering, and cerebral dominance and a mobile unit for field work. To finance this work he secured a grant of \$60,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation for a two-year period. The mobile unit served as a case finding group for the scientists at the Hospital and also to demonstrate the need for and feasibility of a mobile psychiatric unit as an extension of the Hospital's Outpatient Clinic.

To start this enterprise a University of Iowa Service Bulletin describing the function of the mobile unit and containing an invitation to participate was sent to physicians, social workers, teachers, and others throughout the state. Responses came from twenty-four communities. Dr. Orton gave preference to rural areas where medical, legal, educational, and social agencies could unite to form a mental hygiene committee which would make local arrangements for examination of children with problems and adults with suspected mental disorders and to help meet expenses. The mobile unit stayed two to ten weeks in nine towns and also visited surrounding towns. It examined 1,090 cases, mostly children of school age. The mobile unit found that more than half of the children had physical defects, primarily enlarged tonsils and adenoids, visual defects, and decayed teeth. Thirty-seven cases of mental disease came to light. One third of the children had I.Q.'s in the borderline to the normal range or below. The unit frequently encountered school placement problems. Sixteen per-



Patients at recreational volleyball in 1929 or 1930.

cent of the children had reading difficulties which in some cases caused emotional maladjustment. Seventy-five children presented articulatory speech defects, some of which were referred to Iowa City for further examination. Local school teachers were instructed in remedial reading and in phonetic and kinesthetic aids to speech correction. The unit saw five cases of serious antisocial behavior and many mild disciplinary problems. Examinations at the State Juvenile Home at Toledo and the Annie Wittenmyer Children's Home in Davenport convinced Dr. Orton that "it

would be highly desirable for each child in the orphanage to have a complete clinical study and that a full-time psychiatric unit could be profitably employed by the state." In Green County, the sheriff and county attorney asked that all of their current prisoners be examined. In Waterloo, a probation officer referred twenty-one cases for clinical study. Some areas were revisited to follow up on the work done, particularly the progress made by local teachers.

Dr. Orton believed that many counties were ready for a mobile psychiatric service

since one fifth of the persons examined suffered from true mental or nervous disease or feeble-mindedness. "The other cases, however, presented a mental hygiene rather than a strictly psychiatric problem, and their adjustment was found due not to intrinsic pathologic conditions but to the interplay of various factors in the situation, such as intellectual capacity, personality makeup, and home and school environment. Correlated psychological, physical and psychiatric studies are essential for the understanding and adjustment of such problems and the mental hygiene unit of social worker, psychologist,

and psychiatrist is better equipped for this service than workers in in these fields alone."

The mobile mental hygiene clinic in Iowa was one of the first in the country. There is record of only one earlier mobile clinic in the United States. Certainly, the clinic services backed by a scientific laboratory were unusual and represented an ideal arrangement for acquiring new knowledge and improving clinic practices. Dr. Orton left Iowa in the fall of 1927. He continued his interest in speech and reading difficulties at Columbia University. After his death in 1948, his work led



Reading therapy in the 1930s.

to the formation of the Orton Society in 1949, an organization for the study and treatment of children with language disability and reading problems. This group, national in scope, has over 2,000 members. Dr. Orton's widow, June Lyday Orton, a social worker at the Psychopathic Hospital in the 1920s prior to her marriage to Dr. Orton, has been President of the Orton Society, and has served for many years as Director of the Orton Reading Center in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Parenthetically, the work of the laboratory and mobile units proved a powerful force to stimulate the study and treatment of speech disorders, and Iowa became a national leader in this field. The study of speech pathology in the United States had significant beginnings in the basement of the Hospital where Lee Travis, a member of the laboratory unit, had his laboratory. Many of his students received training in the laboratory. The Wendell Johnson Speech and Hearing Center at The University of Iowa is partly an outgrowth of Dr. Orton's work.

The mobile clinic began its activities in February of 1926 and ceased operation in July of 1927, but the idea of providing services close to local communities remained. The mobile clinic seemed to fit into a popular conception of that period, that of mental hygiene. The mobile clinic, in addition to finding severe or research cases, encountered many minor problems, and taught others in the local community how to handle such cases.

In 1929, Dean Seashore had proposed

formation of an Iowa Mental Hygiene Institute (a program of preventive medicine), and again pushed the proposal in 1934. The Institute would use the resources of the Psychopathic Hospital, the Psychological Clinic, and the Iowa Child Welfare Station coordinated into "a functional whole by recognizing all grades of mental disorder, inadequacy, pedagogical and social ineptitudes, maladjustment or delinquency."

Dr. Woods, then Director, was not entirely sympathetic to the idea of the Institute, believing that the concepts of mental hygiene were too vague and confusion would develop in distinguishing mental hygiene from psychiatry. He discussed this cogently in a memorandum to Professor George Stoddard on April 8, 1930. In a covering letter Dr. Woods wrote, "As a matter of fact, I would like to inveigle some other psychiatrist to build a mental hygiene institute, while I go fishing." But, if established, he pledged his complete support.

Twenty years after the Mobile Clinic, a second event put the Psychopathic Hospital more definitely into local communities. In 1946, Congress enacted Public Law 70-487, the National Mental Health Act. Among other things it created Mental Health Authorities for the states. In 1947, the Iowa General Assembly by resolution designated the Psychopathic Hospital, through its Director, as the Mental Health Authority of Iowa. This enabled Iowa to receive some federal funds for training, education, and research in the field of



The adult occupational therapy shop.

mental illness and the application of new knowledge to clinic work through demonstration projects and consultations. The legislature created a Mental Hygiene Committee to act as a policy committee for the Authority. Its members were the State Commissioner of Health, a member of the Board of Control, a representative of private mental hospitals, and the Director of the Psychopathic Hospital. An early policy of the Mental Hygiene Committee promoted the formation of local community mental health centers, to be supported by public talks, pamphlets, and films on

mental health. Space for this operation was first provided by the Board of Health in Des Moines. In 1960, the office was moved to Iowa City. Mrs. Opal Fore, a highly qualified social worker, with years of experience in public administration and mental health was employed in 1949 to head this work. Mrs. Fore literally covered the state herself. Traveling about she spread the word of doing something locally for the mentally ill with cheerfulness and persuasion. Mrs. Fore came to know the editors of newspapers, the school superintendents, physicians, the directors of

social services, and the members of the legislature. In the late 1940s and in the 1950s, she, probably more than any other person, made mental health a grass roots concern. It seemed that almost everyone in the state came to know Opal Fore. Mainly through her efforts, by 1956, eight local mental health centers had been formed. By July 1 of 1966, at the time of her retirement, there were nineteen.

An amusing episode displays the talents of Mrs. Fore. In the late 1950s, the legislature appointed a joint committee of the Senate and House to study the services for children in Iowa. The Hospital staff was called to a hearing of this committee to report on the work at the Hospital and in the mental health centers. The meeting went on for half an hour with the legislators, eight in number, asking questions—sometimes spoken in critical tone implying that not enough was being accomplished. Then came Mrs. Fore's turn. In her sprightly way she began to ask rhetorical questions of the committee members, "Now Senator ———, do you remember how we got people in your town interested in starting a mental health center?" Then, answering her own question, she recalled the work of someone in the Senator's constituency who had helped; or perhaps remembered a meeting the Senator himself had attended. The temper of the meeting changed. The scene became like a school room with Mrs. Fore the teacher and the legislators the pupils who put up their hands to recite what they had done for mental health centers and

to ask what more they could do.

In a very real sense the community mental health center carried out some of the original ideas embraced in the concept of mental hygiene. It treated and continues to treat mental health problems such as neuroses, maladjustments, difficulties of adults, and behavior problems of children. Typically, about forty percent of its cases are children. Its staffing pattern includes psychiatrists, social workers, and psychologists who work as a team. Recently some centers have added a nurse to the staff.

Observing the work of the Mental Health Authority had an effect on Hospital staff. They saw a different system of delivery of mental health care. Staff members went out to present educational programs at quarterly meetings of the community mental health center staffs and



Mrs. Opal Fore at the time of her retirement.

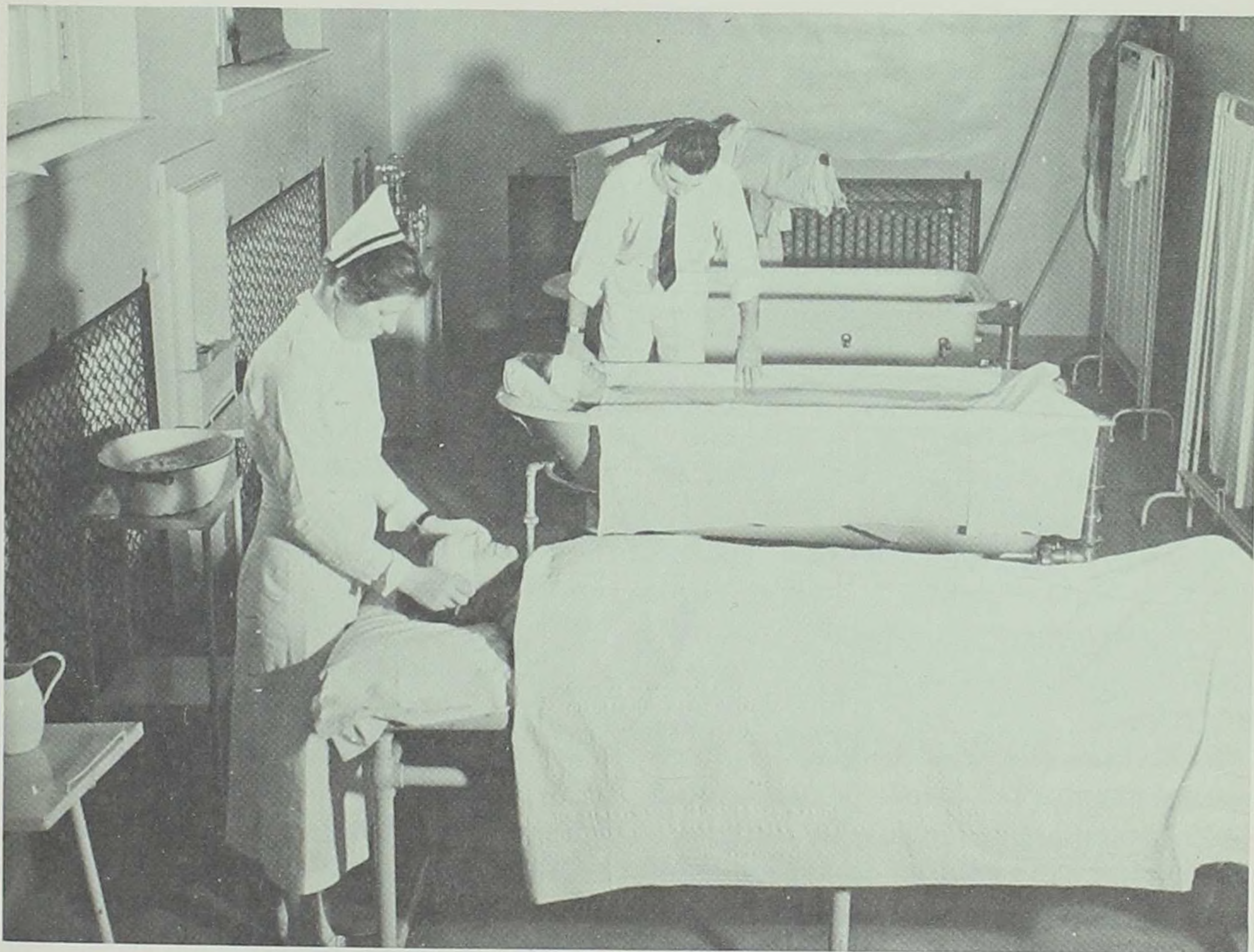
Boards of Directors. This was of particular value to resident physicians who might be offered employment in a mental health center, for they learned how a community organizes itself to start, finance, and operate a center. While still residents, they learned the functions of a center Board of Directors, the importance of developing working relationships with various social agencies and professional groups, and the need for maintaining good public relations.

To assist in the staffing of the community centers, the Hospital made a determined effort to interest resident physicians in accepting employment in the centers, as well as in the state institutions and in private practice in Iowa. Some communities planned to open a mental health center and a psychiatric unit in a general hospital simultaneously. This proved an attractive way to draw psychiatrists to a community, for they could work part-time in the center, meanwhile treating seriously ill patients in the general hospital psychiatric unit on a private basis. Sixteen psychiatrists from the program have worked in the centers in recent years. Others have gone into private practice without a mental health center appointment, while still others associated themselves with psychiatric units in general hospitals only. In 1963, there were twelve of these units which admitted 3,673 patients; in 1971, seventeen units which admitted 9,537 patients. The private practice of psychiatry has largely absorbed the bulk of serious hospital cases formerly sent to state or

private institutions.

This local activity of the private practice of psychiatry, psychiatric units in general hospitals, and a more progressive attitude in the state hospital system have produced a seventy-three percent decline in Iowa of the state hospital population over a ten year period from 1956 to 1966; compared with a thirteen percent reduction in the nation as a whole. This placed Iowa among the national leaders in mental health and was the subject of a feature article in a national journal in 1967 entitled "Iowa's Shrinking Mental Hospital Population."

Despite the growing involvement in community problems through mental health centers, psychiatric personnel in hospitals are sometimes startled by unusual situations. In the 1960s various forms of group activities were becoming increasingly popular to promote better human relations. One of these activities was sensitivity training. In this, the participants attempt to express sincerely and honestly, how they feel about each other. This process may arouse considerable feeling. These meetings often take place in a quiet weekend retreat away from the distractions of daily life. In one such group of about fifty persons, a young woman, deeply affected by the interchange of emotion, suddenly rose and pulled off all her clothing and passionately announced she was in love with the group leader. This action, to many present, seemed to carry sensitivity too far. All attempts to induce her to dress or be covered by a blanket failed. She was final-



Hydrotherapy, an effective technique for calming patients, around 1938.

ly loaded into an automobile and transported to the Psychopathic Hospital some sixty miles distant. She entered the building accompanied by a male companion. The appearance of this couple, a nude woman with a fully clothed man, produced a remarkable effect on Hospital personnel even though they were accustomed in the course of their work to dealing with patients who occasionally took their clothing off in the presence of others in the Hospital. In fact the Hospital has a

seclusion room where exhibitionistic patients may go so as not to shock the sensibilities of other patients. On this occasion, however, one of the Hospital employees, coming out of her office as the couple came down the hall, promptly retreated into her office and closed the door fearing she had seen an hallucination. Other employees stood rooted in their tracks in unbelieving silence. The strange situation was relieved by a young physician who gallantly offered his arm

to the lady and graciously escorted her to the ward.

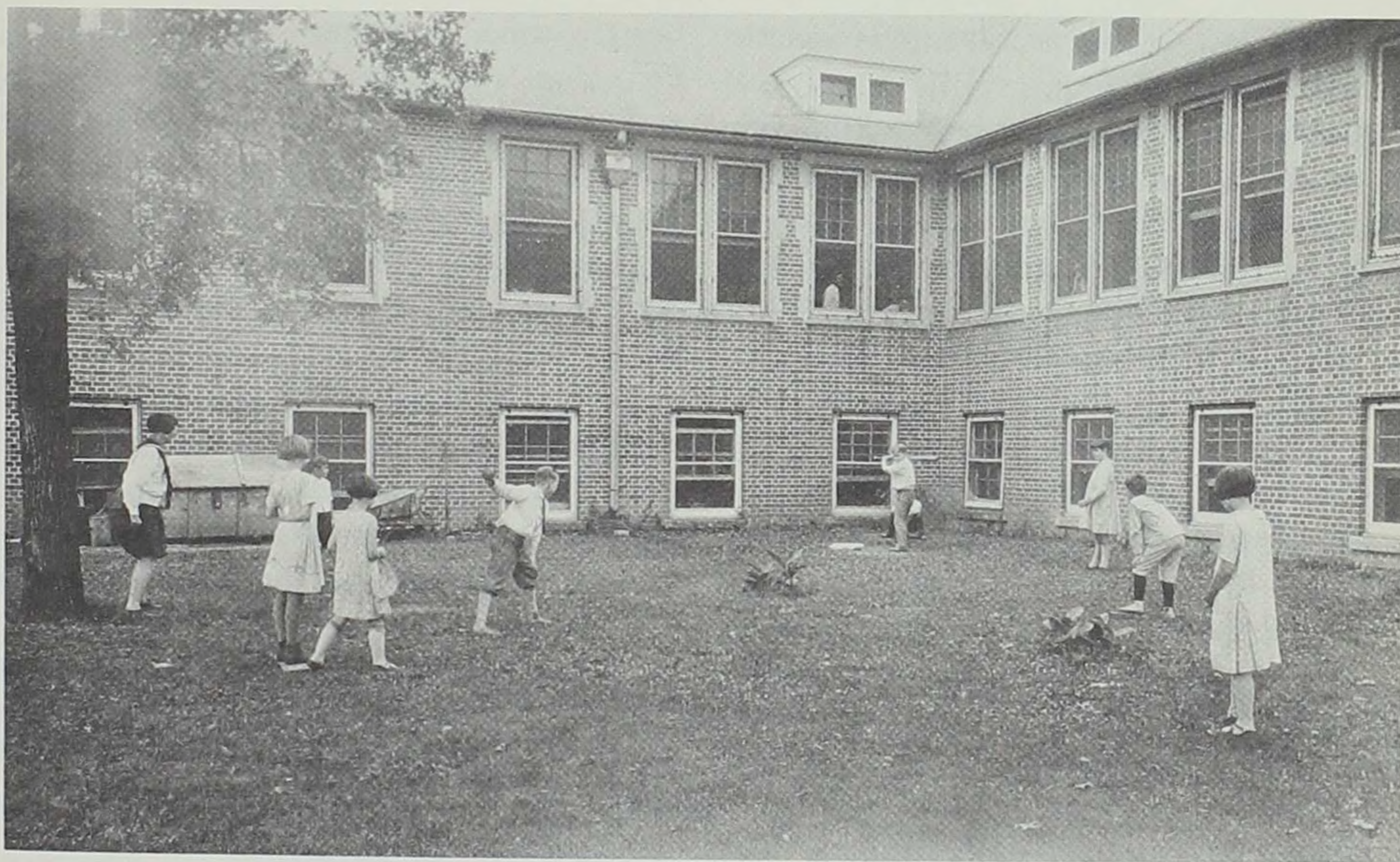
In 1963, yet another activity of the Mental Health Authority brought the Hospital into a new relationship to the whole state as a community. Federal legislation made two year grants available to each state for the purpose of developing a state-wide comprehensive mental health plan. Iowa's share, based on population, was \$101,400. Iowa is the only example in the United States where a University-based department of psychiatry and Hospital had the primary responsibility for developing a state-wide plan. The Mental Hygiene Committee was expanded to nine to form an executive committee for the project.

The organization of the planning took several months, but before the work could begin an important philosophic difference needed to be resolved. Those representing the state institutions, who traditionally had taken care of the majority of the state's hospitalized mentally ill, felt they should develop community programs directed from the state institutions. Their hospitals, they said, were placed strategically in the four quadrants of the state; they had many contacts within these areas. The central administration of the state institutions should receive and control the federal planning money. But the opposing view was that the local communities should control and provide mental health services, not the state hospitals. Several communities had psychiatric units in general hospitals as well as mental health centers.

This was a significant new approach to a more responsive care system. The Mental Health Authority had long experience in working with communities to start local services and could easily call upon the resources of the University for scientific studies to assist the planning. The Mental Health Authority had earned respect for its work. As an editorial writer said, "The Iowa Mental Health Authority has the delightful habit of taking a look at the whole field, not just the part of the job which lies in its own jurisdiction." Besides, the federal planning grant was to the Authority.

Despite the merits of the opposing views, a remarkable change was in progress. Electrotherapy, used for the first time in Iowa City by the author at the Hospital in September 1941, had indicated that serious depression could be treated successfully in about three weeks. The introduction of phenothiazine drugs for the treatment of schizophrenia in 1951, and the tricyclic antidepressants for depression in 1954, ushered in shorter periods of hospital care. Lithium now controls and prevents manic attacks. All these treatments made local care feasible. These newer treatment methods fulfilled a principle widely advocated in the late 1950s: early treatment of the patient with as little personal or social dislocation as possible.

In addition, a serious by-product of long, continued care in a remote hospital was coming into clearer focus. For a patient to live for years in the abnormal en-



Children at play during Dr. Orton's time.

vironment of the institution permitted the deterioration of his normal social attitudes, interpersonal relationships, vocational skills, and personal habits. Even if the patient had recovered from the disease which hospitalized him initially, now he could not adjust in the world outside the institution. Thus he became completely dependent on the hospital. Perhaps the deterioration could be prevented by prompt treatment in the local community. A remote hospital could not forever meet community competition.

Not every one saw the inevitable effect of the new drugs in the 1950s. The mental health center was hardly a central focus in the dispute for it treated problems of

maladjustment of adults and its clientele had a high percentage of children with behavior problems. It did not provide patients with hospital care.

For the purposes of cooperative planning a compromise was necessary. Three working divisions were formed, a governmental Agencies Division coordinated by the Director of the Division of Mental Health of the Board of Control, a Voluntary Agencies Division under the President of Iowa Association for Mental Health to stimulate public interest, and a Scientific Division composed of various University departments, state and voluntary agencies and professional organizations, and coordinated by the Director of the Compre-

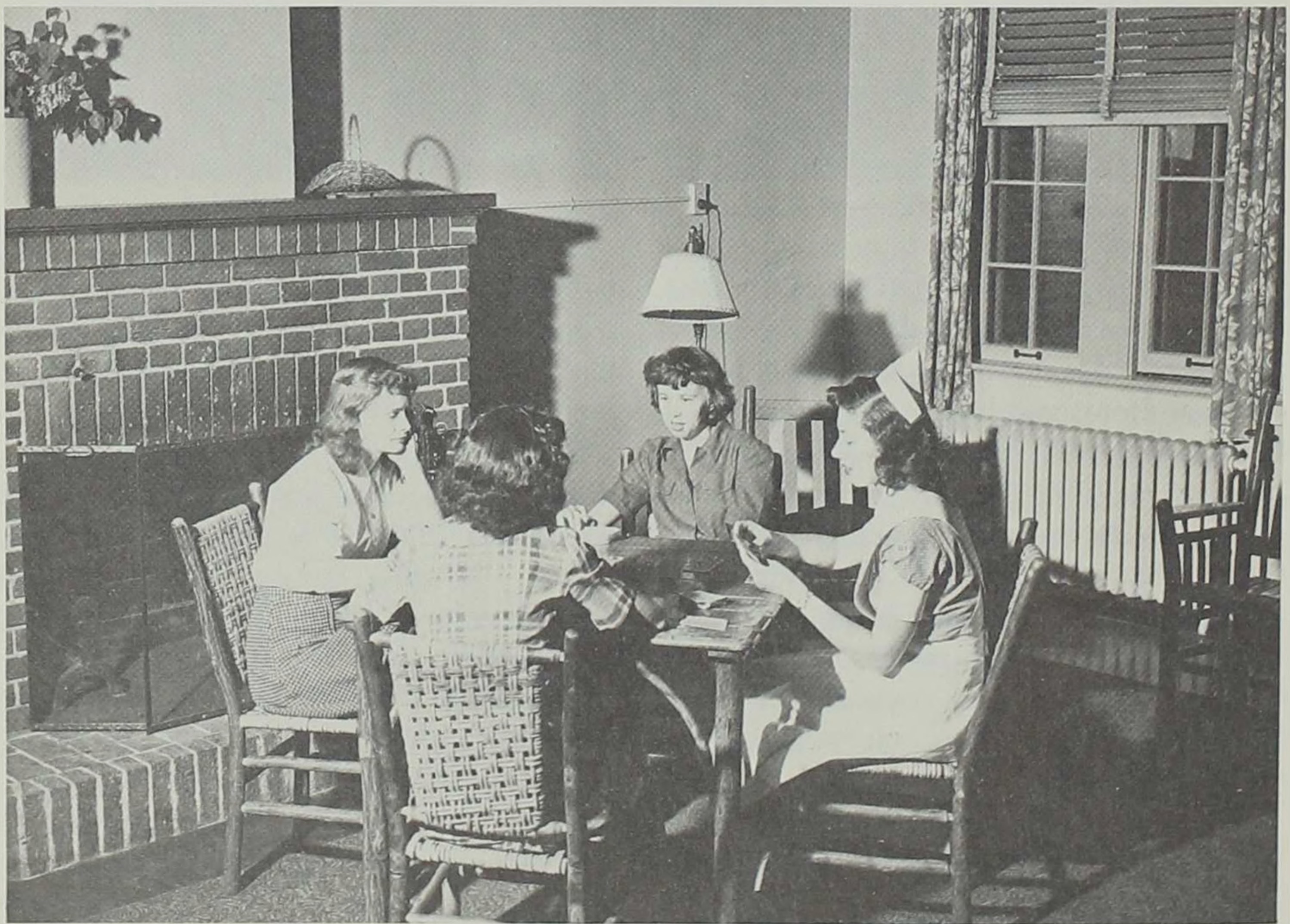
hensive Plan. All these divisions became active late in 1963.

The Scientific Division operated through committees of eleven to fifteen members, covering six areas: mentally ill adults, mentally ill offenders, alcoholism and drug addiction, the aged, children, and the mental health aspects of mental retardation. These committees met every four to six weeks. The Scientific Division also carried out a number of special research projects to support the work of the committees. These studies considered facil-

ties, treatment, manpower, legal aspects, financing and costs, population trends, and so on.

A project of such scope is hard to evaluate. In the years since, many changes have occurred, some of which came about directly as a result of the planning activities.

State institutions now coordinate more fully with community social agencies to provide better after-care for discharged patients. All of the four hospitals have become accredited by the Joint Commis-



Card players in December 1948.

sion on Accreditation of the American Hospital Association and the American Medical Association. For disturbed children, a new unit was built at Independence and two other hospitals opened children's facilities. Iowa's four state hospitals have continued to reduce their resident population, in 1972 the figure being 945 patients. In the same year the new admissions of 1,473 and re-admissions of 2,973 indicate a continued need for these institutions. The average duration of hospitalization has been now reduced to two or three months. The Centers also provide more direct services to patients discharged from state institutions and more indirect services such as consultations to schools, county homes which house mental patients, and participation in crisis centers. The centers have formed a Community Mental Health Centers Association of Iowa which holds quarterly meetings to exchange experiences, plan new programs, and keep abreast of new developments in treatment. Three Centers, in Dubuque, Davenport, and Council Bluffs received federal construction grants totaling \$3,124,000, plus \$921,000 in allocations from neighboring states, less advanced in planning than Iowa. These comprehensive Centers provide a wide variety of services. In 1972, there were twenty-eight centers covering seventy of Iowa's counties and eighty-five percent of the total state population. In that year they served more than 24,000 persons.

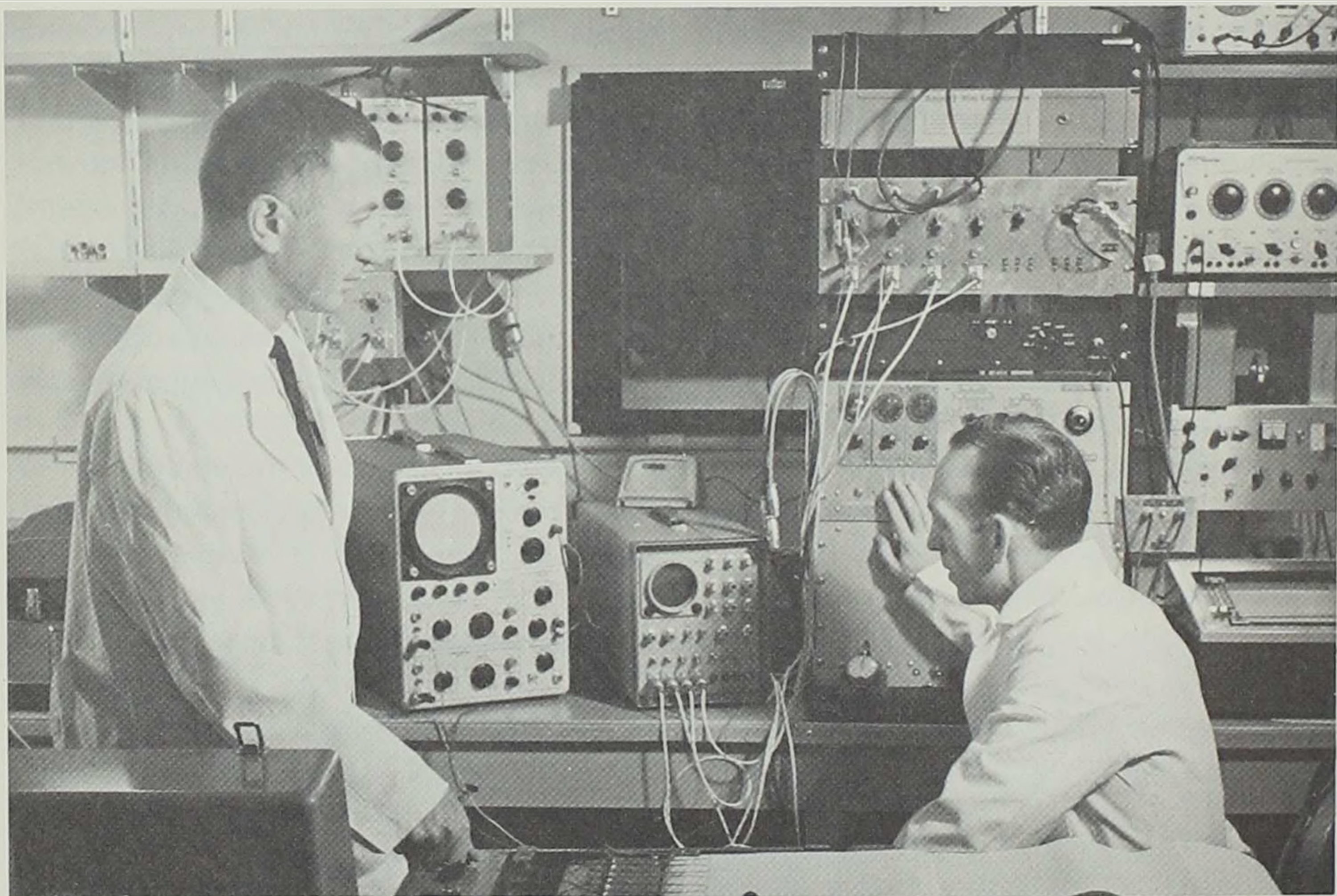
To promote joint planning and coordination of services in the state, an enlarged

Mental Hygiene Committee was formed. It represented governmental, private, voluntary, and professional groups concerned with mental health, and applied its collective wisdom to the problems of mental health and illness in the state. Because of its existence, a greater degree of communication and coordination has appeared at local levels among various agencies and professional groups.

The work of the planning committee on mentally ill offenders stimulated the construction of the Medical Security Facility at Oakdale, opened in 1969, markedly improving the condition of those individuals formerly confined to the Anamosa Reformatory and known as the criminally insane. The staff of this institution regularly evaluates persons in whom mental illness is suspected, and who are charged with a crime. If the person is ill, treatment is provided.

The formation of an alcoholism unit for treatment and rehabilitation of persons suffering from alcoholism and for the training of alcoholism counsellors began at Oakdale. The Psychopathic Hospital staff made significant contributions to program development and staffing of the alcoholism unit.

The Psychopathic Hospital does not claim credit for all these advances, but the planning which involved so many professional persons, dedicated citizens, and public and private agencies, was organized and directed by the Mental Health Authority.



Dr. Shagass and an assistant with some of the equipment used in the study of electrical activity of the brain, sometime in the mid-1960s.

In looking back over the more than fifty years of the Hospital, the wisdom and foresight of the committee of 1910 is impressive. They conceived of an institution devoted to a social and medical purpose, the alleviation of the distress of the mentally ill. To achieve this they made the institution a part of a university and its medical college. This focused the activities of the Hospital toward searches for new knowledge and the training of professional personnel. The founders also gave the Director of the Hospital a specific charge to help the state institutions, and later legislation placed a larger state-

wide community responsibility on the Hospital. Yet, the best efforts of an institution have little effect without a substantial positive response from the group it serves. In Iowa this response was assured because of a strong tradition, brought by its pioneering settlers, which placed a high value on education and professional competence. This tradition plus a characteristic of pioneering societies of depending on their own resources and assisting each other made it possible for the Hospital and the state to move ahead in concert to improve mental health in local communities. □

Palimpsest Award of Merit

*The Board of Curators of
The State Historical Society of Iowa*

*presents to LELAND SAGE an award of merit for
"European Contact with Iowa: Joliet and Marquette,"*

*judged to have been the best article
published in the Palimpsest during 1973*

Awarded this January 10, 1974

The Board of Curators of the State Historical Society of Iowa has announced the presentation of an award of merit to Leland Sage for his article, "European Contact with Iowa: Joliet and Marquette," which appeared in the May/June issue. This article was selected as the best to be published in the *Palimpsest* during 1973 by a panel of judges which included Joseph Wall of Grinnell, Lauren Soth of Des Moines, Keach Johnson of Des Moines, Mary Ann Lowary of Big Timber, Montana, and Fred Schwengel of Washington, D.C. The award competition was based on both historical and literary merit. Articles written by Curators of the Society were not eligible.

In addition to the award certificate, Mr. Schwengel has donated to the winner a Life Membership in the United States Capitol Historical Society.

CONTRIBUTORS:

THEO. C. RESSLER was born on a farm in Sharon Township, Johnson County, Iowa in 1905. When he was five years old, his mother died, leaving him to be reared in the home of a bachelor uncle and two maiden aunts who lived in the old home place of their father, John Jacob Ressler of the Forty-niner account. His first education was in a one-room rural school, but he attended Iowa City High School, graduating in 1924. He received a B.A. from The University of Iowa in 1924 and an M.A. in 1939. In 1926, he began an eighteen year teaching career which included superintendencies in Johnson, Scott, Jones, and Fayette Counties. In 1928, he was married to Dorothy Bell of Wellman, Iowa. From 1944 until 1971, Ressler was a partner in a hatchery and feed business in Williamsburg, Iowa. For the last two years, he has been engaged in part-time work as a broom maker in a broom and basket shop in West Amana, Iowa. One of his major hobbies is historical research. The selection presented in this issue is part of a longer work entitled, "Trails Divided" which covers the story of the Sacramento Mining Company to California and back. Ressler is also active in the Iowa County Historical Society.



PAUL E. HUSTON is the former Director of the Iowa State Psychopathic Hospital; his biographical sketch appeared in Vol. 54, No. 6.

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.